



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

Eighteenth Sunday After Pentecost

September 22, 2024, 11:00AM Service
WE ENTER GOD'S GATES WITH PRAISE

WELCOME WITH MUSIC AND IMAGES

Mark Holden & June Stemmler - Photographer & Curator, Gail Garner ASL Interpreter

PRELUDE AND GREETING

GATHERING WORDS:

Liturgist – Rick Pulling

Leader: Beloved, in a world that criticizes women who lead in the workplace and demeans women who stay home to tend their families, God's uncommon wisdom calls to us:

All: Recognize the leadership of women!

Leader: In a world where churches still deny and repress the gifts, graces, and callings of women in ministry, God's uncommon wisdom calls to us:

All: Nurture the leadership of women!

Leader: In boardrooms, family meetings, town councils, pulpits, and church committees, women lead us with their voices, their actions, their wisdom, and their strength. And so, God's uncommon wisdom calls to us:

All: Respect the leadership of women!

Leader: For too long, women who lead among us have been unnamed, underappreciated, and exploited as free labor. May we listen and act, then, as God's uncommon wisdom calls to us:

All: Support the leadership of women! Thanks be to God.

*OPENING HYMN:

How Can We Name A Love

Red Hymnal 111

*OPENING PRAYER: (all praying): **Holy Stream of Righteousness, as we embrace the dawn of this week and the reemergence of hope in our lives, we sing your praises. As we face the journey before us, we seek your wisdom and your strength. Erase the envy from our minds and the biases from our hearts, as we enter this space. May your peace still the whirlwind within our minds and help us hear your holy wisdom as we walk our journey of faith. Fill our lives with the refreshing brooks of your peace. Amen**

WORDS FOR YOUNG METHODISTS:

I Will Enter His Gates

Black Hymnal 2270

I will enter his gates with thanksgiving in my heart. I will enter his courts with praise. I will say this is the day that the Lord has made, I will rejoice for he has made me glad. He has made me glad, he has made me glad; I will rejoice for he has made me glad. He has made me glad, he has made me glad. I will rejoice for he has made me glad. Pastor Linda Ray shares a blessing with our children!

FIRST LESSON: *Proverbs 31:10-31* (CEB)

¹⁰ A competent wife, how does one find her?

Her value is far above pearls.

¹¹ Her husband entrusts his heart to her,
and with her he will have all he needs.

¹² She brings him good and not trouble
all the days of her life.

¹³ She seeks out wool and flax;
she works joyfully with her hands.

¹⁴ She is like a fleet of merchant ships,

bringing food from a distance.
¹⁵ She gets up while it is still night,
 providing food for her household,
 even some for her female servants.
¹⁶ She surveys a field and acquires it;
 from her own resources, she plants a vineyard.
¹⁷ She works energetically;
 her arms are powerful.
¹⁸ She realizes that her trading is successful;
 she doesn't put out her lamp at night.
¹⁹ She puts her hands to the spindle;
 her palms grasp the whorl.
²⁰ She reaches out to the needy;
 she stretches out her hands to the poor.
²¹ She doesn't fear for her household when it snows,
 because they are all dressed in warm clothes.
²² She makes bedspreads for herself;
 fine linen and purple are her clothing.
²³ Her husband is known in the city gates
 when he sits with the elders of the land.
²⁴ She makes garments and sells them;
 she supplies sashes to traders.
²⁵ Strength and honor are her clothing;
 she is confident about the future.
²⁶ Her mouth is full of wisdom;
 kindly teaching is on her tongue.
²⁷ She is vigilant over the activities of her household;
 she doesn't eat the food of laziness.
²⁸ Her children bless her;
 her husband praises her:
²⁹ "Many women act competently,
 but you surpass them all!"
³⁰ Charm is deceptive and beauty fleeting,
 but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.
³¹ Let her share in the results of her work;
 let her deeds praise her in the city gates.

HYMN OF PREPARATION:

As The Deer

Black Hymnal 2025

GOSPEL LESSON: *Mark 9:30-37* (CEB)

³⁰ From there Jesus and his followers went through Galilee, but he didn't want anyone to know it. ³¹ This was because he was teaching his disciples, "The Human One will be delivered into human hands. They will kill him. Three days after he is killed he will rise up." ³² But they didn't understand this kind of talk, and they were afraid to ask him.

³³ They entered Capernaum. When they had come into a house, he asked them, "What were you arguing about during the journey?" ³⁴ They didn't respond, since on the way they had been debating with each other about who was the greatest. ³⁵ He sat down, called the Twelve, and said to them, "Whoever wants to be first must be least of all and the servant of all." ³⁶ Jesus reached for a little child, placed him among the Twelve, and embraced him. Then he said, ³⁷ "Whoever welcomes one of these children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me isn't actually welcoming me but rather the one who sent me."

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

THE MESSAGE:

“Greatness”

Pastor Linda Ray

WE GIVE THANKS

OFFERTORY PRAYER: Beloved One, with the work of our hands, we create pathways of care With open hearts, we welcome your abundant wisdom which invites us to share. May our gifts transform our communities into places of humility and generosity. Amen

THE OFFERTORY: Today’s **Yellow Hat** mission offering supports **9/22/24 Alzheimer Research (Linda Sydnor)**.

CHORAL ANTHEM: *Jesus Loves Me* with ASL on Refrain

Chancel Choir

*THE DOXOLOGY:

Red Hymnal 95

GATHERING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (all praying): **We long for wisdom, O Lord, but prefer that it be our own. We turn away from the ideas of others and ignore the possibility and promise that come from life together with you. Most of all, we drown out your gift of Wisdom as she seeks to get our attention, for we believe that we know better or would prefer to decide where we make her welcome. Forgive us, loving God. Bring an end to the self-righteousness that ignores you and awaken us anew to the Wisdom that comes only from you. Show us how to walk in your ways and listen to your promise each and every day. Amen**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION:

Communion Officiant - Pastor Linda Ray
Communion Server- Jonathan Ray

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. By your Will and through your Word you created the universe, gave it purpose and life, and called it good. Into this creation you placed us, and called us to tend and to keep it; but we quickly turned from your Will and, like the sheep we were called to shepherd, we went astray. But you have not left us lost in the wilderness; you sent your Law and the Prophets to proclaim your Will, and in the fullness of time you sent your Son, our Savior Jesu Chris, as a Suffering Servant, to deliver us back into the safety of your family. And so with your people on earth and the great company of heaven we praise you as we 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. As the Suffering Servant, Jesus took upon himself the penalty which we merit, bore within himself our sins, our sicknesses, our infirmities, and through his suffering and death bridged the gap of sin which we have cast between ourselves and each other, between ourselves and you. In his death, resurrection, and ascension, Jesus our savior, friend and Lord, has brought an end to sickness and death to sin and separation. By his presence we know the grace and peace of God and are empowered to share these mercies with the whole world.

Lifting the bread) On the night in which Jesus gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you, 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, Jesus took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to the 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. By your Holy 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, Holy God, now and forever.

ALL: AMEN. AMEN. AMEN.

Reader 2: Let us join our hearts and voices in the prayer that God continues to teach 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

WE GO IN THE SPIRIT

OPPORTUNITIES FOR MINISTRY AND SERVICE

SENDING HYMN:

I Sing A Song Of The Saints Of God

Red Hymnal 712

SERVING IN WORSHIP TODAY

Liturgist: Rick Pulling

Audio/Video: Charlii Miller, John Littell, John Cate, Carlotta Cline, Garrett Ray

Communion Officiant/Server: Jonathan Miller

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

Director of Music: Thomas Maloney, Organist/Accompanist: Jin Kyung Seo

Flowers today are in honor of Kenzel Messick's birthday on Monday with much love from her family.

Your St. Paul's family loves you too Kenzel!

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 09/22 Worship Services 8:30AM Livestreaming and ASL and 11AM, Adult & Children's Bible Study 9:45AM, Dingo & Dessert at Wyoming Methodist Church 3PM.

Monday 09/23 9AM Bible Study

Tuesday 09/24 Cub Scouts 6PM

Wednesday 09/25 4:30 ASL, TOPS Mtg 5:45 PM, Bells Rehearsal 6PM, Choir Rehearsal 7PM

Thursday 09/26 10AM Prayer and Praise Group, SPRC Mtg. 6:30PM

Friday 09/27 6:30 PM Jesus The Movie in ASL, Wyoming UMC

Saturday 09/28 Methodist Men's Breakfast 8AM, AA Mtg 7PM

OUR DAILY BREAD partnered food collection with Women's Club of Odessa continues through this Sunday.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29th is International Deaf Awareness Sunday. The Choir will be signing 'Blessed Assurance'.

METHODIST MEN'S BREAKFAST: September 28, Saturday at 8AM. You can bring your family and friends and enemies for a good meal and wonderful conversation! Please attend!

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY will begin again in October. Meetings will be held Mondays, October 7, 14, 21, and 28 at 9AM. Come and you will be fed!

LATEST FINANCIAL NEWS: If you there is a need for reimbursement, the **Committee Chairperson will need to complete a Disbursement Voucher**, list the account number, attach any receipts, and submit within 14 days; this is the best practice for auditing purposes. Once completed, place the Disbursement Voucher with receipts directly into the Treasurer/Financial black box which is hanging on the wall, on the landing leading up the stairs, to the church office. Disbursement Voucher forms are located in the mail bin outside the church office. Billing and reimbursement checks are sent out Tuesdays of each week. Thanks so much, Alice Mullins, Treasurer.

BIRTHDAYS: September 22 – Bryan Reed; September 23 – Kenzel Messick, Gradaigh O'Hop, Lloyd Sheats; September 26 – Ray Mullins; September 27 – Parker Hickey, Sierra Hearn.

ANNIVERSARIES: September 22 - Jerry & Cathy Blanco, September 25 – Bob & Sandy Urstadt

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. You can also email Bonnie in the Church Office at bonnie@stpaulsodessa.org.

PRAYERS FOR: David Dudgeon, Dorothy Dudgeon, Carolyn Akin, Jonathan Brooks, Mary Ingram's friend Maureen, John Guy, Maria Gregors, Levi Schrum and family, Marilyn Hendershot, Dennis Downes, Jeffrey & Cheryl Martin, Nancy- sister of Alice Rizzo, Ethan Porter, George, Dylan Green, Blain Shoun, Kevin Quiveors – Al Calbazana's brother-in-law, Thomas Maloney's mother, John Littell, Faye Taylor's nephew Matthew Smith, and Brenda Shaffer's nephew, Scott, Mindie, and Bo Pleasanton, Ellen McMichael and Norman Parks, Sarah Bosworth, David Sheats, Alice Mullins' brother -Clarence Brooks, Diane Shoun's sister-in-law, Amanda Branlund, who is going through cancer treatment, Keith Brady who was in a recent bad auto accident and has a traumatic brain injury, Terry Sweeney, Michael Whitehead who is doing better but still grateful for prayers, Barbara Apigian, Dan Moore, Angela Christian for her Aunt Joyce, Matthew Sheats, Kathy Golden, Rev. Cheryl Jensen, Sue Austin, Frank Hartenstein - Beth O'Grady's father waiting on medical tests, friend of Karen Ellis, Georgiana Fennemore, Michael Stanley, Ann Raymond, Phil Elliott, Phil's parents, Sue and Mark Holden, Rosalie Lukens and family on the passing of her husband Noel, Dawn Buckworth.

YELLOW HAT COLLECTIONS FOR SEPTEMBER 2024

9/01/24 National Donate Gift For Life (Nancee Bleistine)

9/08/24 El Ayudante Child, Yesprin

9/15/24 UMCOR for US Disaster Rsp. Relief

9/22/24 Alzheimer Research (Linda Sydnor)

9/29/24 Deaf Awareness Sunday (Gail Garner)

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 black box on the wall 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

- Cub Scouts –Tuesdays 6-8 PM
- TOPS Meeting – Wednesdays 5:45 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 15, 2024 at 9:45AM.

Men's Bible Study will again be held in October, Mondays 7,14,21,28, 2024 at 9AM.

Children's Sunday School will resume Sunday, September 15, 2024 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 at bonnie@stpaulsodessa.org 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 Ellie Leuliette.

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.