

St. Paul's UMC 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

Fourteenth Sunday After Pentecost Grandparent's Day

September 14, 2025, 8:30AM Contemporary Service WE ENTER GOD'S GATES WITH PRAISE

WELCOME WITH MUSIC AND IMAGES

GATHERING MUSIC AND PHOTOS: Mark Holden - Photographer & Curator, Gail Garner – ASL Interpreter GATHERING WORDS:

Liturgist- Ann Newswanger

One: We come seeking refuge in a world where goodness and good news can feel far away.

Many: God is our hope and our refuge.

One: We come searching for safety in a world that often calls foolishness wisdom and wisdom foolishness.

Many: God is our hope and our refuge.

One: We come longing for rest in a world that bombards us with all the ways people work against the abundant life and flourishing of their neighbors.

Many: God is our hope and our refuge.

One: Come, children of God, to find refuge and hope in God who delivers and restores us.

Many: May God teach us and guide us to find refuge and be refuge with and for our neighbors today and every day.

PRAISE AND WORSHIP:

To God Be the Glory

Red Hymnal 98

*OPENING PRAYER: (all praying): This world would deny you, Lord, and rely on human wisdom in their search for answers to questions they have yet to ask, but we will praise you, and exalt your name, for we know that you are Alpha, the beginning of all things, and Omega, the end, and all that is between. We have known your healing. We have known your provision. We have known your victory. Our sorrow has turned into dancing and our tears to songs of joy. We shall praise you ever more. Amen

WORDS FOR YOUNG BELIEVERS:

Peace for the Children

Green Hymnal 3125

Peace for the children, 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 today.

Suzie Cate shares a blessing with our children!

PASS THE PEACE: (safely share words and signs of blessing)

I Love You With The Love Of The Lord
Words and Music by Jim Golbert. CCLI Song #10130

I love you with the love of the Lord, yes, I love you with the love of the Lord. I can see in you the glory of my King, and I love you with the love of the Lord.

FIRST LESSON: *Jeremiah 4:11-12, 22-28* (CEB)

¹¹At that time, this people and Jerusalem will be told:

A blistering wind from the bare heights;

it rages in the desert toward my people,

not merely to winnow or cleanse.

12 This wind is too devastating for that.

Now I, even I, will pronounce my sentence against them.

²² My people are foolish.

They don't even know me!

They are thoughtless children without understanding; they are skilled at doing wrong, inept at doing right. ²³ I looked at the earth, and it was without shape or form; at the heavens and there was no light. ²⁴ I looked at the mountains and they were quaking; all the hills were rocking back and forth. ²⁵ I looked and there was no one left; every bird in the sky had taken flight. ²⁶ I looked and the fertile land was a desert; all its towns were in ruins before the Lord. before his fury. ²⁷ The Lord proclaims: The whole earth will become a desolation, but I will not destroy it completely. ²⁸ Therefore, the earth will grieve and the heavens grow dark because I have declared my plan and will neither change my mind

GOSPEL LESSON: Luke 15:1-10 (CEB)

nor cancel the plan.

All the tax collectors and sinners were gathering around Jesus to listen to him. ² The Pharisees and legal experts were grumbling, saying, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them."

³ Jesus told them this parable: ⁴ "Suppose someone among you had one hundred sheep and lost one of them. Wouldn't he leave the other ninety-nine in the pasture and search for the lost one until he finds it? ⁵ And when he finds it, he is thrilled and places it on his shoulders. ⁶ When he arrives home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Celebrate with me because I've found my lost sheep.' ⁷ In the same way, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who changes both heart and life than over ninety-nine righteous people who have no need to change their hearts and lives.

⁸ "Or what woman, if she owns ten silver coins and loses one of them, won't light a lamp and sweep the house, searching her home carefully until she finds it? ⁹ When she finds it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Celebrate with me because I've found my lost coin.' ¹⁰ In the same way, I tell you, joy breaks out in the presence of God's angels over one sinner who changes both heart and life."

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

HYMN OF PREPARATION: My Hope Is Built Red Hymnal 368

THE MESSAGE: "Rejoice In The Finding" Pastor Linda Ray

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE (You may speak aloud your joys and concerns.)

WE GIVE THANKS

OFFERTORY REMINDERS

THE OFFERTORY: Today's Yellow Hat mission offering supports 9/14/25 UMCOR for US Disaster Rsp. Relief.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (all praying): O Most Patient God, we recognize how much we need

you for life itself. But how often have we behaved as if we did not know or even care about you? How often have we become the ones who do not carry out justice? How often have we tried to dominate others, even as you stand with them? How often have we participated in the desolation of your creation by our treatment of the heavens, the earth, and its waters? Forgive us for these times when we have lost our way. All Loving God, we want to be among those whom you seek. Shower your mercy upon us. Find us and lead us safely home to faithfulness. Amen

INVITATION TO COMMUNION:

Pastor Linda Ray Communion Server – Ellie Leuliette Communion Setting 2257-a

Reader 2 (singing): The Lord be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

Reader 2: Lift up your hearts.

ALL: We lift them up to the Lord.

Reader 2: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. ALL: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Reader 1: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth. 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:

Communion Setting 2257-b

ALL: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest! 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:

Communion Setting 2257-c

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

Reader 2: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and 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.

Communion Setting 2257-d

ALL: Amen. Amen. Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna in the highest!

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

Our Father, 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.

COMMUNION SONG:

To Know You More

Black Hymnal 2161

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

OPPORTUNITIES FOR MINISTRY AND SERVICE

CLOSING MUSIC:

Victory In Jesus

Red Hymnal 370

SERVING IN WORSHIP TODAY

Liturgist: Ann Newswanger

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

Communion Officiant/Server: Ellie Leuliette Musicians: Duane Dillard – Minister of Music

Altar flowers this week are donated by John & Patti Harmer in memory of their parents, Ray & Marie Harmer and Joseph & Sophie Grigoletti

CONTACT INFORMATION

Rev. Linda Driver Ray, Pastor PastorLinda@stpaulsodessa.org (540) 207-1787 Bonnie Valeski, Admin, Asst. bonnie@stpaulsodessa.org (302) 378-2420 stpodessa@stpaulsodessa.org (302) 293-9956 Alice Mullins, Financial/Treasurer Duane Dillard, Minister of Music duanedillard@gmail.com (443) 593-2470 jinksblue@gmail.com

Jin Kyung Seo, Organist/Accompanist

kathleenmshannon@gmail.com Dr. Katheen Shannon, Director of Music

ANNOUNCEMENTS - THIS WEEK AT ST. PAUL'S:

Sunday 09/14 8:30AM Contemporary Worship Service and 11AM Traditional Worship Service ASL & Livestreaming, Sunday Adult Bible Study will resume 9/14/2025, 9:45AM, Children's Sunday School will resume 9/14/2025, 9:45AM

Monday 09/15 Trustees Committee Mtg 6:30PM

Tuesday 09/16 On Par With God Golf Outing 9AM, Health Ministries Mtg 2PM, Leadership Committee Mtg 6:30PM

Wednesday 09/17 Compassionate Card Mtg 10AM-Noon, TOPS Mtg 5:45PM, Choir & Bells Rehearsals, 6PM & 7PM

Thursday 09/18 10AM Prayer and Praise Group

Friday 09/19

Saturday 09/20 AA Mtg 7PM

LOOK FOR THE LEMONADE STAND this week after the 8:30 and 11:00 services, supporting children with osteosarcoma bone cancer, as Cole, Adaline, and Kallie Tokash are Make It Better agents raising funds for children with cancer. Their Aunt Victoria died at age 19 from osteosarcoma after 6 long years involving a leg amputation, numerous surgeries, and many, many tests. Thank you for your support!!

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY: From Hap Bonham: starting Monday, October 6, we will meet every Monday at 9:00 AM for the month of October for a Bible study. Come and be fed.

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 dlmueller90@gmail.com, or Steve Johnson at SJohn82602@aol.com for further information.

FINANCE NEWS FROM MELISSA BROOKS/CHAIR:

August Income	\$21,065
August Expense	\$(24,222)

2025 YTD Income \$211,273 2025 YTD Expense \$(201,456)

August Yellow Hat Collections (Sunday collections only)

Back to School	\$674
Bags/Neighbor-	
hood House	
Grateful Acres	\$226
The Nest	\$288
Deep Roots Home-	\$235
less Shelter	
	\$1,423

BIRTHDAYS: September 14 – Karen Fitzwater, Denis Shaffer; September 15 – Julianna Ashley, Joyce Nickerson; September 16 – June Glass; September 17 – Tanner Martin, Serena Pizzadili, St. Jerome Reeves: September 18 – Kaitlyn Whitmer; September 19 – Victoria Dahn, Linda Sydnor; September 20 – Mitch Fawcett, Sarah Pulling, John St. Jean

ANNIVERSARIES: September 15 – David & Carol Sheats; September 16 – Leonard & Sibyl Pompeo; September 20 – Diane & Blain Shoun

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 <u>bonnie@stpaulsodessa.org</u> 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, Henry Spencer, Blain Shoun, 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, Alice Mullins' sister Sue Austin who has been ill, Jeanne Buckworth, 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, Giancarlo and family - the great-grandson baby of Carole & John Harmon who needs prayers with his continuing critical health struggles, Dave Sydnor, for Frances who is battling pneumonia and COPD, Bruce Vanmeter – cousin to Beth O'Grady, on his recovery after heart transplant surgery, Faye Taylor and family on the passing of her nephew, Matthew Smith.

Upcoming Yellow Hat Schedule for September 2025

9/07/25 Paws for Life (Bev Fawcett) 9/14/25 UMCOR for US Disaster Rsp. Relief 9/21/25 Alzheimer Research (Linda Sydnor) 9/28/25 Deaf Awareness Sunday (Gail Garner)

Please make sure ALL checks are made payable to St. Paul's <u>UMC</u>, <u>including checks</u> 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 Wednesdays 6PM
- St. Paul's Choir Rehearsal –Wednesdays 7PM
- 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, 9:45AM

Children's Sunday School will resume 9/14/2025, 9:45AM

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

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 <u>bonnie@stpaulsodessa.org</u> 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 dlmueller90@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 <u>www.stpaulsodessa.org</u> 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 the second Wednesday of every 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 iluvbr-muda@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.