



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

Second Sunday After Epiphany Human Relations Day

January 19, 2025, 11 AM Service
WELCOME WITH MUSIC AND IMAGES

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

GREETING

Liturgist – Melissa Brooks

GATHERING WORDS:

One: When we become anxious from the turmoil of the world,

Many: help us see your love in the caring of our friends and family.

One: When we become frustrated when we realize that some have so much more than they need and others don't have nearly enough,

Many: help us see your love in the generosity all around us.

One: When we become isolated out of fear of rejection,

Many: help us see your love in the acceptance of neighbors, near and far.

One: When we become despondent that our world is fractured beyond repair,

Many: help us see your love in those who dedicate their lives to healing our communities.

PRAISE AND WORSHIP

*OPENING HYMN:

For The Healing Of The Nations

Red Hymnal 428

*OPENING PRAYER (all praying): **Eternal God, Love of our souls, we come to you this morning hungering for something from you that will change the rest of our lives. We come hungering for honesty instead of corruption, for generosity instead of greed, we come hungering for integrity instead of intrigue. We come hungering for our neighbors to be fed and for all to have enough honest work to provide for the basic needs of their families. We come this morning hungering for righteousness to flow like rainwater and for justice like an ever-flowing stream described by the prophets. We come hungering and we come listening for your words to us, describing how we can participate in your great work of re-creation. We come listening for ways that we can become part of the solution and not part of the problem. We come listening in fear and trembling, praying that we will have the courage to respond and act if we hear a clear word of instruction from you. Speak Lord, for your children are listening. Amen**

WORDS FOR YOUNG BELIEVERS: *Peace For The Children* vs. 1

Green Hymnal 3125

Peace for the children, peace, peace. Peace for the children we pray. Following the path of one of peace, we work for healing, we work for peace. Peace for the children we pray.

Courtney Martin shares a blessing with our children!

FIRST LESSON: *Isaiah 62:1-5* (CEB)

For Zion's sake I won't keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I won't sit still
until her righteousness shines out like a light,
and her salvation blazes like a torch.

²Nations will see your righteousness,
all kings your glory.

You will be called by a new name,
which the Lord's own mouth will determine.
³ You will be a splendid garland in the Lord's hand,
a royal turban in the palm of God's hand.
⁴ You will no longer be called Abandoned,
and your land will no longer be called Deserted.
Instead, you will be called My Delight Is in Her,
and your land, Married.
Because the Lord delights in you,
your land will be cared for once again.
⁵ As a young man marries a young woman,
so your sons will marry you.
With the joy of a bridegroom because of his bride,
so your God will rejoice because of you.

HYMN OF PREPARATION:

On Eagle's Wings 2x

Red Hymnal 143

*GOSPEL LESSON: *John 2:1-11* (CEB)

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, and ² Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the celebration. ³ When the wine ran out, Jesus' mother said to him, "They don't have any wine." ⁴ Jesus replied, "Woman, what does that have to do with me? My time hasn't come yet." ⁵ His mother told the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." ⁶ Nearby were six stone water jars used for the Jewish cleansing ritual, each able to hold about twenty or thirty gallons. ⁷ Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water," and they filled them to the brim. ⁸ Then he told them, "Now draw some from them and take it to the headwaiter," and they did. ⁹ The headwaiter tasted the water that had become wine. He didn't know where it came from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. The headwaiter called the groom ¹⁰ and said, "Everyone serves the good wine first. They bring out the second-rate wine only when the guests are drinking freely. You kept the good wine until now." ¹¹ This was the first miraculous sign that Jesus did in Cana of Galilee. He revealed his glory, and his disciples believed in him.

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

THE MESSAGE:

"Come And See"

Pastor Linda Ray

WE GIVE THANKS

OFFERTORY PRAYER God of steadfast love and faithfulness, thank you for the gift of your love and the gifts of your Holy Spirit. Thank you for the gifts we return to you, this day and every day. Help us share as generously with others as you have shared with us, that your love might be known throughout all the world. Amen

THE OFFERTORY: Today's **Yellow Hat** mission offering supports the **American Red Cross L.A. Fire Relief**.

MUSICAL REFLECTION:

O Worship The King

Ray Family Ensemble

*THE DOXOLOGY:

Red Hymnal 95

GATHERING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

PRAYER OF CONFESSION: **Lord, we need a miracle today. Like Jesus changing water into wine at the wedding feast in Cana, we need a miracle today. We are tired, Lord, of the hurts of this world. We are discouraged in the face of injustice, war, poverty, and indifference. We need a miracle today, Lord. Your steadfast love, like a mighty mountain will not be moved. Your gifts, as many as the mighty winds, cannot be counted. Your glory, like a mighty torch, will not be put out. Lord, crown us with your love. Show us**

your glory, that in you we may be moved to acts of kindness, love, justice, and mercy. Lord, we need a miracle today. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION:

Pastor Linda Ray
Officiant Server – Melissa Brooks

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. 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:

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: 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:

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 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.

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:

We've A Story To Tell To The Nations

Red Hymnal 569

POSTLUDE

SERVING IN WORSHIP TODAY

Liturgist: Melissa Brooks

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

Communion Officiant/Server: Melissa Brooks

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

Director of Music – Dr. Kathleen Shannon & Organist/Accompanist: Jin Kyung Seo

CONTACT INFORMATION

Rev. Linda Driver Ray, Pastor	lindaray@vaumc.org	(540) 207-1787
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Duane Dillard, Minister of Music	duanedillard@gmail.com	(443) 593-2470
Jin Kyung Seo, Organist/Accompanist	jinksblue@gmail.com	
Dr. Kathleen Shannon/Director of Music	kathleenshannon@gmail.com	

ANNOUNCEMENTS - THIS WEEK AT ST. PAUL'S:

Sunday 01/19	Worship Services 8:30AM ASL & Livestreaming and 11AM, Adult & Children's Bible Study 9:45AM, atTAcK Addiction Presentation 3PM
Monday 01/20	Adult Bible Series 9AM, Witness Team, 1:30 PM
Tuesday 01/21	ODB, Leadership Meeting 6:30PM, Cub Scouts 6PM
Wednesday 01/22	TOPS Mtg 5:45PM, Bell 6PM & Choir 7PM Rehearsals
Thursday 01/23	10AM Prayer and Praise Group
Friday 01/24	N/A
Saturday 01/25	Coffee N Chat 11AM, AA Mtg 7PM

atTAcK ADDICTION PRESENTATION: Mark your calendars for January 19th at 3PM at St. Paul's for a presentation about addictions brought to you through the Health Ministries Committee and the atTAcK Addictions organization. You will receive addiction education in recognizing signs, talking about this with young children to help to prevent misuse of drugs and how to give a dose of Narcan to reverse an overdose. You must attend in person to receive a Narcan dose. Overdose deaths are still happening and rising in our community. Administering Narcan can save a life! Everyone is welcome to attend and this is open to the public.

FINANCE CHAIR NEWS: Thank you to all! Your generous contributions enabled us to end the year with a balanced budget! Melissa Brooks/Chair

FINANCE/TREASURER-ALICE MULLINS NEWS: Stewardship pledge totals through December 3, 2024, for the 2025 Budget:

71 Pledges, Total Pledge Amount: \$231,217. Thank you to all who have so generously pledged so far!

BIRTHDAYS:

Mary Ingram	January 19
Carl Ravilious	January 20
Caroline Kearns	January 22

ANNIVERSARIES: Dick & Ellie Leuliette - January 20

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 Valeski in the Church Office with your request at bonnie@stpaulsodessa.org.

Please be sure to let Bonnie know you want to remove your request. Thank you

PRAYERS FOR: David & Dorothy Dudgeon, Carolyn Akin, Jonathan Brooks, John Guy, Levi Schrum and family, Marilyn Hendershot, Dennis Downes, Jeffrey & Cheryl Martin, Nancy- sister of Alice Rizzo, Ethan Porter, George, Dylan Green, Kevin Quiveors – Al Calbazana’s brother-in-law, and Brenda Shaffer’s nephew, Scott, Mindie, and Bo Pleasanton, Norman Parks, David Sheats, Amanda Branlund who is going through cancer treatment, Terry Sweeney, Michael Whitehead who is doing better but still grateful for prayers, Bev Moore and family, Angela Christian’s mother, Kathy Golden, Sue Austin, Georgiana Fennemore, Phil Elliott, Phil’s parents, Faye Taylor’s nephew Matthew Smith, Bob, Ken, Wells, nephew of Steve Johnson - Matthew, Henry Spencer, June Stemmler, Blain Shoun, Justin Marusa – cousin to Cindra Holland, having surgery for lung cancer in January, Karen Ellis’ friend Ellen who is having severe eye problems, also Karen Ellis’ friend Cindy who needs prayers for healing and pain management after surgery, Skip Bason, Kenzel Messick’s brother Lem – for back surgery and recovery to go well, family of a teaching colleague of Pastor Patti’s, Rev. Cindy & David Koski recovering from recent falls, passing of Stephen Faulkner, Ellie Leuliette & Dick Leuliette, Nikolai Gregors. Karen Kolf – sister to Alice Mullins. Jay and Laura, Rebecca Roberts - sister-in-law to Gail Garner going through chemotherapy and other therapies for leukemia.

Upcoming Yellow Hat Schedule for January 2025

1/05/25 Friends of Zoar (Steve Johnson)

1/12/25 Our Daily Bread (Sue Holden)

1/19/25 American Red Cross L.A. Fire Relief

1/26/25 Special Olympics Polar Bear Plunge (Cathy Blanco, Melanie Blanco)

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
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 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
- Reconciling Ministries – TBD

Adult Sunday Bible Study 9:45AM

Children’s Sunday School 9:45AM.

Adult Bible Series Mondays 9AM

Flowers for Worship

If you are interested in honoring a loved one with flowers at the altar on a particular Sunday, please call Bonnie or email the church office at bonnie@stpaulsodessa.org so we make sure the information is added in the bulletin and reserved for you. You can have a florist create a bouquet or you can create your own, and then bring it to the church on Saturday or before the 8:30 am service on Sunday morning.

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.