



St. Paul's United Methodist Church of Odessa
Reaching Up Reaching In Reaching Out
Pastor Linda Ray, 406 Main Street, Odessa, DE 302-378-2420
www.stpaulsodessa.org, CCLI 11305346 and Streaming Lic. 21184487

Twentieth Sunday After Pentecost
October 15, 2023, 8:30 AM Service, ASL & Livestreaming
WE ENTER GOD'S GATES WITH PRAISE

WELCOME WITH MUSIC AND IMAGES

GATHERING MUSIC AND PHOTOS:

Duane Dillard, Music Ministry, Mark Holden, Photographer & Curator

*GATHERING WORDS:

Liturgist – Melissa Brooks

One: What is the mind of Christ?

Many: To love and serve.

One: What is the mind of Christ?

Many: To work in God's world.

One: May this mind be in us.

Many: May it define our speaking and our acting, our coming and our going.

PRAISE AND WORSHIP:

Sanctuary

Black Hymnal 2164

*OPENING PRAYER: (all praying): **We seek your goodness, O God, for we search our hearts and find them wanting. We seek your joy, source of mirth and laughter, for our limbs are weary and our hearts are heavy. Set our minds on things that are excellent, admirable, and worthy of praise. Shine the light of your love far and wide, that the world might strive after things that are just, righteous, and true. Amen**

CHILDREN'S TIME:

Jesus Loves Me

Red Hymnal 191

Susie Cate shares a blessing with our children!

PASS THE PEACE: (safely share words and signs of blessing)

I Love You With The Love Of The Lord

Words and Music by Jim Golbert. CCLI Song #10130

I love you with the love of the Lord, yes, I love you with the love of the Lord. I can see in you the glory of my King, and I love you with the love of the Lord.

FIRST LESSON: *Exodus 32:1-14* (CEB)

The people saw that Moses was taking a long time to come down from the mountain. They gathered around Aaron and said to him, “Come on! Make us gods^[a] who can lead us. As for this man Moses who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we don't have a clue what has happened to him.”

² Aaron said to them, “All right, take out the gold rings from the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me.” ³ So all the people took out the gold rings from their ears and brought them to Aaron. ⁴ He collected them and tied them up in a cloth.^[b] Then he made a metal image of a bull calf, and the people declared, “These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!”

⁵ When Aaron saw this, he built an altar in front of the calf. Then Aaron announced, “Tomorrow will be a festival to the Lord!” ⁶ They got up early the next day and offered up entirely burned offerings and brought well-being sacrifices. The people sat down to eat and drink and then got up to celebrate.

⁷ The Lord spoke to Moses: “Hurry up and go down! Your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, are ruining everything! ⁸ They've already abandoned the path that I commanded. They have made a metal bull calf for themselves. They've bowed down to it and offered sacrifices to it and declared, ‘These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!’” ⁹ The Lord said to Moses, “I've been watching these people,

and I've seen how stubborn they are. ¹⁰ Now leave me alone! Let my fury burn and devour them. Then I'll make a great nation out of you."

¹¹ But Moses pleaded with the Lord his God, "Lord, why does your fury burn against your own people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and amazing force? ¹² Why should the Egyptians say, 'He had an evil plan to take the people out and kill them in the mountains and so wipe them off the earth'? Calm down your fierce anger. Change your mind about doing terrible things to your own people. ¹³ Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, whom you yourself promised, 'I'll make your descendants as many as the stars in the sky. And I've promised to give your descendants this whole land to possess for all time.'" ¹⁴ Then the Lord changed his mind about the terrible things he said he would do to his people.

*GOSPEL LESSON: *Matthew 22:1-14* (CEB)

Jesus responded by speaking again in parables: ² "The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding party for his son. ³ He sent his servants to call those invited to the wedding party. But they didn't want to come. ⁴ Again he sent other servants and said to them, 'Tell those who have been invited, "Look, the meal is all prepared. I've butchered the oxen and the fattened cattle. Now everything's ready. Come to the wedding party!"' ⁵ But they paid no attention and went away—some to their fields, others to their businesses. ⁶ The rest of them grabbed his servants, abused them, and killed them.

⁷ "The king was angry. He sent his soldiers to destroy those murderers and set their city on fire. ⁸ Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding party is prepared, but those who were invited weren't worthy. ⁹ Therefore, go to the roads on the edge of town and invite everyone you find to the wedding party.'

¹⁰ "Then those servants went to the roads and gathered everyone they found, both evil and good. The wedding party was full of guests. ¹¹ Now when the king came in and saw the guests, he spotted a man who wasn't wearing wedding clothes. ¹² He said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without wedding clothes?' But he was speechless. ¹³ Then the king said to his servants, 'Tie his hands and feet and throw him out into the farthest darkness. People there will be weeping and grinding their teeth.'

¹⁴ "Many people are invited, but few people are chosen."

One: May this story inspire us all. **ALL: To walk in the way that leads to life.**

HYMN OF PREPARATION: *Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us* Red Hymnal 381

THE MESSAGE: *Are We Ready To Choose?* Pastor Linda Ray

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE (*You may speak aloud your joys and concerns.*)

WE GIVE THANKS

OFFERTORY REMINDERS

Today's **Yellow Hat** mission offering supports **10/15/23 Autism Walk**.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (all praying): **Gracious and loving God, open our hearts so that we are able to admit to you the fullness of our lives – that which is beautiful and good, and that which is hurtful and hateful. We confess that we do not follow Jesus in all that we do. We love with condition. We judge and condemn. We cast the first stone, and keep the logs in our own eyes. We do not turn to You as the source of our healing. Forgive us, we pray. Forgive our sin, and empower us to be imitators of Christ in love and service. Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION: Pastor Linda Ray
Officiant Server – Melissa Brooks

Reader 2 (singing) :The Lord be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

Reader 2: Lift up your hearts.

ALL: We lift them up to the Lord.

Reader 2: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

Communion Setting 2257-a

ALL: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Reader 1: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth. In the beginning, you created us from dust. You called us to live in your image and to be of one mind. Even when we grumbled and complained, and we argued and fought, you called us to unity and love. Even when we neglected your teachings and turned away from your call, you invited us back into your vineyard of mercy and grace. And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Communion Setting 2257-b

ALL: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna in the highest!

Reader 2: Holy are you and blessed is your beloved name. In the fullness of time, you sent Christ Jesus to call us anew to abundant life, compassionate love, and unity with you and your people. With encouragement and grace, Christ calls us now to join in unity with followers around the world. May we be of one mind, live as one people, and love with the power of your grace. Through this amazing grace, we are invited to your table, welcomed in your love, and reclaimed as sisters and brothers of Christ. As children of your mercy and grace, we come with humble hearts and open minds, remembering how Jesus shared a feast of love, and how Jesus invites us even now to share this feast of love with one another.

(Lifting and breaking the bread) On the night in which he gave himself up for us he took bread, gave God thanks, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Reader 1: (Lifting the cup) When the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks to God, gave it to his disciples, and said "Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Communion Setting 2257-c

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

ALL: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again! Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna in the highest!

Communion Setting 2257-d

Reader 2: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the life and love of Christ, that we may be the body of Christ for the world, redeemed and unified by Christ's love and grace. By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet. Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever.

ALL: Amen. Amen. Amen. Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna in the highest!

Reader 2: Let us join our hearts and voices in the prayer that Jesus taught us:

Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory Forever. AMEN.

COMMUNION SONG:

Let Us Break Bread Together

Red Hymnal 618

(The congregation will come forward to partake of the bread and cup.)

OPPORTUNITIES FOR MINISTRY AND SERVICE

CLOSING MUSIC:

Shall We Gather at the River

Red Hymnal 723

SERVING IN WORSHIP TODAY

Liturgist: Melissa Brooks

Audio/Video: Charlii Miller & John Littell & John Cate & Carlotta Cline

Communion Officiant/Server: Melissa Brooks

Duane Dillard, Minister of Music, ASL Interpreter: Gail Garner

CONTACT INFORMATION

Rev. Linda Driver Ray, Pastor	lindaray@vaumc.org	(540) 207-1787
Bonnie Valeski, Admin. Asst.	bonnie@stpaulsodessa.org	(302) 378-2420
Alice Mullins, Financial/Treasurer	stpodessa@stpaulsodessa.org	(302) 293-9956
Duane Dillard, Minister of Music	duanedillard@gmail.com	(443) 593-2470
Laura Sebastiano, Director of Music Ministries	musicohl@gmail.com	(302) 480-3152
Jin Kyung Seo, Organist/Accompanist	jinksblue@gmail.com	

ANNOUNCEMENTS - THIS WEEK AT ST. PAUL'S:

Sunday 10/15	Worship Services 8:30AM ASL & Livestreaming and 11AM, Adult & Children's Bible Study/School 9:45AM
Monday 10/16	Card Ministry Mtg. 1:30PM, Men's Bible Study 9 A.M., BSA Mtg 7PM
Tuesday 10/17	ODB, Cub Scouts 6PM, Leadership Team 6:30PM
Wednesday 10/18	TOPS Mtg 6PM, Bell 6:00 PM & Choir 7:00PM Rehearsals
Thursday 10/19	Prayer & Praise Group 10AM, Directory Photograph Appts
Friday 10/20	N/A, Directory Photograph Appts
Saturday 10/21	AA Mtg 7PM, Directory Photograph Appts

ALZHEIMER'S INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION will be held on Sunday November 5th in Fellowship Hall from 2:30-3PM.

CHURCH FALL CLEAN-UP will be Saturday, October 28, 2023, from 9-12 noon. As last year, there will be index cards of tasks in Fellowship Hall that we need your help to complete, inside and outside the church. You can come by during the week prior, beginning October 23rd, to volunteer your time helping with any of those tasks.

Please bring any tools necessary for outside cleanup, i.e., rakes, gloves, clippers etc. Trucks and trailers needed to haul yardwaste away. If you cannot physically help, donations of donuts, snacks, juice and water are much appreciated for our helpers. *Monetary donations for mulch are very much needed for our outside areas.* Please see Barbara Lynn Manlove with questions or direction. Last year everyone really did a great job of pulling together and the church and grounds looked wonderful.

DIRECTORY NEWS: Just a friendly reminder that our pictorial directory photo dates are fast approaching! We will be having family photography October 19, 20, and 21, 2023 in Fellowship Hall. Appointment times are filling up so schedule your time if you haven't already. Just for participating you will receive a complimentary 8X10 portrait and a church directory. You will view your images right away and have the opportunity to purchase family portraits. Our directory wouldn't be complete without you.

You can make an appointment for morning, afternoon or evening hours, by clicking on the link www.ucdir.com, User Name: **DE111** Password: **photos**. **There will also be volunteers beginning September 17th before and after Church services in Fellowship Hall** to help you sign up for your photo times. Any questions can be directed to Carole Harmon at car.har416@gmail.com or Karen Ellis (after September 14th) at ilvubrmuda@gmail.com. We look forward to seeing you there!

FINANCE NEWS: From Hap Bonham/ Finance Chair Financial Report: As of August 31

	Actual	Budget	
Income	\$163,071.91	\$230,672.00	71%
Expenses	\$168,465.20	\$146,295.00	68%

Keep in mind the budget has a \$15,120 deficit.

Disbursement Vouchers. Our auditor, Eileen Parton, has relayed a gentle reminder that all Disbursement Vouchers need to be completed in full, with receipts attached, and must have a signature before payment can be made. Also, reimbursement requests need to be submitted to Alice Mullins/Finance, within 2 weeks from the date of the receipt. Thank you!

BIRTHDAYS: October 16 – Lulu Calbazana; October 17 – Jacob Geer; October 19 – Cathy Blanco; October 20 – Nancy Judd.

ANNIVERSARIES: October 15 – Joe & Kathy Chas, Keith & Meghan Sydnor; October 16 – Gene & Kenzel Messick.

PRAYER REQUEST BOX is available in the Narthex along with the prayer request cards. Just complete the form, fold, and drop in the box on the corner shelf located at the second set of doors into Fellowship Hall.

PRAYERS FOR: Noel Lukens, Sue Holden's sister, Betsey Snipes, David Dudgeon, Dorothy Dudgeon, Carolyn Akin, Linda Botsford's father, Joe Chas, Jonathan Brooks, Ginny Lewis, Mary Ingram's friend Maureen, John Guy, Maria Gregors, Rick Wooters, Levi Schrum and family, Matthew Smith, Marilyn Hendershot, Allison, Dennis Downes, Angela Christian's mother – Mala, Ryan, Ty Somersshield – cousin to Don Mueller, Jeffrey & Cheryl Martin, Paul & Lois Loder on the sudden passing of their son, Craig Loder, Music Director of Calvary Baptist Church in Winchester, Tenn., Carolyn Stanley's friends -Ron and Gail Wallace and their daughter and son-in-law, Jessica and Chris, in the sudden passing of Fighting Finn, Nancy-sister of Alice Rizzo, Joe Chas, Nancy Judd.

Upcoming Yellow Hat Schedule for October 2023

10/01/23 World Communion Sunday

10/08/23 Friendship House (Robin Cross)

10/15/23 Autism Walk

10/22/23 Our Daily Bread

10/29/23 Congo Partnership

Please make sure ALL checks are made payable to St. Paul's UMC, including checks for the Yellow Hat missions, writing the organization's name on the memo line.

All donations are collected, recorded, entered in the system, and deposited into the Church's operating account on a weekly basis. Also, on a weekly basis, a check is mailed to the specified yellow hat organization for the total amount collected.

It is very important that donations be placed in the offering plate, yellow hat or mailed to St. Paul's UMC. You are also welcome to drop off donations in the grey box just inside the side door to the Church, making sure it is secured in an envelope with your name on the front. This is to guarantee acknowledgement of your donations when the yearly contribution statement is sent for tax purposes.

Thank you all for your continued support for St. Paul's as we are growing in our faith through generosity.

Alice Mullins, Treasurer



ST. PAUL'S
United Methodist Church of Odessa
Reaching Up, Reaching In, Reaching Out

St. Paul's Mission Statement

Reaching Up to praise God in vibrant worship

God calls us to live out our discipleship grounded in Christ's awakening us to the glory and majesty of God in all creation, and we respond together by worshiping God with our gratitude and praise. Standing or lifting our hands high are both ancient postures of worship, and so our dance of discipleship involves reaching up with our hearts, souls, and bodies, lost in wonder, love, and praise.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him, bless his name. For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.

Psalms 100:4-5 (NRSV)

Reaching In to deepen our spiritual walk with Christ

Christ accepts us as we are, and then calls us to follow him and learn from him, growing in our spiritual walk-through practices the church calls spiritual disciplines: prayer, fasting, meditation, studying God's Word, individually and with others. As we grow in the knowledge of God, we discover more about the extraordinary plans God has for our lives.

"If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

John 8:31-32 (NRSV)

Reaching Out with acts of love and compassion

Here's where it all comes together! Assured of God's eternal love, strengthened by the grace and knowledge of Christ, we are ready for the Holy Spirit to kindle a fire in our lives, gifting us for the labor of love God has prepared for us to accomplish. Having fallen in love with God, we love and serve our neighbors.

"Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."

Matthew 25:40 (NRSV)

MISSIONS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

WEEKLY GATHERINGS – CHURCH BUILDING

OFFICE HOURS Tuesday -Thursday, 9 AM-2 PM

- Boy Scouts –Mondays 7-8:30 PM
- Cub Scouts –Tuesdays 6-8 PM
- TOPS Meeting – Wednesdays 6 PM.
- St. Paul's Prayer and Praise Group Ministry – Thursdays 10 AM @Carole Harmon's Home
- St. Paul's Handbell Rehearsal – Wednesdays 6 PM
- St. Paul's Choir Rehearsal – Wednesdays 7 PM
- AA Meeting – Saturdays 7 PM

MONTHLY GATHERINGS

- Finance Meeting – 2nd Monday 6:30 PM
- Trustees Meeting – 2nd Tuesday 6:30 PM
- SPRC Meeting – 4th Thursday 6:30 PM
- Leadership Meeting – 3rd Tuesday 6:30 PM
- PFLAG Meeting – 3rd Thursday 6:30 PM
- Reconciling Ministries – TBD

Reconciling Ministries Informational Meetings - TBD

Adult Bible Study will resume Sunday, September 17, 2023 at 9:45AM.

Children's Sunday School will resume Sunday, September 17, 2023 at 9:45AM.

Men's Bible Study will convene on Mondays (October 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30) at 9:00 AM to study the Word and be fed. Hope to see you there. Hap

Flowers for Worship

If you are interested in honoring a loved one with flowers at the altar on a particular Sunday, we are asking you to contact Alicia Blackwell, from Wildflowers by Alicia to place your order. Alicia can be reached at (302) 593-9884. Also, please email the church office so we make sure the information is added in the bulletin.

Compassionate Card Ministry

The Compassionate Card Ministry is made up of 20 dedicated members of our congregation who create hand-made cards and encouraging messages to those in our directory, within our congregation, those on our prayer lists and others who are brought to our attention. Our purpose is to spread kindness and love to others through uplifting and personalized sentiments on hand-made cards. If you are not in our directory and would like to be added to our list, or if you know someone who would benefit from the blessing of a card, please contact Nancee Bleistine, nbleistine@yahoo.com or 609-217-1924.

Prayer and Praise Group Ministry

Carole Harmon hosts a prayer circle, currently Thursday mornings at 10 AM - in person. Please contact Carole if you are interested in joining the group or have a special prayer request. You can also find prayer request cards and box on the corner shelf in the Narthex.

VANCO: Manage Your Giving Online

Giving online is easy and allows you to set up automatic recurring contributions and view your complete online giving history from anywhere you have access to the Internet. Simply follow these easy steps:

- 1) Visit the church website at www.stpaulsodessa.org and click on the VANCO Online Giving button to the left of the screen.
- 3) Click on the Link to Online Giving thru VANCO button, then
- 4) Follow the onscreen instructions to create an online profile and to schedule your RECURRING CONTRIBUTIONS.

Love Thy Neighbor Fund

Our "Love Thy Neighbor Fund" was created to help those in need in the MOT community. This fund may support a time in someone's life when he/she may need a little kindness and generosity to help endure and survive a challenging situation. If you can donate, please make checks payable to St. Paul's UMC and then write in the memo area it is for "Love Thy Neighbor Fund." Please note, this fund is SEPARATE from the Yellow Hat. Thank you, Love Thy Neighbor Committee

Deep Roots

Nadine Johnson & Karen Ellis continue to work with the "Deep Roots" mission. This group works with families who are disconnected through homelessness and provides transitional shelter and other services to families in need. They need your help as they continue to contact members of the church to help with making meals once a month feeding approximately 50+ individuals. Here's hoping you will be able to help us with this very important and necessary mission. Thanks so much! Contact Karen Ellis at iluvbrmuda@gmail.com and Nadine Johnson at nadine.faye.johnson@gmail.com

Our Daily Bread Food Donations

214 N Broad St, Middletown, DE 19709

Volunteers Needed – day and evening hours and different areas of need, filling bags, handing out meals, etc. Volunteer Opportunities can be found at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10COE4FAEA82CA3F5CF8-volunteer>. Contact Sue Holden, Missions Co-Chair, at 802-324-6167, susieq2951@aol.com, with any

questions. Also, find information and volunteer sign-up forms on the website,

<https://www.ourdailybreadmot.com>. **On-line Training Coming Soon!**

ODB is most thankful to all who donate either monetarily or in kind. Your generosity helps ODB feed those in our community who are facing food insecurity. Listed below are the items needed to stuff our side bags and other items that are needed on a regular basis. Donations can be dropped off on Tuesday from 9:15 to 11:30AM

- Individual bottles of water
- Individual bags of salty snacks
- Individual packets of sweet snacks
- Individual fruit cups and/or applesauce
- Fresh fruit (apples, bananas, oranges)
- Boxes of breakfast cereal
- Boxes of mashed potatoes
- White bread
- Baked beans (large cans)
- Gallon size zip-loc bags
- Lg black garbage bags
- Cans of soup

Thank you for any and all kindness!

Neighborhood House

Neighborhood House really appreciates St. Paul's ongoing support in so many ways. At this point, we are low on some items in the food pantry. These items are especially needed right now in our food pantry, though all donations are gladly accepted with the inventory being low now.

Currently we are really low on personal hygiene products as well as some food items:

- 1. Bottled water**
- 2. Toilet paper, Toothpaste, Soap, Shampoo & conditioner**
- 3. Peanut butter & jelly (medium size)**
- 4. Pasta sauce**
- 5. Tuna/Tuna Helper**
- 6. Hamburger Helper**

These non-perishables are needed to keep our pantry stocked:

Chef Boyardee, beef stew, Spam ,pancake mix/syrup, snacks - cookies, crackers etc.

ADDITIONALLY, THERE IS ALWAYS A NEED FOR ADULT SIZED DISPOSABLE DIAPERS AS WELL AS FOR BABIES/CHILDREN IN SIZES 4, 5, AND 6, AND WIPES. WE HAVE NUMEROUS MOMS WITH BABIES AND TODDLERS WHO TAKE THEIR MONEY FOR FOOD AND BILLS TO BUY THEM.

Donations can be left inside the Church. We look forward to another great year working together to feed the hungry. Thanks to all, Marilyn Hendershot, Family Services Specialist, Neighborhood House, Inc.

PFLAG Meeting

Meetings are held at 6:30 PM on the 3rd Thursday of each month, presently via Zoom. Please join us if you would like to be supported or offer support and please spread the word to all corners of our communities. We are currently working on a system which will help youth who have been rejected by their parents, find families who will help them. Please contact Mark Holden, (Mark@maholden.com) or call 802-279-8100.

JOYS & CONCERNS: If you know someone, you'd like to add to our prayer list, please email the church office or visit the church website (www.stpaulsodessa.org) to complete a prayer request. **There is also a Prayer Box in the Narthex in which you can drop your completed request.** Please email the office when someone can be taken OFF the list. If you or a loved one needs a pastoral visit, please call or email the church office to schedule.