



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

Twenty-first Sunday After Pentecost Laity Sunday

October 22, 2023 11:00 AM Service
WE ENTER GOD'S GATES WITH PRAISE
WELCOME WITH MUSIC AND IMAGES
Mark Holden, Photographer & Curator

GREETING

*CALL TO WORSHIP:

Liturgist – Rick Pulling

One: We are called to hold tight to words that bring life.

Many: We know God is speaking good news through scripture, song, and neighbors, both known and new to us.

One: We listen for grace at work in everything, for good, for life.

Many: We know wise words serve Love's purpose.

One: In all we say and do, we are learning what it means to be faithful – as those called “to serve and witness in deeds and words that heal and free.”

Many: We thank God for the good news of Jesus' love and healing words of life.

*OPENING HYMN:

Forward Through The Ages

Red Hymnal 555

*OPENING PRAYER (all praying): **O Lord, we recall the words of your Son when he said, "I came not to be served, but to serve." He saw our needs and he ministered to us in love. We thank you for calling us to follow in his footsteps. We ask you to work through us, and help us always to work for you. Keep our eyes open to the possibilities around us; grant us strength and courage to serve Christ and others. In Christ's name we pray. Amen**

CHILDREN'S TIME:

God Is So Good v. 1-2

Black Hymnal 2056

Adrienne Dillard, Certified Candidate for Ministry shares a blessing with our children!

FIRST LESSON: *Exodus 33:12-23* (CEB)

Moses said to the Lord, “Look, you’ve been telling me, ‘Lead these people forward.’ But you haven’t told me whom you will send with me. Yet you’ve assured me, ‘I know you by name and think highly of you.’¹³ Now if you do think highly of me, show me your ways so that I may know you and so that you may really approve of me. Remember too that this nation is your people.”¹⁴ The Lord replied, “I’ll go myself, and I’ll help you.”

¹⁵ Moses replied, “If you won’t go yourself, don’t make us leave here. ¹⁶ Because how will anyone know that we have your special approval, both I and your people, unless you go with us? Only that distinguishes us, me and your people, from every other people on the earth.”

¹⁷ The Lord said to Moses, “I’ll do exactly what you’ve asked because you have my special approval, and I know you by name.” ¹⁸ Moses said, “Please show me your glorious presence.”

¹⁹ The Lord said, “I’ll make all my goodness pass in front of you, and I’ll proclaim before you the name, ‘The Lord.’ I will be kind to whomever I wish to be kind, and I will have compassion to whomever I wish to be compassionate. ²⁰ But,” the Lord said, “you can’t see my face because no one can see me and live.” ²¹ The Lord said, “Here is a place near me where you will stand beside the rock. ²² As my glorious presence passes by, I’ll set you in a gap in the rock, and I’ll cover you with my hand until I’ve passed by. ²³ Then I’ll take away my hand, and you will see my back, but my face won’t be visible.”

*GOSPEL LESSON: *Matthew 22:15-22* (CEB)

Then the Pharisees met together to find a way to trap Jesus in his words. ¹⁶ They sent their disciples, along with the supporters of Herod, to him. “Teacher,” they said, “we know that you are genuine and that you teach God’s way as it really is. We know that you are not swayed by people’s opinions, because you don’t show favoritism. ¹⁷ So tell us what you think: Does the Law allow people to pay taxes to Caesar or not?”

¹⁸ Knowing their evil motives, Jesus replied, “Why do you test me, you hypocrites? ¹⁹ Show me the coin used to pay the tax.” And they brought him a denarion. ²⁰ “Whose image and inscription is this?” he asked.

²¹ “Caesar’s,” they replied. Then he said, “Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God.” ²² When they heard this they were astonished, and they departed.

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

THE MESSAGE:

“Forgiveness”

Melissa Brooks, Certified Lay Servant

WE GIVE THANKS

OFFERTORY PRAYER: Holy One, bless those who receive these gifts. Bless our words, our actions, and our gifts, that they may be blessings for your world. And bless these offerings and this time of worship, even as you strengthen this community of faith and the ministries of this church. Amen

THE OFFERTORY: Today’s **Yellow Hat** mission offering supports **10/22/23 Our Daily Bread**.

CHORAL ANTHEM:

Chancel Choir

*THE DOXOLOGY:

Red Hymnal 95

GATHERING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Janet Miller, Certified Lay Servant

PRAYER OF CONFESSION: **God, I stand before you equipped for every good work and not working. I haven't responded to itching ears about your sound doctrine. I haven't told your truth or shared your word, and I have allowed your people to wander away. Forgive, me Lord for my idleness. Now, right, now, I turn back to you and will speak your word of love, hope, and faith as I work in ministry fully to glorify your name. Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION:

Pastor Linda Ray

Officiant Server – Mark Holden, Local Church Lay Leader

Reader 1: The Lord be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

Reader 1: Lift up your hearts.

ALL: We lift them up to the Lord.

Reader 1: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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:

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

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!

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 in 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.

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

Our Father, who 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.

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

PRAYER AFTER RECEIVING

Pastor Linda Ray

WE GO IN THE SPIRIT!

OPPORTUNITIES FOR MINISTRY AND SERVICE

SENDING HYMN: *Grace Alone*

Black Hymnal 2162

POSTLUDE

SERVING IN WORSHIP TODAY

Liturgist: Rick Pulling

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

Communion Officiant/Server: Mark Holden

Ushers: Ellie & Dick Leuliette, John & Patti Harmer, June Stemmler, John Harmon, Denis Shaffer, Laura Widger

ASL Interpreter: Gail Garner

Director of Music Ministries: Thomas Maloney, Accompanist: Jin Kyung Seo

CONTACT INFORMATION

Rev. Linda Driver Ray, Pastor
Bonnie Valeski, Admin. Asst.
Alice Mullins, Financial/Treasurer
Duane Dillard, Minister of Music
Thomas Maloney, Director of Music
Jin Kyung Seo, Organist/Accompanist

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ANNOUNCEMENTS - THIS WEEK AT ST. PAUL'S:

Sunday 10/22	Worship Services 8:30AM ASL & Livestreaming and 11AM, Adult & Children's Bible Study/School 9:45AM
Monday 10/23	Men's Bible Study 9 AM, BSA Mtg 7PM
Tuesday 10/24	ODB, Cub Scouts 6PM
Wednesday 10/25	TOPS Mtg 6PM, Bell 6:00 PM & Choir 7:00PM Rehearsals
Thursday 10/26	Prayer & Praise Group 10AM, PFLAG 6:30
Friday 10/27	N/A
Saturday 10/28	Fall Clean-up 9AM-12PM, Halloween in the Odessa Park 2-4PM, AA Mtg 7PM

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.

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 24 – Quest Reeves; October 25 – Kiersten O'Hop; October 26 – Angela Christian, Kami Morris; October 27 – Dawn Buckworth, Andrew Shaffer, Randy Spence.

ANNIVERSARIES: N/A

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, 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 Somersfield – cousin to Don Mueller, Jeffrey & Cheryl Martin, 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

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.