



## THE SEASON AHEAD

*"Pastor Todd, you need to know: Victory Lutheran Church saved my life."*

That got my attention! One of our dear members said those words to me personally as we walked into Victory one day. She went on to share that, after many years away from the Lord, she felt Him calling her back. Because Victory was just down the street, she decided to visit one Sunday. A pastor welcomed her, a member befriended her, and soon she became part of a Bible study group and made friends at Victory that remain an important part of her life today.

Little did she know that just over a year later, she would be diagnosed with cancer and face several years of difficult treatments and surgery. Through it all, her Victory family prayed for her, encouraged her, and helped carry her through. Today, she gives back by helping in the church office and baking sweet breads for others to enjoy after worship. In her words, the Lord and her Victory family helped her make it through.

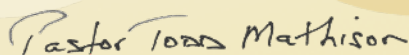
Behind her words is a precious story of God's grace—and I know there are many more stories just like it throughout our congregation. You may have a precious Victory story of your own. Perhaps this is where you found faith, friendship, healing, hope, or a renewed sense of purpose. Maybe Victory became your church home during a season when you especially needed one.

Next year on April 3, 2027, Victory Lutheran Church will celebrate our 50th anniversary. As we approach this wonderful milestone, we will do more than look back at dates, names, buildings, and programs. We will remember the people and stories through which God has been at work for five decades.

Each story is unique, yet the Holy Spirit has woven them together into one much larger tapestry. He has called us, gathered us, and made us part of this family of God called Victory Lutheran Church. In the weeks and months ahead, listen closely. Pay attention to the Holy Spirit as He tugs at your heart through the stories of your brothers and sisters at Victory. Remember your own story, too—and consider how God may be calling you to become part of what He will do through Victory in the years ahead.

This anniversary is not simply about where we have been. It is also about who we are today and who God is calling us to become. Together, we will celebrate God's faithfulness and rediscover what so many have already found here: Victory: A Place to Call Home.

With gratitude and great anticipation — Pastor Todd Mathison



# 50



Todd Mathison, Lead Pastor  
Dirk Duhlstine, Chaplain  
[VictoryLutheran.com](http://VictoryLutheran.com)

5946 E. University Drive, Mesa, AZ 85205  
480-830-5024 | Office Hours: M-Th, 8am-4pm  
[hello@victorylutheran.com](mailto:hello@victorylutheran.com)





## Annual Congregational Meeting Save the Date!

Victory's Annual Meeting will be held on **Sunday, November 15, at 11:00am**. Join us as we discuss the 2027 proposed budget, ministry plan, and ballot. We'll also take a look back at the past year with a special Year-in-Review slideshow, capturing many of the events, ministries, and special moments that made this year at Victory so meaningful.

Want to learn more or have questions about the upcoming year? **Q&A sessions** will be held in room B7 immediately following each worship service on Saturday, November 7, and Sunday, November 8.

This is a great opportunity to learn more, ask questions, and share in the conversation as we look forward to all that God has in store for Victory in the year ahead!

## Associate Pastor Search Update

Many people continue to ask, "Do we have a new Associate Pastor yet?" Not yet—but the search is active and moving forward.

We continue to seek potential candidates through LCMC and other trusted pastoral networks. Our goal is not simply to fill a position, but to prayerfully discern whom God is calling to serve alongside us as Victory's next Associate Pastor.

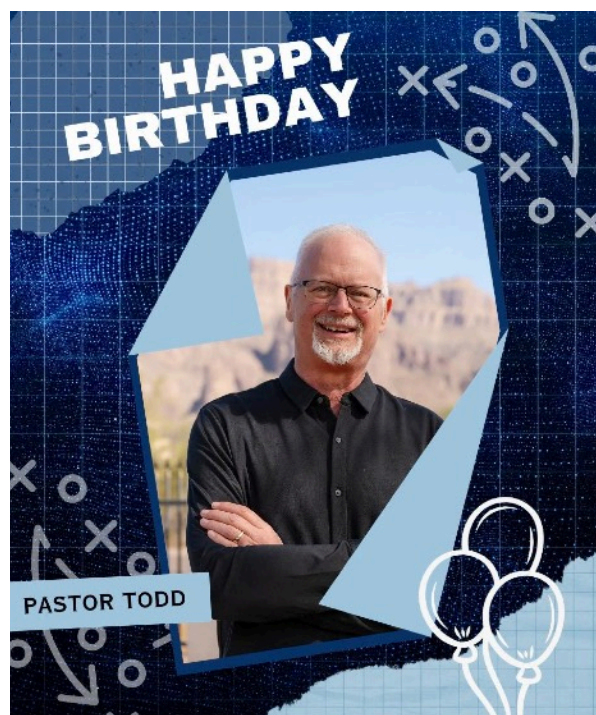
This is an important moment in the life of our congregation, and we need the prayers of our entire Victory family. Please make this search a priority in your daily prayer life. Ask God to bring forward strong candidates, guide every conversation and decision, give us wisdom and unity, and make His direction unmistakably clear.

We trust that the Lord is already at work—both among us and in the life of the pastor God is preparing for this call.



## Birthday Celebration!

On September 30th, Victory's staff gathered for lunch to celebrate Pastor Todd's 65th birthday! We are grateful for his faithful stewardship of the church, his servant-hearted leadership, and the many ways he blesses the Victory family. Happy Birthday, Pastor Todd!



## We Count People Because People Count

"Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it." —1 Corinthians 12:27

|                                                                   | 2026     | 2025     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|
| <b>Average Weekly Attendance</b><br>(for the month of September)  | 288      | 327      |
| <b>YTD Average Weekly Offerings</b><br>(as of September 27, 2026) | \$19,135 | \$17,505 |



## SING & RING WITH JOY!

"Sing to the Lord! Let the whole world know what He has done." - Psalm 105

Music has long been a defining part of our congregation's worship and community life, bringing people together in praise and service. Now, as the summer season draws to a close and many of our seasonal residents return, we are pleased to welcome back the Choir and Bell Choir. Rehearsals for both ensembles will resume in October, and their music will once again play an important role in our worship services throughout the year. Do you enjoy singing in choir? Maybe you have always wondered about how to play bells? Or do you have a musical talent you would like to share in worship? We'd love to have you join us!

If you'd like more information as we begin another season of musical leadership and service, contact our Director of Worship & Music, Dr. Kristin Holton Prouty at [kprouty@victorylutheran.com](mailto:kprouty@victorylutheran.com).



## REHEARSAL DETAILS

**Choir:** Wednesdays @ 6:30pm

**Bell Choir:** Wednesdays @ 1pm  
beginning October 14

This year, as we honor Victory's heritage and the generations who have contributed to it, we also look ahead with a commitment to sustaining and strengthening our music ministry for years to come. We invite those with an interest in sharing their musical gifts to join us this season as we continue this important legacy.



## 2026 REFOR-FEST

Willkommen to our 2026 "Refor-fest" — Reformation & Oktoberfest — an annual Victory celebration of the rich traditions of Lutheran Germany. Our weekend services celebrate our Lutheran religious beliefs. Enjoy delicious German cuisine and entertainment on Saturday evening at our very own Oktoberfest. Sunday afternoon is a hymn festival with guest organist, Devon Howard. And Monday features a movie about the life of Martin Luther. Join us for one or all of these wonderful opportunities!

## OKTOBERFEST

**Saturday, October 24 @ 5pm**

The Oktoberfest celebration features German foods, Root Beer, and entertainment provided by accordions with our beloved Ted & Marilyn Peterson. Victory will provide brats, buns, and Root Beer. **SIGN UP** at the Welcome Desk to bring an appetizer, side dish, or dessert!

## "O GOD, OUR HELP IN AGES PAST"

**A Hymn Festival with Devon Howard**

**Sunday, October 25 @ 3pm**

We are delighted to welcome back former Victory organist Dr. Devon Howard for a special Hymn Festival celebrating the rich traditions of congregational song and worship.

A passionate advocate for sacred music, Devon studied in The Netherlands as a Fulbright Scholar and earned a Doctorate from ASU in 2012. He has served churches in a variety of worship roles, including here at Victory. He currently serves in Tennessee.

This afternoon of music will invite the congregation to lift their voices in beloved hymns, enjoy choral offerings by the choir, and hear organ selections based on treasured hymn tunes. Invite a friend and join us as we celebrate the God who has been our help in ages past and remains our hope for years to come.

## "LUTHER" MOVIE MATINEE

**Monday, October 26 @ 10am**

*"This is not the story of a great man, but the story of a great God, who deeply loves miserable and tormented creatures like this monk."* Join us for the classic 1953 biographical film about Martin Luther directed by Irving Pichel. Invite a friend or neighbor. FREE movie & popcorn!





## THE JOURNEY TO 50 BEGINS

This month, we officially kick off celebrations for Victory's 50th Anniversary! Our formal anniversary date isn't until April 3, 2027, but we are starting early with a special, three-arc sermon series exploring our past, present, and future: Who have we been? — Remembering God's faithfulness, Advent — God Makes His Home With Us, Who are we? — Clarifying our present identity, and Who is God calling us to be? — Following Christ into the future.

### OCTOBER SERMONS: Foundations of our Faith

Victory's story begins with God, not with us. Across fifty years, the Lord has gathered people around His Word, washed them in grace, fed them at His Table, and sent them to serve their neighbors. This series remembers the spiritual foundations that have made Victory a church home and calls us to treasure those gifts as we enter the anniversary year.

**October 3 & 4, 2026**

#### **Founded on the Rock — Matthew 7:24-27**

Every congregation has stories, buildings, traditions, and beloved people, but only one foundation can carry the full weight of the Church: Jesus Christ. For fifty years, Victory has endured not because every plan was perfect, but because

Christ has remained faithful through His Word and promises. As we begin this anniversary journey, we give thanks for the past and build our future on the Rock who never moves.

**October 10 & 11, 2026 — Matthew 4:1-11 — People of the Word**

Jesus answers every temptation with the written Word, showing that God's truth is not decoration for religious life but daily bread for faithful living. Victory has long understood that the Church does not live by trends, personalities, or human wisdom, but by the Word through which Christ exposes sin, announces forgiveness, and strengthens faith. Remembering our past means renewing our confidence that Scripture still accomplishes what God sends it to do.

**October 17 & 18, 2026 — Grace at the Center — Luke 18:9-14**

#### **Guest Preacher Pastor Bruce Lerum**

This weekend, we welcome a guest preacher who is no stranger to Victory. Pastor Bruce Lerum has served our congregation as an Intern Pastor and as our Associate Pastor, and later as pastor of Christ the Victor, Victory's church plant in Florence, Arizona. We gladly welcome Pastor Bruce back to our pulpit to share God's Word with us once again.

Jesus places a self-assured religious man beside a sinner who can only plead for mercy, and He declares that the humbled sinner goes home justified. Victory's Lutheran heartbeat has always confessed that we are saved by grace through faith in Christ—not by our goodness, effort, or religious performance. Grace received becomes grace lived, as forgiven people are freed to serve their neighbors.

**October 24 & 25, 2026**

#### **Always Reforming, Always Returning — John 8:31-36**

The Reformation was not a celebration of novelty, but a call to return to the Gospel that sets sinners free. Victory honors our heritage best not by preserving everything unchanged, but by letting Scripture continually correct, renew, and reform us. As we remember who we have been, Christ calls us again to remain in His Word and live as people made free by His grace.

### SERMON SERIES LINE-UP

#### **October - November**

*Who have we been?*  
Remembering God's faithfulness

#### **December**

*Advent*  
God Makes His Home With Us

#### **January - February**

*Who are we?*  
Clarifying our present identity

#### **March - April**

*Who is God calling us to be?*  
Following Christ into the future

# VICTORY IS TURNING 50!

## WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR STORY

We know there are many stories over the last 50 years, and we want to hear yours!

In 2027, Victory Lutheran Church will celebrate 50 years of ministry—50 years of worship, service, fellowship, faith, and lives touched by God through this congregation.

As we prepare to celebrate this milestone, we want to hear from you. Over the coming months, we hope to share stories in The Pulse that help tell the story of Victory—not simply through dates and events, but through the experiences of the people who have called Victory home.

### WHAT DOES VICTORY MEAN TO YOU?

Perhaps there is a moment you have never forgotten, a ministry that made a difference in your life, a friendship that began here, or a time when the people of Victory supported you or your family.

You might consider questions like:

- ▶ What is your most meaningful memory of Victory?
- ▶ How has Victory made an impact on your life or faith?
- ▶ Is there a person, ministry, worship service, event, or experience at Victory that holds a special place in your heart?
- ▶ Maybe an impactful experience or testimony connected to Victory that you would be willing to share?
- ▶ How has God worked through Victory or its ministries in your life?
- ▶ What does Victory Lutheran Church mean to you?

Your story does not have to be long or dramatic. Sometimes the simplest memories say the most about the ministry God has done through this church over the past 50 years.

**If you have a story to share, please send it to:**  
**[hello@victorylutheran.com](mailto:hello@victorylutheran.com)**

**Photos connected to your story are welcome, too!**

As we look toward Victory's 50th anniversary, we look forward to celebrating not only where we have been, but the many ways God has worked through this congregation and its people.

Thank you for helping us tell the story of 50 years of ministry at Victory!

Blessings,  
Victory Lutheran Church



# COMING IN NOVEMBER!

## A FOUR-PART STUDY OF HEBREWS: JESUS IS GREATER

*A Personal Preface from Pastor Todd*

There are times when we open God's Word intending to study it, only to discover that God's Word is studying us. It searches our hearts, exposes where our faith has grown tired, and reminds us where our confidence truly belongs. That has been my experience as I have prepared to teach the Book of Hebrews.

Preparing and teaching this study is a privilege I do not take lightly. Hebrews lifts our eyes again and again to the greatness of Jesus—to who He is, what He has done, and what it means to belong to Him. As I am working through these passages, I am reminded that I am not simply preparing lessons for others. I am being taught, corrected, encouraged, and drawn closer to Christ myself.

I also understand the holy calling entrusted to me as a preacher and teacher at Victory Lutheran Church. To stand before God's people and proclaim His Word is never a casual responsibility. It is more than preparing a message, explaining a passage, or leading a study. It is the sacred task of pointing people to Jesus Christ—faithfully, clearly, and humbly.

As Victory celebrates our fiftieth anniversary, I am especially aware that I do not stand alone. I stand within a great cloud of biblical witnesses who have proclaimed God's faithfulness and pointed His people toward the promised Messiah. I also stand alongside the pastors, teachers, ministry leaders, and faithful disciples who have proclaimed Jesus as Lord throughout Victory's history.

For fifty years, Christ has remained at the center of our preaching, teaching, worship, and witness. This study reflects something essential about who we are: a Christ-centered congregation committed to Bible-based teaching. It is a profound privilege to receive that heritage, serve within it, and help carry it forward.

The description of Jesus as our Great High Priest has become especially meaningful to me. Jesus is not distant from our struggles. He understands our weakness, temptation, sorrow, and need. He entered fully into our humanity, yet without sin. He stands before the Father on our behalf. Because of Him, we may approach the throne of grace with confidence—not because we are worthy, but because He is.

I need that truth in my everyday life. I need God's mercy and the grace of Christ. I need the assurance that my sins are forgiven, my prayers are heard, and

my life is securely held in the hands of my Savior. Before I am a preacher, teacher, or pastor, I am a sinner in need of grace and a disciple still learning to trust and follow Jesus.

I invite you to join me for four Monday mornings in November at 10:00 a.m. My prayer is that this will be more than an examination of an important book of the Bible. May it be an invitation to fix our eyes on Jesus, trust Him more deeply, and receive His grace anew.

As we celebrate fifty years of ministry and look toward the future God is preparing for

Victory, may we know not only more about Jesus, but know Jesus Himself more fully—our Great High Priest, the One who is greater, the One who is faithful, and the One who will never let us go.

*Pastor Todd Mathison*

Rev. Dr. Todd G. Mathison



### 4-WEEK HEBREWS STUDY

**Begins November 2nd**

**Meets Mondays @ 10am**

**Sign up in the Welcome Center**

## Tailgate Potluck • September 6, 2026

Thank you to everyone who joined us for our potluck on September 6th! We loved seeing everyone sporting their favorite team jerseys and enjoying great food and fellowship together. A special thank you to everyone who brought food to share, and to the Mesa City Band for providing wonderful entertainment. We appreciate everyone who helped make the afternoon so much fun!



Mesa  
City Band





## The Chosen — Season 6, episode 1 Monday, October 19 @ 10am Mark Your Calendars: Exclusive Early Screening

Join us on Monday, October 19th at 10:00am for an exclusive, early showing of Episode 1 of the new season of The Chosen—weeks before it becomes available to the public!

The hour has come. Before the sun sets, Jesus will be dead. Season 6 captures the historic events of Jesus' final day through the lives of those who love Him—and those who condemn Him. Pharisees call it justice. Romans call it peace. Followers call it murder. But in the face of loneliness and death, Jesus stands resolute in a plan that has always led to one place: the cross.

Come together with our church community to watch, pray, and reflect as we are introduced to this powerful new season together!

SIGN UP in the  
Welcome Center or  
scan the QR code.



Scan Me



Discovering  
VICTORY

**Sunday, November 1 & 8  
12:30-2:30pm**

*Want to know more about Victory?  
Learn what it means to be part of our church family  
— no matter where you are in your journey.  
(Lunch included)*

SIGN UP at the Welcome Desk or Scan the QR Code >



Scan Me

## "WHAT'S MY NEXT STEP AT VICTORY?"

**If you have ever asked that question, Discovering Victory is a wonderful place to begin.**

Over two Sundays, you will have a meaningful opportunity to discover who we are—and where God may be leading you next. Whether you are new to Victory, considering membership, or have been part of our church family for years, Discovering Victory is for you.

Together, we will explore Victory's story, our Christian faith, our mission and vision, and the many ways you can grow, serve, and become more deeply connected.

This is more than a membership class—it is an invitation to better understand the heart of Victory and take your next step as we live out our mission: to be and make disciples of Jesus Christ.

You will learn more about what we believe, why it matters, and how our grace-centered faith shapes our worship, relationships, service, and everyday lives. You will also have the opportunity to meet others, learn about meaningful ways Victory can be part of your Christian walk, and ask Pastor Todd your questions directly.

Whether you are discovering Victory for the first time or rediscovering your place within it, you are warmly invited. Come and see what God is doing among us—and prayerfully consider how He may be calling you to be part of it.

VICTORY LUTHERAN PRESENTS

# 50th Anniversary Concert Season

As Victory Lutheran Church marks its 50th Anniversary, our 2026-2027 Concert Series explores the themes of past, present, and future through inspiring performances by guest artists, local ensembles, and our own choir and handbell choirs. Join us as we honor our rich heritage, celebrate the blessings of today, and look forward with hope to God's continuing work among us.

**All concerts are at 3pm on Sundays** and are followed by a reception. Invite a friend and celebrate this special anniversary season with us!

October 25

*O God, Our Help in Ages Past*

Hymn Festival with Devon Howard, organ

November 15

*Songs of a New World: American Music for Tenor Saxophone and Organ*

Keith Kelly and Kristin Holton Prouty

December 13

*Once Upon a Noel* - VLC Choir & Bells

February 7

Valley Chamber Chorale - Christopher Samuel, conductor

February 28

*Playing It Forward* - The East Valley Pops Orchestra

March 14

*Safety Last!* - Silent film with Brett Valliant, organ

March 26 - Friday, 4 & 6pm

Good Friday Cantata - VLC choir

April 4

*Golden Resonance*

Alisson Unglaub, violin & Kristin Holton Prouty, organ/piano



LEARN MORE

**FREE  
ADMISSION!**



5964 E. University Drive, Mesa, AZ 85203 • VictoryLutheran.com • 480-830-5024

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

## All Saints Day

The weekend of October 31-November 1  
we wish to honor those who have "gone home  
to the Lord" within the past year.

Send names by October 28th to:  
[dsnyderl@victorylutheran.com](mailto:dsnyderl@victorylutheran.com)



## VETERANS DAY PRESENTATION NOVEMBER 7-8

On Veterans Day Weekend, we would like to recognize our Veterans during our worship services by presenting a slideshow of those from our congregation who have served in the military. Please send a photo (suitable for worship), with your name, branch, and years served, to:

[ehernandez@victorylutheran.com](mailto:ehernandez@victorylutheran.com)

**DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 1**

4

### WORLD COMMUNION

8:30-11am Coffee & Fellowship, FH  
8am Worship & Communion, WC  
9:30am Worship, WC



5

9-11:30am Food Pantry  
12:30-2:30pm GriefShare, CH



6

6:30pm "Seekers" Small Group, B7  
7pm AA Men's Meeting, C5

7

9-11:30am Food Pantry  
10am Men's Bible Study, C1  
12:30pm Al-Anon, C4  
6:30pm Choir Rehearsal, WC

11

8:30-11am Coffee & Fellowship, FH  
8am Worship & Communion, WC  
9:30am Worship, WC

12

9-11:30am Food Pantry  
12:30-2:30pm GriefShare, CH

13

10:00am Esperanza Bible Study, FS  
11:30am Cozy Corner Cafe Lunch (off-site)  
1:30pm Mary Bible Study, meet in home  
7pm AA Men's Meeting, C5

14

9-11:30am Food Pantry  
10am Men's Bible Study, C1  
12:30pm Al-Anon, C4  
1pm Bell Choir Rehearsal, WC  
2pm Sunshine Acres (off-site)  
Bus leaves @ 1:15pm  
6:30pm Choir Rehearsal, WC

## FAMILY PROMISE HOST WEEK: OCTOBER 11-18, 2026



18

8:30-11am Coffee & Fellowship, FH  
8am Worship & Communion, WC  
9:30am Worship, WC

19

9-11:30am Food Pantry  
12:30-2:30pm GriefShare, CH  
**10am Movie Matinee, FH**  
**"The Chosen"**



20

8:30am-2:30pm Quilters, FH  
3pm Council Meeting, B7  
6:30pm "Seekers" Small Group, B7  
7pm AA Men's Meeting, C5



21

8:30-11:30am Quilters, FH  
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

25

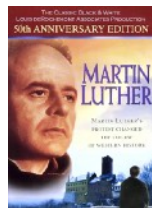
### REFORMATION WEEKEND Remember to wear red!

**NEW MEMBER COMMISSIONING**  
8:30-11am Coffee & Fellowship, FH  
8am Worship & Communion, WC  
9:30am Worship, WC  
**3pm Hymn Festival, WC**



26

9-11:30am Food Pantry  
12:30-2:30pm GriefShare, CH  
**10am Movie Matinee, FH**  
**"Luther"**



27

1:30-3:00pm Book Club, B7  
7pm AA Men's Meeting, C5



28

9-11:30am Food Pantry  
9am Feed My Starving Children (off-site)  
Bus leaves @ 8am  
10am Men's Bible Study, C1  
12:30pm Al-Anon, C4  
1pm Bell Choir Rehearsal, WC  
6:30pm Choir Rehearsal, WC

| THURSDAY                                                                                                                                                             | FRIDAY                                                                                        | SATURDAY                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1</b><br>9:30am Women's Ministry Leadership Meeting, C1<br>11am Al-Anon Meeting, C5<br>11:30am-1:00pm Stephen Ministers, C4                                       | <b>2</b><br>OFFICE CLOSED                                                                     | <b>3</b><br><b>WORLD COMMUNION</b><br>8am Men's Bible Study, C5<br>4pm Worship, WC<br>                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>8</b><br>8am-4pm Interactive Prayer Room, B5<br>10am Prayer Group, B7<br>11am Al-Anon Meeting, C5                                                                 | <b>9</b><br>OFFICE CLOSED                                                                     | <b>10</b><br>8am Men's Bible Study, C5<br>4pm Worship, WC                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>15</b><br>10am Prayer Group, B7<br>11am Al-Anon Meeting, C5<br>11:30am-1:30pm Stephen Ministers, C4                                                               | <b>16</b><br>OFFICE CLOSED                                                                    | <b>17</b><br>8am Men's Bible Study, C5<br>4pm Worship, WC                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|  <b>FAMILY PROMISE HOST WEEK: OCTOBER 11-18, 2026</b>                             |                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>22</b><br>7am Men's Breakfast Fellowship @ IHOP (off-site)<br>10am Prayer Group, B7<br>11am Al-Anon Meeting, C5<br>7:30pm Annie (off-site)<br>Bus leaves @ 6:30pm | <b>23</b><br>OFFICE CLOSED<br>7:30pm Come From Away Musical (off-site)<br>Bus leaves @ 6:15pm | <b>24</b><br><b>REFORMATION WEEKEND</b><br><b>Remember to wear red!</b><br><b>NEW MEMBER COMMISSIONING</b><br>8am Men's Bible Study, C5<br>4pm Worship, WC<br><b>5pm Oktoberfest, FH</b><br> Operation Christmas Child<br>Pick up your shoebox in the lobby this weekend! |
| <b>29</b><br>10am Prayer Group, B7<br>11am Al-Anon Meeting, C5                                                                                                       | <b>30</b><br>OFFICE CLOSED                                                                    | <b>31</b><br><b>COMMUNION WEEKEND</b><br><b>ALL SAINTS WEEKEND</b><br>8am Men's Bible Study, C5<br>4pm Worship, WC<br>                                                                                                                                                   |

## NOVEMBER UPCOMING EVENTS

**Oct 31 / Nov 1**

All Saints Weekend

**November 1 & 8**

Discovering Victory

**Begins November 2**

4-weeks on Mondays  
Hebrews Study @ 10am

**November 7/8**

Veterans Day Weekend

**November 12**

Vitalant Blood Drive

**November 14**

OCC Shoebox Packing  
Party @ 5pm

**November 15**

Annual Congregational  
Meeting @ 11am

**November 15**

Concert Series @ 3pm

**November 20**

Orchard: Africa Zoolights

**November 25**

Thanksgiving Eve  
Worship Service @ 4pm  
Dinner @ 5pm

**DAILY  
HOPE**  
DEVOTIONAL

**SUBSCRIBE**

Text the word **victory** to

**888-897-5573**

Receive a short daily  
devotional and  
Bible verse directly to  
your phone.

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



## LCMC 26th Annual Gathering & Convention

**October 4-7, 2026 | Lutheran Church of Hope (West Des Moines, IA)**

Access to the live stream will be available at [www.lcmc.net/live](http://www.lcmc.net/live)

### ABOUT LCMC

Victory Lutheran Church has been a member of Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC) since 2010. LCMC is a growing association of Lutheran congregations committed to living out the Gospel, strengthening local churches, and planting new churches.

LCMC began in 2001 with just 25 congregations and has grown to more than 900 congregations around the world. At its heart, LCMC is a movement that values the local church as a place where people can connect with God and with one another. It also celebrates the unique gifts, skills and talents God has given each person and encourages people to use those gifts in service to God and others.

### ROOTED IN SCRIPTURE AND THE LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS

LCMC churches are rooted in the authority of Scripture and recognize the Lutheran Confessions as a faithful witness to the truth of Scripture. LCMC also places a strong emphasis on freedom in Christ and encourages congregations and individuals to faithfully follow where God is leading.

### LCMC ANNUAL GATHERING

Each year, LCMC churches from across the country and around the world gather for the LCMC Annual Gathering & Convention. The four-day event includes worship, Bible study, keynote speakers, breakout sessions, ministry resources, fellowship and opportunities to connect with pastors, church leaders and members from other LCMC congregations.

This year's gathering will explore the theme of freedom in Christ, based on Galatians 5:1:

"It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery."

The Annual Gathering is more than a business meeting. It is an opportunity to learn more about LCMC, hear from church leaders, discover new ministry resources, and be encouraged and equipped for ministry.

### WATCH ONLINE

Victory members are invited to experience this year's gathering through a **FREE livestream** from the comfort of home. The livestream will be available when the event begins. The opening keynote speaker will on Monday, October 5 at 7:30am Arizona time.

A printable PDF of the event program, including the schedule, speaker information and more, is also available at [lcmc.net/annual-gathering](http://lcmc.net/annual-gathering).

Consider taking some time to watch and learn more about the larger Lutheran community of which Victory is a part!

### LCMC NEWSLETTER

Updated details for this event will be available on the Annual Gathering page of the LCMC website and in their newsletter. If you're not already subscribed, you can sign up to receive their e-newsletters at [lcmc.net/enewsletter](http://lcmc.net/enewsletter).





## Our Final Family Promise Host Week at Victory • October 11-18, 2026

For many years, Victory has had the privilege of opening our doors to families experiencing homelessness through Family Promise. During each host week, volunteers have transformed church spaces into temporary bedrooms, prepared and served meals, welcomed guests with kindness, stayed overnight, helped with laundry, and offered the gift of Christian hospitality. This upcoming host week will be Victory's final Family Promise host week. While this marks the end of one chapter in our congregation's hands-on partnership, it also gives us an opportunity to give thanks for the many ways

God has worked through this ministry and through the people of Victory.

Family Promise partners with congregations across the Valley to provide safe shelter, meals, and compassion to families in crisis. At Victory, that mission has been lived out in simple but meaningful ways: a warm dinner, a made bed, a clean towel, a friendly conversation, a quiet place to rest, and the reassurance that families are seen, valued, and not alone.

We are deeply grateful to every volunteer who has served over the years—those who set up rooms, cooked meals, hosted evenings and overnights, baked homemade treats, washed linens, cleaned up, prayed, donated supplies, coordinated schedules, and helped make each host week possible. Your service has reflected the love of Christ in practical, compassionate ways.

As we prepare for this final host week, we invite the Victory family to **SIGN UP in the lobby** to participate, pray, and give thanks. Let us make this last week a meaningful expression of welcome and care for our guests and let us celebrate the faithful service that has made this ministry such a blessing for over 12 years.

At the same time, we are **praying for two people to step forward** and help lead Victory's Family Promise mission partnership into the future. Family Promise provides clear guidelines for its leaders to follow, and you would not be asked to carry this ministry alone. If the Holy Spirit is prompting your heart, please indicate your interest on a Connect Card or contact the church office. We will reach out to you, pray with you, and talk together about what this ministry could look like going forward.



## GriefShare Group

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

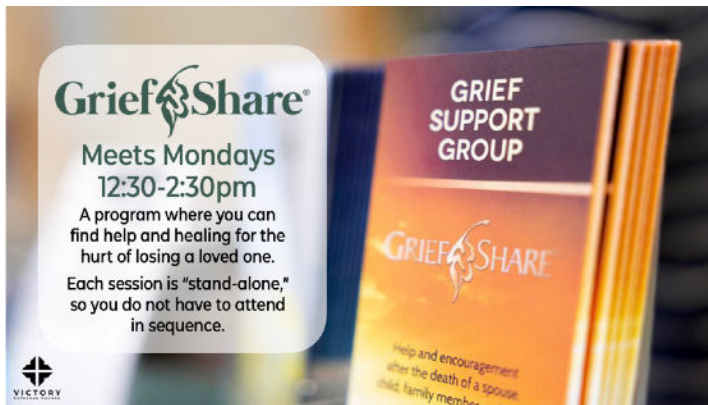
Griefshare is a special weekly seminar and support group designed to help you rebuild your life after losing a loved one. Our group is led by caring people who have experienced grief and want to help you through the difficult days ahead. Each session stands alone, so you may drop in anytime.

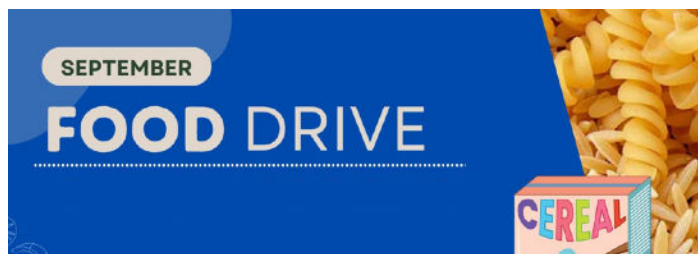
## GriefShare Team Has New Facilitators

Don Davidson and Cal Schell join the Team to facilitate GriefShare. A former facilitator, Tricia Van Every, has left the Team to explore and discover new avenues to serve. Katherine Perazzo, Gail Pankow and Lorna Calhoun continue to bring their support for members on their Grief Journey. As lead facilitator, Suellen Palya continues to feel grateful for all their support and thank God for His Guidance.

If you would like more information you can find more info about GriefShare on their website at [griefshare.org](http://griefshare.org) or you may contact:

Suellen Palya 480-325-3410  
[suellenpalya@yahoo.com](mailto:suellenpalya@yahoo.com)





## FOOD DRIVE — THANK YOU!

"Look at all that food!", exclaimed a food pantry client. The shelves had started to look bare until YOU generously donated pasta, rice, beans, marina sauce, cereal, and peanut butter. Victory, along with Lutheran Social Services, has provided food boxes to the needy for many years. This year, in particular, the need has been greater.

In the parable of the Sheep and Goats in Matthew 25, Jesus encourages us to feed and clothe those in need. "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me." "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

What a glorious way to serve the Lord! An obedient response to His encouragement to see a need and meet it, as if we are giving directly to Him. A big 'thank you' to all who contributed!



## ORCHARD: AFRICA ZOOLIGHTS Friday, November 20, 2026 @ 6:00pm

Phoenix Zoo

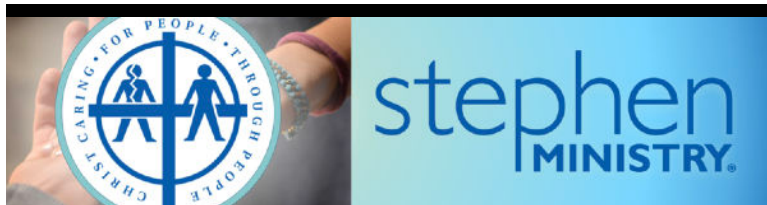
455 N. Galvin Parkway Phoenix, AZ 85008

Our favorite night of the year is right around the corner! We can't wait to share a meal together, reflect on all that God has done through Victory's global mission partner Orchard: Africa this year. Enjoy an evening out at the Phoenix Zoo with a barbecue dinner, a private viewing of Zoolights and an opportunity to make an impact in the lives of families in Southern Africa. **Tickets are \$50** (includes meal and Zoolights). Bus will leave Victory at 5:30pm.

Sign up and pay in the Welcome Center.

**Early Bird Rate Deadline — October 25th!**





## BECOME A STEPHEN MINISTER

You can make a difference in someone's life  
by simply being there.

Victory Lutheran is beginning a **Stephen Ministry training class**, and you are invited to consider becoming a Stephen Minister! Stephen Ministers are trained members of the congregation who provide **one-to-one, Christ-centered care** to people who are going through difficult seasons of life. A Stephen Minister typically meets with one care receiver once a week for about an hour—listening, caring, praying, and walking alongside them as they experience God's love and presence.

### What does the training involve?

- Learn practical skills for providing **high-quality, Christ-centered care**.
- Gain insight into the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of people who are hurting.
- Develop listening and caring skills that can benefit **every relationship in your life**.
- Deepen your own faith as you grow in becoming a Christ-centered caregiver.
- Build meaningful Christian community with others in the training class.
- Discover that learning to care for others can be **engaging, rewarding, and even fun!**

Stephen Ministers come from all walks of life. You don't need to have all the answers or be a professional counselor. What matters is a willingness to listen, learn, pray, and walk alongside someone who is hurting.

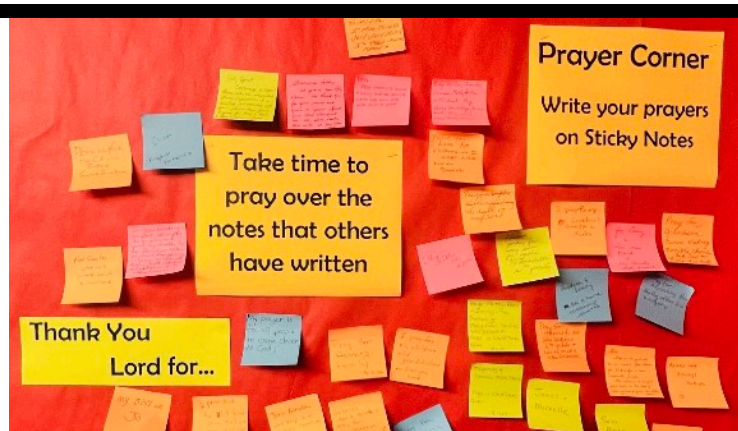
"One of the biggest things I learned is that it's not about me, it's about God. I am the caregiver, and God is the cure-giver. My job is to listen—to really listen and care—and rely on God to bring about healing." (Paul, Clinton, South Carolina)

**New Training Class at Victory Lutheran**  
**Tuesdays | 1:00–4:00pm**  
**Beginning November 3, 2026**

If you have a heart for people and a desire to share the love and care of Christ with someone who is going through a difficult time, we invite you to prayerfully consider joining this new Stephen Ministry training class. You could be the person God uses to remind someone that they are not alone.

Chaplain Dirk Duhlstine

[dduhlstine@victorylutheran.com](mailto:dduhlstine@victorylutheran.com) | 480-660-5231



## THANK YOU FOR PRAYING

**Global Week of Prayer • September 6–13, 2026**

**2,728 prayer rooms. 141 nations.**

**Hundreds of thousands of hours of prayer.**

Those numbers are incredible—and they remind us that what happened during Global Week of Prayer was much bigger than any one church, city, or nation.

When 24-7 Prayer began, they celebrated having 52 prayer rooms participate in their first year. Today, thousands of prayer rooms around the world are joining together. **It feels miraculous—and it is happening because people like you said "yes" to God's invitation to pray with His Church around the world.** Thank you for being part of it!

At Victory, **more than 30 people committed to pray every day**, joining brothers and sisters in Christ around the globe. Our interactive prayer room became a special place throughout the week. People stopped to pray, added their own prayer requests to the sticky notes, placed pins on the prayer map for cities and nations they were praying for, and lifted up unreached people groups around the world. We prayed for God to raise up workers who would carry the Gospel to those who have not yet heard it.

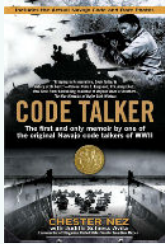
One of the prayers from the week especially stood out to me: **"May Your Kingdom come and Your will be done."** Think about that for a moment. Hundreds of thousands of people around the world were praying essentially the same prayer—that God's Kingdom would come and His will would be done.

The 2026 Global Week of Prayer may be over, but our invitation to pray is not. I encourage you to continue praying globally. Pray for your family, your neighbors, our city and nation, other nations, and people who have never heard the Good News of Jesus. And remember that prayer is a conversation with the Lord. Don't just bring your requests to God—take time to listen.

Chaplain Dirk Duhlstine

# THE BOOK CLUB 2026-2027

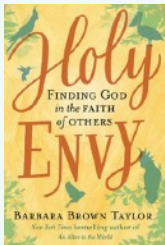
Love to read books? The Book Club meets monthly on the 4th Tuesday from 1:30-3:00pm. Please come prepared to discuss the monthly book selection.



## **"Code Talker: The first and only memoir by one of the original Navajo code talkers of WWII" by Chester Nez**

As a child, Chester Nez wasn't allowed to speak his native language as his teachers sought to rid him of his culture and traditions. But discrimination didn't stop him from serving his country after Pearl Harbor, for the Navajo have always been warriors, and his upbringing on a New Mexico reservation gave him the strength to excel as a marine.

**Led by Dottie Cisek, October 27, 2026**

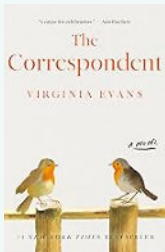


## **"Holy Envy: Finding God in the Faith of Others" by Barbara Brown Taylor**

The author recounts her moving discoveries of finding the sacred in unexpected places while teaching the world's religions to undergraduates in rural Georgia. She finds new meaning in old teachings that have too often been used to exclude religious strangers instead of embracing the divine challenges they present. And she takes heart in how often God chooses outsiders to teach insiders how out-of-bounds God really is.

**Led by Paulette Krenke, November 24, 2026**

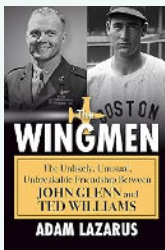
**(No Meeting in December)**



## **"The Correspondent: A Novel" by Virginia Evans**

At 73, retired lawyer and devoted letter writer Sybil Van Antwerp navigates her daily life and reflects on her past, but when unexpected letters open old wounds, she must confront a painful chapter that reshapes her understanding of herself and her world.

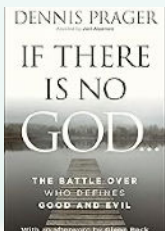
**Led by Judeen Hendrickson, January 26, 2007**



## **"The Wingmen: The Unlikely, Unusual, Unbreakable Friendship Between John Glenn and Ted Williams" by Adam Lazarus**

In 1953, the Korean War in full throttle, two men crossed the fabled 38th Parallel into Communist airspace aboard matching Panther Jets, creating a death-defying bond. Over the next half-century, their contrasting lives were challenged by exhilarating highs and devastating lows, yet they remained, however improbably, profoundly close friends.

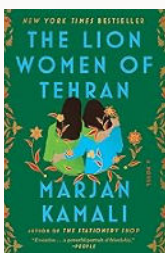
**Led by Mary Branstad, February 23, 2027**



## **"If There Is No God: The Battle Over Who Defines Good and Evil" by Dennis Prager**

We live in an era when people increasingly make moral judgments based on emotions. Without objective morality, the world will descend into chaos, with every individual engaging in any behavior they feel is right. Thought-provoking, important, and accessible for the devout and the skeptic, this book is a guide for anyone seeking clarity in a morally troubled age.

**Led by Joe Myers, March 23, 2027**



## **"The Lion Women of Tehran" by Marjan Kamali**

Historical fiction about the friendship between two young girls of different social status in Tehran, Iran. Decades later, they come of age and pursue their own goals for meaningful futures while the political turmoil in Iran builds to a breaking point.

**Led by Mary Robb, April 27, 2027**



## SOMETHING NEW AT VICTORY!

You may have noticed something new outside Victory! Our new digital sign is now up and running! Our original electronic sign was installed on May 28, 2014, and after more than 12 years of faithfully serving Victory, it was beginning to fail and wasn't working as reliably as it once did.

The new sign brings brighter, clearer images and much better resolution, giving us the opportunity to connect with the thousands of people who pass by our church each week. More than simply announcing events and activities, this sign is a way to let people know that there is a church here—a place where they can find community, experience God's love, and call home. We're excited about this new tool and the many ways God can use it to invite, encourage, and point people to Jesus! Check out our before-and-after photos!



Old Sign - Modules failing



September 15, 2026 - New panels installed



New Sign!



### **Men's Breakfast Fellowship** **Men, Don't Do Life Alone** **Thursday, October 22 @ 7:00am**

"As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another." - Proverbs 27:17

Men need other men—men who will listen, encourage, challenge and point one another back to Christ. Victory's Men's Breakfast Fellowship is a simple opportunity to connect, talk honestly about life and build friendships rooted in faith.

Our next breakfast is Thursday, October 22, from 7:00–8:30am in the meeting room at IHOP, 10662 E. Southern Avenue, near Signal Butte.

No sign-up. No program. Just show up, order whatever sounds good from the menu and take care of your own check. Come hungry. Meet some good men. See what God can do when iron begins sharpening iron



### **Women's Ministry** **Bible Study** **Tuesday, October 13**

Individual Bible Study Groups meet the second Tuesday of each month (October-April).

Studies are open to all women.

#### **Esperanza Bible Study**

2nd Tuesday @ 10:00am, Room C5

#### **Mary Bible Study**

2nd Tuesday @ 1:30pm

Meets in home (call for location)

Gayle Schmidt, Chair, 612-867-2679

### **Quilters Group • October 20 & 21 @ 8:30am**

We are off and running with a new year at Quilting. We completed 20 quilts in September and gave them to the Food Pantry to distribute. Our next meeting will be on Tuesday October 20th from 8:30am-2:30pm and Wednesday October 21st from 8:30-11:30am. We will be having our group picture taken for the yearly directory.

Come when you can and join us (leave when you must) You do not need to spend all day with us. On Tuesday, we break for a potluck-style lunch. Bring something to share (salad, cookies, cheese and crackers, etc). See you there!

Co-Chairs:

Dottie Cisek 480-250-6668

Betty Swanson 480-234-4466





## OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD October 24-November 7, 2025

This wonderful ministry where we here at Victory Lutheran Church pack shoeboxes for children in need around the world. Pencils, markers, toys toothbrushes and other school supplies are always greatly appreciated! We will have the shoeboxes to hand out beginning October 25th.

## PIZZA & PACKING PARTY! November 15 @ 5pm

We are asking each person to bring 10-20 items to help fill the boxes together. Items needed: Toys, toothbrushes, school supplies, t-shirts, etc. and monetary donations to cover shipping welcome too. **Sorry no food, no toothpaste, soap or liquid items allowed.** If you can't bring items join us anyway to pack boxes, pray over them for God's little ones and enjoy some pizza.

Remember every shoebox is delivered in Jesus Name. Let's take the message of the Gospel to the ends of the earth!

Marcia Hurry, Volunteer Coordinator  
mhurry.up@hotmail.com



## FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN JOIN US TO HELP FEED HUNGRY CHILDREN Everyone Welcome! Invite Your Friends!

FMSC provides free children's meals to a network of humanitarian and religious mission partners in some 70 countries around the world. They in turn are responsible for shipping costs and the distribution of the meals to schools, churches, orphanages, community centers, medical clinics and feeding programs. The meals (containing vitamins, soy protein and dehydrated vegetables) are designed by nutrition professionals to reduce problems with malnutrition and counter the severe undernutrition found in developing countries.

Historically, more than 99% of FMSC meals have safely reached their intended destinations. Last year FMSC provided over 380 million meals, and fed over 1 million children a daily meal for a year.

FMSC is a Christian nonprofit organization with nation-wide operations. It has a permanent packing facility in Tempe where food is packed and labeled by volunteers.

**Join us on the 4th Wednesday morning of each month** at FMSC's Tempe packing facility – you can stand and package food, or sit and label it. The packing session runs from 9:00 to 11:00 am. The BUS IS FREE and leaves at 8:00 am. Sign up by the Sunday before.

Feed My Starving Children  
1100 W Grove Parkway, Tempe, AZ 85283  
480-626-1970 • [TempeInfo@fmsc.org](mailto:TempeInfo@fmsc.org)  
[www.fmsc.org](http://www.fmsc.org)



## VICTORY CONNECTIONS

Connecting People. Enjoying Life. Growing Faith.

# OCTOBER

**SINGLES & COUPLES WELCOME!**  
**INVITE FAMILY & FRIENDS TOO!**

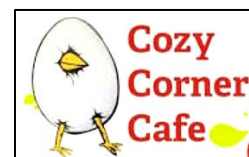
*NOTE: Deadlines to sign up for theater events are typically a few weeks in advance in order to get group discounts and seating together. Theater tickets are handed out on the bus or in the lobby of the event site.*

### This Month:

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

**Tuesday, October 13, 11:30 am**

5901 E McKellips Rd #102, Mesa (SW corner McKellips & Recker – between Kohl's & Fry's)  
Great breakfast & lunch choices. **Sign up by Sunday, October 11<sup>th</sup>**



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

**Wednesday, October 14, 2:00-3:00 pm** (Bus leaves at 1:15 pm)

Sunshine Acres, 3405 N Higley, Mesa

No experience or talent necessary. Everyone had a blast last month (both kids & adults). No standing. No cost. All supplies provided. This month we're making a pop up card – only coloring & gluing required. **Sign up by Sunday, October 11<sup>th</sup>.**



#### **Annie** (Off Site – Bus Optional)

**Thursday, October 22, 7:30 pm** (Bus leaves at 6:30 pm)

Hale Centre Theatre, 50 W Page Ave, Gilbert

Leapin' Lizards! It's a hard-knock life for clever redheaded orphan Annie. A close escape & stroke of luck pairs her with billionaire Daddy Warbucks who pulls out all the stops to help. **Tickets are \$45; the bus (optional) is \$7.**

**Sign up by Sunday October 4<sup>th</sup>. \$45 without the bus, or \$52 with the bus.**



#### **Feed My Starving Children – Tempe Packing Facility** (Off Site – **FREE** Bus)

**Wednesday, October 28, Packing Session 9:00-11:00 am** (Bus leaves at 8:00 am)

1100 W Grove Parkway, Tempe

FMSC provides free meals for children around the world. You can stand & package food, or sit & label it. **Sign up by Sunday, October 25<sup>th</sup>.**



### Next Month:

#### **The Neil Diamond Tribute** (Off Site – Bus)

**Monday, November 2, 7:30 pm** (Bus leaves at 6:30 pm)

Hale Centre (main) Theatre [not the Concert Hall], 50 W Page Ave, Gilbert

Enjoy this brand-new tribute to Neil Diamond starring the incomparable international performer Scott Moreau as he sings all of Diamond's greatest hits such as "Sweet Caroline", "America", "Song Sung Blue", "Forever in Blue Jeans", "Hello Again", "I Am... I Said", "I'm A Believer", "Cherry Cherry", "Kentucky Woman", "Red Red Wind" & more! The show will feature a live band with backup singers. **Tickets are \$62; the bus (optional) is \$7. Sign up by Sunday October 18<sup>th</sup>. \$62 without the bus, or \$69 with the bus.**



For more information or questions, contact Judy Bailey at 480-46209521 or JudithMBailey@hotmail.com



**REFORMATION**  
Weekend  
October 24-25, 2026





**WORSHIP WITH US!**  
Saturdays 4pm  
Sundays 8am with Communion  
9:30am

**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.

**SUBSCRIBE TO WEEKLY EBLAST & MORE!**  
Scan the QR code with your smart phone's camera and tap on the link.



SCAN ME

   **SUBSCRIBE** 

 **VICTORY**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH  
5946 E. University Drive • Mesa, AZ  
480-830-5024 • VictoryLutheran.com