



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](http://www.stpaulsodessa.org), CCLI 11305346 and Streaming Lic. 21184487

## Twenty-fourth Sunday After Pentecost Veterans Day Sunday

November 12, 2023 11:00 AM Service

WE ENTER GOD'S GATES WITH PRAISE

WELCOME WITH MUSIC AND IMAGES

Mark Holden & June Stemmler, Photographer & Curator

### GREETING

\*CALL TO WORSHIP:

Liturgist – Lynda Whitehead

One: God is from everlasting to everlasting.

Many: **The Holy One inhabits all eternity and everything that is or was, or ever will be.**

One: God is the source, guide and goal of our lives.

Many: **We acknowledge God as the center of our lives, and of our world, not ourselves.**

One: We come today to worship God.

Many: **We come with thanks and praise.**

One: Let us humble ourselves before God's holy presence.

Many: **May God teach us the ways of life.**

\*OPENING HYMN:

*Eternal Father Strong To Save*

Black Hymnal 2191

\*OPENING PRAYER (all praying): **In the stillness of this moment, awaken us to the astonishing truth that your love is like the celebratory love of a couple on their wedding day. Help us choose again to live in your love. Help us to choose holy joy again. Help us to choose the Risen Christ again. O God, you are the hope of all the ends of the earth, the God of the spirits of all flesh. Remove from minds hatred, prejudice, and contempt for those who are not like us. Help us to depart from everything that divides so that we may be brought into unity of spirit and into your bond of peace. Open our eyes to those who suffer and help us to offer God's love and hope with lavish generosity. Help us to yield every aspect of our lives to your divine rule. Amen**

CHILDREN'S TIME:

*Seek Ye First*

Red Hymnal 405

Courtney Martin shares a blessing with our children!

FIRST LESSON: *Joshua 24:1-3a, 14-25*

Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel at Shechem. He summoned the elders of Israel, its leaders, judges, and officers. They presented themselves before God. 2 Then Joshua said to the entire people, "This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: Long ago your ancestors lived on the other side of the Euphrates. They served other gods. Among them was Terah the father of Abraham and Nahor. 3 I took Abraham your ancestor from the other side of the Euphrates. I led him around through the whole land of Canaan. I added to his descendants and gave him Isaac.

14 "So now, revere the Lord. Serve him honestly and faithfully. Put aside the gods that your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates and in Egypt and serve the Lord. 15 But if it seems wrong in your opinion to serve the Lord, then choose today whom you will serve. Choose the gods whom your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you live. But my family and I will serve the Lord."

16 Then the people answered, "God forbid that we ever leave the Lord to serve other gods! 17 The Lord is our God. He is the one who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. He has done these mighty signs in our sight. He has protected us the whole way we've gone and in all the nations

through which we've passed. 18 The Lord has driven out all the nations before us, including the Amorites who lived in the land. We too will serve the Lord, because he is our God."

19 Then Joshua said to the people, "You can't serve the Lord, because he is a holy God. He is a jealous God. He won't forgive your rebellion and your sins. 20 If you leave the Lord and serve foreign gods, then he will turn around and do you harm and finish you off, in spite of having done you good in the past."

21 Then the people said to Joshua, "No! The Lord is the one we will serve." 22 So Joshua said to the people, "You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen to serve the Lord." They said, "We are witnesses!"

23 "So now put aside the foreign gods that are among you. Focus your hearts on the Lord, the God of Israel." 24 The people said to Joshua, "We will serve the Lord our God and will obey him." 25 On that day Joshua made a covenant for the people and established just rule for them at Shechem.

HYMN OF PREPARATION: *Surely The Presence* Red Hymnal 328

\*GOSPEL LESSON: *Matthew 25:1-13*

"At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten young bridesmaids who took their lamps and went out to meet the groom. <sup>2</sup> Now five of them were wise, and the other five were foolish. <sup>3</sup> The foolish ones took their lamps but didn't bring oil for them. <sup>4</sup> But the wise ones took their lamps and also brought containers of oil.

<sup>5</sup> "When the groom was late in coming, they all became drowsy and went to sleep. <sup>6</sup> But at midnight there was a cry, 'Look, the groom! Come out to meet him.' <sup>7</sup> "Then all those bridesmaids got up and prepared their lamps. <sup>8</sup> But the foolish bridesmaids said to the wise ones, 'Give us some of your oil, because our lamps have gone out.' <sup>9</sup> "But the wise bridesmaids replied, 'No, because if we share with you, there won't be enough for our lamps and yours. We have a better idea. You go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.' <sup>10</sup> But while they were gone to buy oil, the groom came. Those who were ready went with him into the wedding. Then the door was shut. <sup>11</sup> "Later the other bridesmaids came and said, 'Lord, lord, open the door for us.'

<sup>12</sup> "But he replied, 'I tell you the truth, I don't know you.' <sup>13</sup> "Therefore, keep alert, because you don't know the day or the hour.

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

THE MESSAGE: "Be Prepared To Wait" Pastor Linda Ray

### WE GIVE THANKS

OFFERTORY PRAYER:

THE OFFERTORY: Today's **Yellow Hat** mission offering supports **11/12/23 Adopt-A-Family (Brenda Shaffer)**.

CHORAL ANTHEM: *May the Peace of the Lord Be With You Today* by Kevin McChesney Chancel Choir

\*THE DOXOLOGY: Red Hymnal 95

GATHERING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

PRAYER OF CONFESSION: )): **Christ Jesus, we want to believe in your kingdom, a kingdom that is already, but not yet in our midst. We want to trust that you haven't forgotten us. We want to wake up and choose to live our lives inside the rule of your love. We want to hope. We want to offer wisdom and encouragement to the generations to come. But we need your help. In your mercy, hear our prayers. Amen**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION: Pastor Linda Ray  
Officiant Server- Lynda Whitehead

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. God of Abraham and Sarah, God of Miriam and Moses, God of Joshua and Deborah, God of Ruth and David, God of the priests and the prophets, God of Mary and Joseph, God of the apostles and the martyrs, God of our mothers and our fathers, God of our children to all generations. 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 Son Jesus Christ. By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection you gave birth to your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

(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 body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood. Renew our communion with all your saints, especially those whom we name before you. Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, strengthen us to run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the Pioneer and Perfecter of our faith. 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. Also please take a moment to light a candle(s) for those you are remembering this day.)*

PRAYER AFTER RECEIVING

**WE GO IN THE SPIRIT!**

OPPORTUNITIES FOR MINISTRY AND SERVICE

SENDING HYMN:

*When We All Get To Heaven*

Red Hymnal 701

POSTLUDE

## SERVING IN WORSHIP TODAY

Liturgist: Lynda Whitehead

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

Communion Officiant/Server: Lynda Whitehead

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

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Alice Mullins, Financial/Treasurer

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Duane Dillard, Minister of Music

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(443) 593-2470

Thomas Maloney, Director of Music

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Jin Kyung Seo, Organist/Accompanist

[jinksblue@gmail.com](mailto:jinksblue@gmail.com)

### ANNOUNCEMENTS - THIS WEEK AT ST. PAUL'S:

<b>Sunday 11/12</b>	<b>Worship Services 8:30AM ASL &amp; Livestreaming and 11AM, Adult &amp; Children's Bible Study/School 9:45AM.</b>
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<b>Monday 11/13</b>	<b>BSA Mtg 7PM, Finance Mtg 6:30PM</b>
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<b>Tuesday 11/14</b>	<b>ODB, Cub Scouts 6PM</b>
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<b>Wednesday 11/15</b>	<b>TOPS Mtg 6PM, Bell 6PM &amp; Choir 7PM Rehearsals</b>
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<b>Thursday 11/16</b>	<b>Prayer &amp; Praise Group 10AM, Pflag Mtg 6:30PM</b>
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<b>Friday 11/17</b>	<b>N/A</b>
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<b>Saturday 11/18</b>	<b>Charge Conf @Dale Methodist Church 1PM, AA Mtg 7PM</b>
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**STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY: November 19<sup>th</sup>. PLEDGE CARDS** can be brought to services, please be sure to put them in sealed envelopes for confidentiality purposes! They will be collected and given to Alice Mullins, Treasurer, for recording. Any questions can be directed to Alice. They can also be dropped off to the Church Office, put in the gray Collection Box at the back door, or mailed in. Again, be sure to put them in a sealed envelope to Alice Mullins.

**The Time and Talent Survey cards can be given to Pastor Linda Ray directly.**

**BIRTHDAYS:** November 12 – Nancy Weldin; November 13 – Ryan Ellis; November 15 – Stephen Blanco; November 16 – Rob Baker; November 18 – Alexa Rodriguez. **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, Raja, Ty Somersfield – cousin to Don Mueller, Jeffrey & Cheryl Martin, Nancy- sister of Alice Rizzo, family and friends of Joe Chas, Nancy Judd, Doris Uhde, Liz Ravilious – Carl Ravilious' step-mother, Ethan Porter, Janet Miller, Bruce Ray, Diana on the loss of her son, Anthony.

### Upcoming Yellow Hat Schedule for November 2023

**11/05/23** Colette W Bleistine-Paying it Forward Foundation by Nance Bleistine

**11/12/23** Adopt-A-Family (Brenda Shaffer & Youth)

**11/19/23** Premier Charities/Charity Waters (Carlotta Cline)

**11/26/23** United Methodist Student Day

*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 – 1<sup>st</sup> Monday 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

**Adult Bible Study** 9:45AM--hybrid

**Children’s Sunday School** 9:45AM.

### **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](mailto: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](http://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](mailto:iluvbrmuda@gmail.com) and Nadine Johnson at [nadine.faye.johnson@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://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.