



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

Transfiguration Sunday
February 11, 2024, 8:30 AM Service
WE ENTER GOD'S GATES WITH PRAISE

WELCOME WITH MUSIC AND IMAGES

GATHERING MUSIC AND PHOTOS:

Duane Dillard Music Ministry, Mark Holden - Photographer & Curator, Cathy Blanco – Liturgist

GATHERING WORDS

One: As we live and as God lives,

Many: God will not leave us.

One: When the world changes around us,

Many: God will not leave us.

One: When we long to speak but find no words,

Many: God will not leave us.

One: As we live and as God lives,

Many: we worship the One who will not leave us.

PRAISE AND WORSHIP:

Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory

Red Hymnal 717

*OPENING PRAYER: (all praying): **Holy One, when the world is full of confusion and your message is hard to perceive, still we can see you. Still your presence shines, a light to illuminate the shadows. When we cannot find a way to speak your story, let your being shine in us and through us, that we may reflect your glory, and your grace. Amen**

CHILDREN'S TIME:

Peace for the Children

Green Hymnal 3125

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: *2 Kings 2:1-12 (CEB)*

Now the Lord was going to take Elijah up to heaven in a windstorm, and Elijah and Elisha were leaving Gilgal. ²Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here, because the Lord has sent me to Bethel."

But Elisha said, "As the Lord lives and as you live, I won't leave you." So they went down to Bethel.

³The group of prophets from Bethel came out to Elisha. These prophets said to Elisha, "Do you know that the Lord is going to take your master away from you today?" Elisha said, "Yes, I know. Don't talk about it!"

⁴Elijah said, "Elisha, stay here, because the Lord has sent me to Jericho."

But Elisha said, "As the Lord lives and as you live, I won't leave you." So they went to Jericho.

⁵The group of prophets from Jericho approached Elisha and said to him, "Do you know that the Lord is going to take your master away from you today?" He said, "Yes, I know. Don't talk about it!" ⁶Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here, because the Lord has sent me to the Jordan." But Elisha said, "As the Lord lives and as you live, I won't leave you." So both of them went on together. ⁷Fifty members from the group of prophets also went along,

but they stood at a distance. Both Elijah and Elisha stood beside the Jordan River. ⁸Elijah then took his coat, rolled it up, and hit the water. Then the water was divided in two! Both of them crossed over on dry ground. ⁹When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, “What do you want me to do for you before I’m taken away from you?”

Elisha said, “Let me have twice your spirit.” ¹⁰Elijah said, “You’ve made a difficult request. If you can see me when I’m taken from you, then it will be yours. If you don’t see me, it won’t happen.” ¹¹They were walking along, talking, when suddenly a fiery chariot and fiery horses appeared and separated the two of them. Then Elijah went to heaven in a windstorm.

¹²Elisha was watching, and he cried out, “Oh, my father, my father! Israel’s chariots and its riders!” When he could no longer see him, Elisha took hold of his clothes and ripped them in two.

*GOSPEL LESSON: *Mark 9:2-9 (CEB)*

Six days later Jesus took Peter, James, and John, and brought them to the top of a very high mountain where they were alone. He was transformed in front of them, and his clothes were amazingly bright, brighter than if they had been bleached white. ⁴Elijah and Moses appeared and were talking with Jesus. ⁵Peter reacted to all of this by saying to Jesus, “Rabbi, it’s good that we’re here. Let’s make three shrines—one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” ⁶He said this because he didn’t know how to respond, for the three of them were terrified. ⁷Then a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice spoke from the cloud, “This is my Son, whom I dearly love. Listen to him!” ⁸Suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus. ⁹As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them not to tell anyone what they had seen until after the Human One had risen from the dead.

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

HYMN OF PREPARATION: *He Is Exalted* Black Hymnal 2070

THE MESSAGE: “Crossing Over” 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 support to *Souper Bowl Sunday – Maggie McCombs (Kathy Chas)*.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (all praying): **God of life, you never stop shining. Yet sometimes we forget to keep looking. It is not always easy to remember to keep our eyes on you. We long for you O God, especially when we have wandered away and want to come home. Entrust us with a double portion of your Spirit when we need it most, when we don’t even know that we need it, when we have no words to ask. Forgive us, we pray and bring us home. Amen**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION: Pastor Linda Ray
Officiant Server – Cathy Blanco

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.

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. Before the mountains were brought forth, or you had formed the earth, from everlasting to everlasting, you alone are God. You created light out of darkness and brought forth life on the earth. You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life. When we turned away, and our love failed, your love remained steadfast, You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God, and spoke to us through your prophets. 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-a

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: You sent Jesus to us, the light of the world. Jesus promised that those who followed him would never walk in darkness, but would have the light of life. The light of his life shone on all people, revealing the truth of your love. Jesus fed the hungry, cured the sick, ate with sinners, and proclaimed your truth.

(Lifting the bread) Before Jesus was betrayed, he gathered with his friends for a meal. Taking the bread, Jesus gave thanks to you and broke it. He gave it to his friends, saying, "Take and eat. I am with you now and forever. Let this meal feed you. Remember me as you eat."

Reader 1: (Lifting the cup) When the supper was over, Jesus took the cup, blessed it, and shared it with his followers, saying, "This is the cup of the new covenant, given for the forgiveness of sins. It is a gift for you and for all people. It is my love offered for you. Drink of this and remember 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:

Communion Setting 2257-c

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

Reader 2: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and cup that they may be for us the living presence of Jesus Christ, light of the world, our hope for all creation. Make us one with Jesus, and one with each other, as we walk in the light, singing your praises. Through Jesus Christ, light of the world, and through the Holy Spirit, radiance divine, all praise is yours, eternal God, now and forever, world without end.

Communion Setting 2257-d

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 God continues to teach 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: *Lord, I Want to be A Christian* Red Hymnal 402

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

OPPORTUNITIES FOR MINISTRY AND SERVICE

CLOSING MUSIC: *This Little Light of Mine* Red Hymnal 585

SERVING IN WORSHIP TODAY

Liturgist: Cathy Blanco

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

Communion Officiant/Server: Cathy Blanco

Duane Dillard, Music Ministry

CONTACT INFORMATION

Rev. Linda Driver Ray, Pastor
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ANNOUNCEMENTS - THIS WEEK AT ST. PAUL'S:

Sunday 02/11	Worship Services 8:30AM and 11AM ASL & Livestreaming, Adult & Children's Bible Study, Souper Bowl Sunday
Monday 02/12	Boy Scouts 7PM
Tuesday 02/13	ODB, Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, 5:30 -7 PM Tree of Life Church, Cub Scouts 6PM
Wednesday 02/14	TOPS Mtg 6PM, Deep Roots 4:30PM, 5 PM Confirmation, Ash Wednesday Service 7PM- Tree of Life Church
Thursday 02/15	10AM Prayer and Praise Group
Friday 02/16	N/A
Saturday 02/17	Methodist Men's Breakfast 8:00AM, District Conference, 9 a.m. – Whatcoat UMC, Dover AA Mtg 7PM

LENTEN SERVICES: Ash Wednesday Service--St. Paul's and Tree of Life at Tree of Life, Feb. 14--7 p.m.

Each Wednesday, beginning Feb. 21 there will be a soup lunch and Bible study as a combined effort with Tree of Life. The first three will be at Tree of Life, the last three will be at St. Paul's. The topic will be "Holy Lament" and will look at grief and struggle from a biblical and a personal perspective.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, Tuesday, Feb. 13 5:30-7 p.m. at Tree of Life.

METHODIST MEN'S BREAKFAST: 8:00am Saturday February 17th, St. Paul's UMC, 406 Main St, Odessa DE, any questions contact Mark, mark@maholden.com, 802-279-8100.

THE NEXT JOY EVENT: will be held on Saturday, March 2nd. We will be touring Barratt's Chapel & Museum of Methodism in Frederica, DE, beginning at 10:00 am. Details about carpooling and lunch afterwards will be forthcoming; however, we need to know if you are interested in joining us. If so, please contact Nadine @ nadine.faye.johnson@gmail.com or Karen @ illuvbrmuda@gmail.com by Monday, February 26th.

FINANCE: To Date: Stewardship 2023 for 2024 Budget, 74 Pledges = \$204,230. This year, we budgeted \$206,000 for pledged income and we are so close! A HUGE thanks to ALL who are pledging their support of St. Paul's with their financial gifts.

BIRTHDAYS: February 13- Tori Morris; February 17 – Brian McNelis

ANNIVERSARIES: February 11 -Bruce & Rev. Linda Ray; February 12 – Richard & Joyce Nelson; February 13 – Paul & Lois Loder; February 14 – Gail Garner & John St. Jean; February 17 – John & Patricia Harmer

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, David Dudgeon, Dorothy Dudgeon, Carolyn Akin, Jonathan Brooks, Mary Ingram's friend Maureen, John Guy, Maria Gregors, Levi Schrum and family, Matthew Smith, Marilyn Hendershot, Allison, Dennis Downes, Ty Somersshield – cousin to Don Mueller, Jeffrey & Cheryl Martin, Nancy- sister of Alice Rizzo, Liz Ravilious – Carl Ravilious' step-mother, Ethan Porter, George, Dylan Green, Chris Chappelle, Blain Shoun, Sally Sutton's neighbor – Dottie, Kevin Quiveors – Al Calbazanna's brother-in-law, Thomas Maloney's mother, Mary Ingram's mother-in-law, John Littell, Steve Johnson, Faye Taylor's nephew, and Brenda Shaffer's nephew.

Upcoming Yellow Hat Schedule for February 2024

02/04/2024 MOT Rise Against Hunger

02/11/2024 Souper Bowl Sunday/Maggie McCombs (Kathy Chas)

02/18/2024 American Heart Association

02/25/2024 UMCOR International for Turkey and Syria Relief Fund

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 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 – 1st 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 will resume Sunday, September 17, 2023 at 9:45AM.

Children’s Sunday School will resume Sunday, September 17, 2023 at 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 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.