



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. 2118448

4th Sunday After Pentecost **Independence Day Sunday**

July 6, 2025, 9:00AM Service, ASL and Livestreaming
WE ENTER GOD'S GATES WITH PRAISE

WELCOME WITH MUSIC AND IMAGES

Duane Dillard/Music, Mark Holden/Photographer/Curator, June Stemmler/Ushers, Gail Garner/ASL Interpreter

GATHERING WORDS:

Liturgist – Rick Pulling

One: All are welcome here. Whether you are heavy-hearted, wondering if there is power to make you well, or feel weighed down by many demands,

Many: The kingdom of God has come near.

One: Whether you are burdened by rules others have imposed or you are a keeper and maker of rules,

Many: The kingdom of God has come near.

One: Whether you feel at home in this place or you long to be accepted,

Many: The kingdom of God has come near.

One: Come and worship God, the One who writes our names in the book of life and dares us to become new creations in Jesus,

Many: The kingdom of God has come near.

OPENING HYMN:

O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go

Red Hymnal 480

***OPENING PRAYER: (all praying) Almighty God, you rule all the peoples of the earth. Inspire the minds of all women and men to whom you have committed the responsibility of government and leadership in the nations of the world. Give to them the vision of truth and justice, that by their counsel all nations and peoples may work together. Give to the people of our country zeal for justice and strength of direction, that we may use our liberty in accordance with your gracious will. Forgive our shortcomings as a nation; purify our hearts to see and love the truth. May we learn and live the path of the cross, restoring one another and bearing one another's burdens, as we discover your gift of becoming new creations in Christ. We pray all these things through Jesus Christ. Amen.**

WORDS FOR YOUNG BELIEVERS:

O How I Love Jesus (Chorus)

Red Hymnal 170

Oh how I love Jesus, O how I love Jesus, O how I love Jesus, because he first loved me!

Susie Cate shares a blessing with our children!

LIFE SHARING: *(follow directions offered by the pastor)*

FIRST LESSON: *2 Kings 5:1-14* (CEB)

Naaman, a general for the king of Aram, was a great man and highly regarded by his master, because through him the Lord had given victory to Aram. This man was a mighty warrior, but he had a skin disease. ² Now Aramean raiding parties had gone out and captured a young girl from the land of Israel. She served Naaman's wife.

³ She said to her mistress, "I wish that my master could come before the prophet who lives in Samaria. He would cure him of his skin disease." ⁴ So Naaman went and told his master what the young girl from the land of Israel had said.

⁵ Then Aram's king said, "Go ahead. I will send a letter to Israel's king."

So Naaman left. He took along ten kikkars of silver, six thousand shekels of gold, and ten changes of clothing. ⁶ He brought the letter to Israel's king. It read, "Along with this letter I'm sending you my servant Naaman so you can cure him of his skin disease."

⁷ When the king of Israel read the letter, he ripped his clothes. He said, "What? Am I God to hand out death and life? But this king writes me, asking me to cure someone of his skin disease! You must realize that he wants to start a fight with me."

⁸ When Elisha the man of God heard that Israel's king had ripped his clothes, he sent word to the king: "Why did you rip your clothes? Let the man come to me. Then he'll know that there's a prophet in Israel."

⁹ Naaman arrived with his horses and chariots. He stopped at the door of Elisha's house. ¹⁰ Elisha sent out a messenger who said, "Go and wash seven times in the Jordan River. Then your skin will be restored and become clean."

¹¹ But Naaman went away in anger. He said, "I thought for sure that he'd come out, stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, wave his hand over the bad spot, and cure the skin disease. ¹² Aren't the rivers in Damascus, the Abana and the Pharpar, better than all Israel's waters? Couldn't I wash in them and get clean?" So he turned away and proceeded to leave in anger.

¹³ Naaman's servants came up to him and spoke to him: "Our father, if the prophet had told you to do something difficult, wouldn't you have done it? All he said to you was, 'Wash and become clean.'" ¹⁴ So Naaman went down and bathed in the Jordan seven times, just as the man of God had said. His skin was restored like that of a young boy, and he became clean.

HYMN OF PREPARATION:

The Summons

Black Hymnal 2130

*GOSPEL LESSON: *Luke 10:1-11,16-20* (CEB)

After these things, the Lord commissioned seventy-two others and sent them on ahead in pairs to every city and place he was about to go. ² He said to them, "The harvest is bigger than you can imagine, but there are few workers. Therefore, plead with the Lord of the harvest to send out workers for his harvest. ³ Go! Be warned, though, that I'm sending you out as lambs among wolves. ⁴ Carry no wallet, no bag, and no sandals. Don't even greet anyone along the way. ⁵ Whenever you enter a house, first say, 'May peace be on this house.' ⁶ If anyone there shares God's peace, then your peace will rest on that person. If not, your blessing will return to you. ⁷ Remain in this house, eating and drinking whatever they set before you, for workers deserve their pay. Don't move from house to house. ⁸ Whenever you enter a city and its people welcome you, eat what they set before you. ⁹ Heal the sick who are there, and say to them, 'God's kingdom has come upon you.' ¹⁰ Whenever you enter a city and the people don't welcome you, go out into the streets and say, ¹¹ 'As a complaint against you, we brush off the dust of your city that has collected on our feet. But know this: God's kingdom has come to you.'

¹⁶ Whoever listens to you listens to me. Whoever rejects you rejects me. Whoever rejects me rejects the one who sent me." ¹⁷ The seventy-two returned joyously, saying, "Lord, even the demons submit themselves to us in your name." ¹⁸ Jesus replied, "I saw Satan fall from heaven like lightning. ¹⁹ Look, I have given you authority to crush snakes and scorpions underfoot. I have given you authority over all the power of the enemy. Nothing will harm you. ²⁰ Nevertheless, don't rejoice because the spirits submit to you. Rejoice instead that your names are written in heaven."

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

THE MESSAGE:

'Summer Series Part One: Love, Serve, Lead'

Pastor Linda Ray

WE GIVE THANKS

OFFERTORY PRAYER: Generous God, you share your kingdom with all humanity, drawing closer to us than our very breath. May our offering this day support your holy work and may all come to know that your kingdom has truly come near. Amen

OFFERTORY: Today's **Yellow Hat** mission offering supports **7/06/25 YMCA (Rick Pulling)**.

MUSICAL REFLECTION:

God Bless the USA by Lee Greenwood

Sung by Henry Spencer

*THE DOXOLOGY:

Red Hymnal 95

PASTORAL PRAYER

PRAYER OF CONFESSION: Holy God, Fountain of all blessing and grace: we confess there are times when we look at our work, at our accomplishments, with prideful ambition as if we were the source of our abilities and gifts. At other times, we look at our efforts with disgust and regret, as if your gifts in us are not enough. Forgive our pride and our despair, Holy God. Renew in us a humble trust in your guiding hand and a hope that your grace is sufficient for every step. Give us the courage to begin again, to jump into a new start with you and one another. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen

INVITATION TO COMMUNION:

Pastor Linda Ray

Officiant Server – Patti Harmer

Reader 2: Lift up your hearts and give thanks to God.

Reader 1: Blessed are you, O God, who with your Word and Holy Spirit created all things and called them good. In Jesus Christ your Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Through Jesus' suffering and death you took upon yourself our sin and death and destroyed their power forever. You raised from the dead this same Jesus, who now reigns with you in glory, and poured upon us your Holy Spirit, making us the people of your new covenant.

Reader 2: (Lifting the bread) On the night before meeting with death, Jesus sat with his friends at the table, sharing a meal. Jesus took the bread, lifted it to you, and blessed it. Jesus broke the bread and gave it to his friends, saying: "This bread is my life, a gift for you and for many. Eat this bread and remember me."

Reader 1: (Lifting the cup) When the supper was over, Jesus took the cup, blessed it, and shared it with his friends, saying, "Drink from this cup. This cup represents my love, a sign of the new covenant. It brings forgiveness from sin as it quenches your thirst. Drink from this cup 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.

Reader 2: Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us and upon your gifts of bread and cup. By your Spirit unite us with the living Christ and with all who seek to follow in his life-giving way., that we may further your reign of peace and justice in every place. As we share this holy meal, we invite your life to fill us; we invite your Spirit to lead us more faithfully to be the body of Christ in the world until we feast at your table forever.

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.

PRAYERS AFTER RECEIVING:

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

OPPORTUNITIES FOR MINISTRY AND SERVICE

SENDING HYMN:

God of the Ages

Red Hymnal 698

SERVING IN WORSHIP TODAY

Liturgist: Rick Pulling

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

Communion Officiant/Server: Patti Harmer

Ushers: John & Patti Harmer, June Stemmler, John Harmon, Denis Shaffer, Laura Widger, Ryan & Brett Vitsorek
 Greeters: Laura Widger, Brook Ellis
 Minister of Music: Duane Dillard
 Director of Music: Dr. Kathleen Shannon, Organist/Accompanist: Jin Kyung Seo
Flowers today are donated by Carlotta Cline in memory of her mother and sister, Leonor Hampson and Dorothy Dudgeon.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Rev. Linda Driver Ray, Pastor	PastorLinda@stpaulsodessa.org	(540) 207-1787
Bonnie Valeski, Admin. Asst.	bonnie@stpaulsodessa.org	(302) 378-2420
Alice Mullins, Financial/Treasurer	stpodessa@stpaulsodessa.org	(302) 293-9956
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	kathleenmshannon@gmail.com	

ANNOUNCEMENTS - THIS WEEK AT ST. PAUL'S:

Sunday 07/06	Worship Service 9AM ASL & Livestreaming, Pak A Sak Sunday
Monday 07/07	Trustee Mtg 6:30PM
Tuesday 07/08	ODB, On Par with God Golf Outing 9AM
Wednesday 07/09	Youth Group Mtg 10AM, Deep Roots Food Drop-off 4:15PM, TOPS meeting 5:45PM
Thursday 07/10	10AM Prayer and Praise Group, Friends of Zoar Mtg 6PM
Friday 07/11	
Saturday 07/12	AA Mtg 7PM

ADULT BIBLE STUDY: Will be held in August, on Wednesdays, beginning on the 6th through the 27th, at 7PM, "Understanding the Old Testament" will be studied.

SUMMER SERVICE SCHEDULE: The regular Summer Services' reduced schedule will return on June 1 with just one 9AM service; this will continue through August 31. Our normal two service schedule will return on September 7, the first Sunday in September.

GRIEF SHARE: Will begin again at St. Paul's UMC August 10, 2025, for 13 weeks, Sundays from 3-5 PM.

STAYING ON PAR WITH GOD GOLF OUTINGS SCHEDULE: All outings are at Odessa National GC, Tee Times are at 9AM, dates are May 6 and 27, June 17 and 24, July 8 and 22, August 5 and 26, September 2 and 16 and October 7 and 21. Lunch follows at Odessa National at 11:30AM. Everyone is welcome to come out! Contact Don Mueller at dmueller90@gmail.com, or Steve Johnson at SJohn82602@aol.com for further information.

FLOWERS FOR WORSHIP: If you are interested in honoring a loved one with flowers at the altar on a particular Sunday, please use the **Flowers sign-up chart and form with instructions on the Narthex bulletin board.**

You can also still 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, (or a plant) and then bring it to the church on Saturday or before the 8:30 am service on Sunday morning.

Our designated florist is Elana's in Middletown, 302-285-0800, please call them early in the week to set up your flower delivery for Saturday to St. Paul's. There will be NO delivery charge.

FINANCE NEWS FROM MELISSA BROOKS/CHAIR:

May Revenue:	\$ 23,009	YTD: \$ 126,706
May Expense:	\$ 23,393	YTD: \$ 121,208

BIRTHDAYS: July 6 – Ellie Burdette-Leuliette; July 7 – Kathy Chas, Jen Rodriguez; July 8 – Georgianna Fennemore; July 9 – Marilyn Jones, Sandy Urstadt

ANNIVERSARIES: July 7 – Melissa & Robert Brooks, John & Susie Cate

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 Dudgeon, Carolyn Akin, Jonathan Brooks, John Guy, Levi Schrum and family, Nancy- sister of Alice Rizzo, Ethan Porter, George, Dylan Green, Kevin Quiveors – Al Calbazana's brother-in-law, 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, Angela Christian's mother, Kathy Golden, Georgiana Fennemore, Faye Taylor's nephew Matthew Smith, Henry Spencer, Blain Shoun, Justin Marusa – cousin to Cindra Holland, having surgery for lung cancer in January, Skip Bason, Kenzel Messick's brother Lem – on his recovery to go well, Joe Stemmler, Kenzel's niece – Heather Dill who is having cancer surgery, Hap Bonham as he recovers from recent surgery, Kathleen Golden, Cindra Holland's mother, who is currently hospitalized and seriously ill. The great-grandson baby of Carole & John Harmon who needs continued prayers, for Jessica Schrum and family, as her father, John Carmichael, begins his cancer treatment journey and her mom, Sandra, his caretaker, Tom who begins his lung cancer journey, Cathy Blanco's mother as she recovers from her recent surgery, Chris Foote, Christine Spencer and her father, Danny Skeans, Dave Koski, Deena Greenwood, Jin Kyung Seo, Leah Elliott & Phil Elliott in their health struggles, Lloyd Sheats, the passing of Eleanor Cleaver, Alice Mullins' sister Sue Austin who has been ill, Jeanne Buckworth, Ellie Leuliette on the passing of her husband, Dick Leuliette, Courtney Martin, Gale Garner on the passing of her sister-in-law, Rebecca, for Marley - the 10 year old niece of Linda Botsford who is very ill.

Upcoming Yellow Hat Schedule for July 2025

7/06/25 YMCA (Rick Pulling)

7/13/25 Campus Crusade Mission Matthew Caspero

7/20/25 Our Daily Bread

7/27/25 Friendship House, Main St., Robin Cross

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 – Regularly Scheduled Practice will resume in the Fall.
- St. Paul's Choir Rehearsal – Regularly Scheduled Practice will resume in the Fall.
- 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 6:30PM
- Reconciling Ministries – TBD

Sunday Adult Bible Study will resume in the Fall.

Children's Sunday School will resume in the Fall.

Flowers for Worship

If you are interested in honoring a loved one with flowers at the altar on a particular Sunday, please use the **Flowers sign-up chart and form with instructions on the Narthex bulletin board.**

You can also still 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 , (or a plant) and then bring it to the church on Saturday or before the 8:30 am service on Sunday morning.

Our designated florist is Elana's in Middletown, 302-285-0800, please call them early in the week to set up your flower delivery for Saturday to St. Paul's. There will be NO delivery charge.

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 at 484-432-4673.

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.

STAYING ON PAR WITH GOD GOLF OUTINGS SCHEDULE: All outings are at Odessa National GC, Tee Times are at 9AM, dates are May 6 and 27, June 17 and 24, July 8 and 22, August 5 and 26, September 2 and 16 and October 7 and 21. Lunch follows at Odessa National at 11:30AM. Everyone is welcome to come out! Contact Don Mueller at dlnueller90@gmail.com, or Steve Johnson at SJohn82602@aol.com for further information.

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.ourdailybreadmot.com/volunteer>. Contact Sue Holden, Missions Co-Chair, at 802-324-6167, susieq2951@aol.com.



Hot Meal Service

Our Daily Bread serves 7 meals a week.

Lunch: Tuesday & Thursday • 12:00pm–1:00pm
(Dine-In Only)

Dinner: Monday–Friday • 5:00pm–6:00pm
(Dine-In or Take Out)

days/times for meal service remain the same each week
menus are subject to change

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.