



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

11th Sunday After Pentecost

August 24, 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 – Tracy Pulling

One: Children of God, we gather today to encounter God.

Many: We do not come expecting to be terrified or dismayed but to be welcomed and embraced.

One: We gather today to witness the gospel at work among us.

Many: We come to join the assembly of the kingdom of God, to learn to live out God's kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

One: We gather today to declare our faith in God's unshakeable kingdom.

Many: We come with grateful hearts, trusting in the secure foundation of God's steadfast love at work among us. Thanks be to God!

OPENING HYMN: (all singing)

My Life Flows On

Black Hymnal 2212

***OPENING PRAYER: (all praying) Listening God, hear our prayers as we come before you. Loving God, Heal their pain. Restore their lives. Mend their broken hearts. Leading God, lead us through the dark valleys. Lead us through troublesome times. Lead us to our home with you. Teach us to listen to your voice, That we may hear the cry of the needy and respond. Teach us to love that we may offer care that brings others to you for healing. Teach us to lead, with your vision so that we lead others home in you. Amen**

WORDS FOR YOUNG BELIEVERS:

Awesome God (Chorus)

Black Hymnal 2040

Our God is an awesome God; he reigns from heaven above with wisdom, pow'r and love. Our God is an awesome God!

Susie Cate shares a blessing with our children!

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

FIRST LESSON: *Jeremiah 1:4-10* (CEB)

⁴ The Lord's word came to me:⁵ "Before I created you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I set you apart; I made you a prophet to the nations."

⁶ "Ah, Lord God," I said, "I don't know how to speak because I'm only a child."

⁷ The Lord responded, "Don't say, 'I'm only a child.'"

Where I send you, you must go;
what I tell you, you must say.

⁸ Don't be afraid of them, because I'm with you to rescue you,"

declares the Lord.

⁹ Then the Lord stretched out his hand,
touched my mouth, and said to me,
“I’m putting my words in your mouth.

¹⁰ This very day I appoint you over nations and empires,
to dig up and pull down, to destroy and demolish,
to build and plant.”

HYMN OF PREPARATION:

Lily of the Valley

Black Hymnal 2062

*GOSPEL LESSON: *Luke 13:10-17* (CEB)

¹⁰ Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. ¹¹ A woman was there who had been disabled by a spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and couldn’t stand up straight. ¹² When he saw her, Jesus called her to him and said, “Woman, you are set free from your sickness.” ¹³ He placed his hands on her and she straightened up at once and praised God.

¹⁴ The synagogue leader, incensed that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, responded, “There are six days during which work is permitted. Come and be healed on those days, not on the Sabbath day.”

¹⁵ The Lord replied, “Hypocrites! Don’t each of you on the Sabbath untie your ox or donkey from its stall and lead it out to get a drink? ¹⁶ Then isn’t it necessary that this woman, a daughter of Abraham, bound by Satan for eighteen long years, be set free from her bondage on the Sabbath day?” ¹⁷ When he said these things, all his opponents were put to shame, but all those in the crowd rejoiced at all the extraordinary things he was doing.

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

THE MESSAGE:

“Our Limits”

Pastor Linda Ray

WE GIVE THANKS

OFFERTORY PRAYER:

OFFERTORY: Today’s **Yellow Hat** mission offering supports **Deep Roots Homeless Shelter (Karen Ellis & Nadine Johnson)**.

MUSICAL REFLECTION:

For the Beauty of the Earth

The Ray Ringers

*THE DOXOLOGY:

Red Hymnal 95

PASTORAL PRAYER

PRAYER OF CONFESSION: Almighty God, You have set before us the path but we have wandered on our own to try to find our way. Sometimes we are like toddlers and we hear Your call and come back. Other times, we are testing boundaries, ignoring Your call until fear finally makes us look back. And still other times, we demand to be cut loose and set free, not knowing how much we still need to seek Your wisdom and guidance. But most of all, we think we have figured it all out and know our own way, only to stumble and stray so far. Remind us, parental God, that we are always Your children, that we are never fully grown up in Your sight, that we always have much to learn. Help us to seek You every day, to acknowledge that we need Your wisdom and guidance, and help us to return to the path and walk with You. In the name of Christ, who is our companion on this journey of faith, we pray. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION:

Pastor Linda Ray

Officiant Server – Tracy Pulling

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:

Lord of the Dance

Red Hymnal 261

SERVING IN WORSHIP TODAY

Liturgist: Tracy Pulling

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

Communion Officiant/Server: Tracy Pulling

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 Carlota Cline in honor of her sister Mary Alice Aguilar.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Rev. Linda Driver Ray, Pastor

Bonnie Valeski, Admin. Asst.

Alice Mullins, Financial/Treasurer

Duane Dillard, Minister of Music

Jin Kyung Seo, Organist/Accompanist

Dr. Kathleen Shannon, Director of Music

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(540) 207-1787

(302) 378-2420

(302) 293-9956

(443) 593-2470

GREAT DAY OF METHODIST SINGING: Sunday, August 31st service. With this being the last summer 9AM service, St. Paul's will be celebrating with a 'favorite hymns' countdown!

List your 3 favorite hymns you'd like to hear and sing at the August 31st 9AM Service Hymn Sing

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Please tear off and put in the collection plate.

ANNOUNCEMENTS - THIS WEEK AT ST. PAUL'S:

Sunday 08/24 9AM ASL & Livestreaming

Monday 08/25

Tuesday 08/26 On Par With God 9AM

Wednesday 08/27 TOPS Mtg 5:45PM, Adult Bible Study 7PM

Thursday 08/28 10AM Prayer and Praise Group, SPRC Mtg.6:30PM

Friday 08/29

Saturday 08/30 AA Mtg 7PM

CHANCEL CHOIR KICKOFF! St. Paul's is definitely a singing church! Now is the time to join the choir! Our kickoff rehearsal/social event will be on **Saturday, August 23**, 10:00-noon Rehearsal, 12:00-1:00 Potluck Lunch. RSVP to Kathleen at kathleenmshannon@gmail.com

GREAT DAY OF METHODIST SINGING: Sunday, August 31st service. With this being the last summer 9AM service, St. Paul's will be celebrating with a 'favorite hymns' countdown! Through August, your bulletins will have a tear-off section where you are invited to list your three favorite hymns you would like to hear and sing on that last Sunday in August. You can then put your completed form in the collection basket. *If you attend online you can join the 'chat' section of the livestreaming and put your favorites there or email the Church Office at bonnie@stpaulsodessa.org.*

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 soon at St. Paul's UMC, **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.

FINANCE NEWS FROM MELISSA BROOKS/CHAIR:

July Income	\$ 38,870.95
July Expenses	\$ (31,972.06)

2025 YTD Income	\$ 190,208.00
2025 YTD Expenses	\$(177,234.00)

Yellow Hat Collections

(Sunday collections only, does not include Vanco contributions)

YMCA	\$ 208.48
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Campus		
Crusades	\$	232.89
Our Daily Bread	\$	251.00
Friendship House	\$	169.00
	\$	861.37

BIRTHDAYS: August 24 – Jenn Ford, Tayloh Reeves; August 26 – Dennis Downes; August 28 – Zowie Dahn, Cheryl Martin, Joe Mastin, Bella Redick; August 29 – Barbara Moore; August 30 – Janet Rowley

ANNIVERSARIES: August 27– Ben & Dawn Feldman

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 **complete the card with instructions on the Narthex bulletin board.** You can email Bonnie at anytime to see if slots are taken on the chart, bonnie@stpaulsodessa.org.

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 (9am in summer) 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.

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, Kathleen Golden, Cindra Holland's mother, who is currently hospitalized and seriously ill, for Jessica Schrum and family, as her father, John Carmichael, begins his cancer treatment journey and her mom, Sandra, his caretaker, Chris Foote, Christine Spencer and her father, Danny Skeans, Dave Koski, Deena Greenwood, Leah Elliott & Phil Elliott in their health struggles, Lloyd Sheats, Alice Mullins' sister Sue Austin who has been ill, Jeanne Buckworth, Ellie Leuliette on the passing of her husband, Dick Leuliette, Courtney Martin, for Marley - the 10 year old niece of Linda Botsford who is recovering from a serious hospitalization, Lauren – granddaughter to a friend of Sue Haberstroh recovering from surgery after a bad car accident, the great-grandson baby of Carole & John Harmon who needs continued prayers after his recent surgery, Dave Sydnor, for Frances who is battling pneumonia and COPD.

Upcoming Yellow Hat Schedule for August 2025

8/03/25 Back to School Book Bags for Neighborhood House

8/10/25 Grateful Acres – Ally Kennedy

8/17/25 The Nest – Ryan & Katelynn Scott's Community Home Space

8/24/25 Deep Roots Homeless Shelter (Karen Ellis & Nadine Johnson)

8/31/25 National Donate Gift of Life (Nancee Bleistine)

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

- 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
- Friends of Zoar Meeting – 2nd Tuesday 6PM

Sunday Adult Bible Study will resume 9/14/2025.

Children's Sunday School will resume 9/14/2025.

Adult Bible Study will resume Monday, 9/15/2025.

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

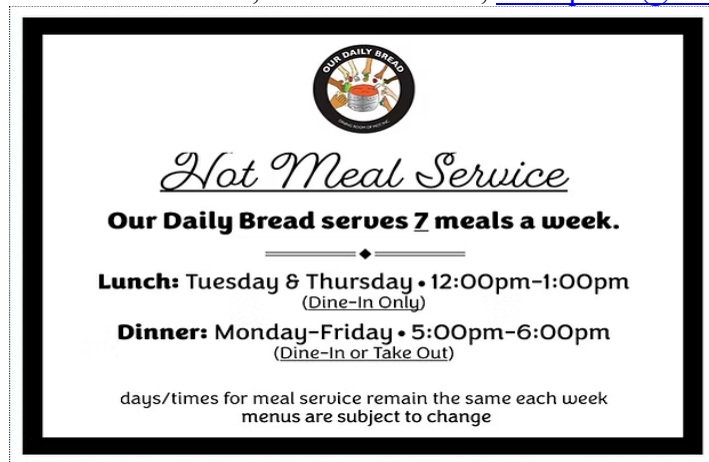
Nadine Johnson & Karen Ellis continue to work with the "Deep Roots" mission. This group works with families who are disconnected through homelessness and provides transitional shelter and other services to families in need. They need your help as they continue to contact members of the church to help 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.



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 our pantry is bare and needs these items:

- pasta/pasta sauce
- canned items like Chef Boyardee, beef stew, Spam, chicken, tuna

- **canned fruit**
- **peanut butter and jelly**
- **any boxed items like mac'n cheese, stuffing, mashed potatoes**

These non-perishables are needed to keep our pantry stocked:

Chef Boyardee, beef stew, Spam ,pancake mix/syrup, snacks - cookies, crackers etc. Toiletries are stocked for now.

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.