



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

Reformation Sunday Twentieth Sunday After Pentecost

October 26, 2025, 8:30AM Contemporary Service, ASL & Livestreaming
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: Rejoice in the Lord and be glad.
Many: God is our hope and our salvation.
One: The Lord blesses the earth with rain.
Many: God crowns the year with bounty.
One: The Lord makes old people dream dreams.
Many: God makes young people see visions.
One: Rejoice in the Lord and be glad.
Many: God is our hope and our salvation.

PRAISE AND WORSHIP:

Lord, I Want to Be a Christian

Red Hymnal 402

***OPENING PRAYER: (all praying): Good and gracious God, you promise to pour out your Spirit upon us; you are the hope of the world. Merciful God, prepare us for the marathon of life, even as we seek the ease of a leisurely stroll. May we never tire of fighting the good fight, nor fall exhausted from running our race. May we never grow weary from keeping the faith. Speak your words of promise once more, O God, for we need to find your quiet center amid the noisy activity of life. Bless us with dreams and guide us with visions that we may faithfully endure life's trials and receive your righteous crown. Amen**

WORDS FOR YOUNG BELIEVERS:

How Great Is Our God 2x

Green Hymnal 3003

How great is our God, sing with me! How great is our God, and all will see how great, how great is our God!
Susan 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: *Joel 2:23-32* (CEB)

Children of Zion,

rejoice and be glad in the Lord your God,
because he will give you the early rain as a sign of righteousness;
he will pour down abundant rain for you,
the early and the late rain, as before.^[a]
²⁴ The threshing floors will be full of grain;
the vats will overflow with new wine and fresh oil.
²⁵ I will repay you for the years
that the cutting locust,
the swarming locust, the hopping locust, and the devouring locust have eaten—
my great army, which I sent against you.

²⁶ You will eat abundantly and be satisfied,
 and you will praise the name of the Lord your God,
 who has done wonders for you;
 and my people will never again be put to shame.
²⁷ You will know that I am in the midst of Israel,
 and that I am the Lord your God—no other exists;
 never again will my people be put to shame.
²⁸ After that I will pour out my spirit upon everyone;
 your sons and your daughters will prophesy,
 your old men will dream dreams,
 and your young men will see visions.
²⁹ In those days, I will also pour out my
 spirit on the male and female slaves.

³⁰ I will give signs in the heavens and on the earth—blood and fire and columns of smoke. ³¹ The sun will be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood before the great and dreadful day of the Lord comes. ³² But everyone who calls on the Lord's name will be saved; for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be security, as the Lord has promised; and in Jerusalem, the Lord will summon those who survive.

GOSPEL LESSON: *Luke 18:9-14* (CEB)

Jesus told this parable to certain people who had convinced themselves that they were righteous and who looked on everyone else with disgust: ¹⁰ “Two people went up to the temple to pray. One was a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood and prayed about himself with these words, ‘God, I thank you that I’m not like everyone else—crooks, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week. I give a tenth of everything I receive.’ ¹³ But the tax collector stood at a distance. He wouldn’t even lift his eyes to look toward heaven. Rather, he struck his chest and said, ‘God, show mercy to me, a sinner.’ ¹⁴ I tell you, this person went down to his home justified rather than the Pharisee. All who lift themselves up will be brought low, and those who make themselves low will be lifted up.”

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

HYMN OF PREPARATION: *He Leadeth Me: O Blessed Thought* Red Hymnal 128

THE MESSAGE: “Will We Accept God’s Love?” 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 **10/25/25 Our Daily Bread Sue Holden.**

MUSIC REFLECTION: *Rejoice* by Fred Gramann Bell Choir

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (all praying): **Lord God in heaven, we confess that we try to measure our faithfulness by comparing ourselves with others. Forgive us O God where we fail to see your Spirit’s work in others, in those who have lived before us. Forgive us for choosing comfort and convenience over faithfulness. Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on us as sinners. Amen**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION: Pastor Linda Ray
 Communion Server – Barbara Bonham
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! Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest! 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. 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:

Let Us Break Bread Together

Red Hymnal 618

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

OPPORTUNITIES FOR MINISTRY AND SERVICE

CLOSING MUSIC:

I'll Fly Away

Black Hymnal 2282

SERVING IN WORSHIP TODAY

Liturgist: Ann Newswanger
Audio/Video: Charlii Miller, John Littell, John Cate, Carlotta Cline, Garrett Ray
Communion Officiant/Server: Barbara Bonham
Musicians: Duane Dillard – Minister of Music

Altar Flowers today are donated by Jolene Gottlieb honoring Kenzel and Gene Messick with blessings as their true love measures in at 60 years and counting! With much admiration, love and hugs, Kelly, Jolene and Family

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 10/26 8:30AM Contemporary Worship Service ASL & Livestreaming,, and 11AM Traditional Worship Service, Adult Bible Study 9:45AM, Children's Sunday School 9:45AM

Monday 10/27 Men's Bible Study 9AM

Tuesday 10/28

Wednesday 10/29 TOPS Mtg 5:45PM, Choir & Bells Rehearsals, 6PM & 7PM,

Thursday 10/30 10AM Prayer and Praise Group

Friday 10/31

Saturday 11/01 Women Moving Forward 10AM-12Noon, AA Mtg 7PM

FALL CLEAN UP DATE: The St. Paul's UMC Fall clean up for indoor and outdoor tasks has been scheduled to begin **Saturday, November 8th through Friday/Saturday November 14th/15th**. Tasks can be done Saturdays until 6:30PM as AA meets at 7PM. As usual we will have index cards with tasks stated, as you complete your selected task/s, please sign the card and put it in the basket available. Your time in volunteering and helping is very much appreciated!

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.

JOY GROUP SAVE THE DATES!

Game Night in Fellowship Hall – Friday, November 7, 2025, Join us for a fun-filled evening of games and fellowship on **Friday, November 7, beginning 7PM**. Bring your competitive spirit as we enjoy board games, card games, and more. **Please bring a snack to share; coffee and tea will be provided**

We can't wait to see you there for an evening of fun and community! If you have any questions, please contact Karen Ellis at: iluvbrmuda@gmail.com or Nadine Johnson at nadine.faye.johnson@gmail.com.

We have booked yet another JOY event at Sight & Sound in Lancaster!! We will be going to see "JOSHUA" on **Thursday, May 21, 2026 at 3:00 p.m.** At this point, 50 seats have been reserved. There is no payment due until after the 1st of the year, but if you are contemplating attending the show, and if you might consider purchasing ticket(s) as a Christmas gift, please let us know so we can put your name on the list. Contact Karen Ellis at iluvbrmuda@gmail.com or Nadine Johnson at nadine.faye.johnson@gmail.com with questions or to sign up for what promises to be another amazing show!!

FINANCE NEWS FROM MELISSA BROOKS/CHAIR:

September Income	\$36,778
September Expense	\$(30,375)

2025 YTD Income	\$248,050
2025 YTD Expense	\$(231,831)

September Yellow Hat Collections
(Sunday collections only)

Paws for Life	\$235
UMCOR	\$234
Alzheimer Re- search	\$223
Deaf Awareness	\$287
Sunday	
	\$979

BIRTHDAYS: October 26 – Angela Christian, Kami Morris; October 27 – Dawn Buckworth, Bob Collins, Andrew Shaffer, Randy Spence, Avery Widener; October 28 – Thomas Foote; November 1 – Kimmey Reeves

ANNIVERSARIES: October 30 - Mark & Sue Holden

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, Blain Shoun, Skip Bason, 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, 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, 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, Bruce Vanmeter – cousin to Beth O'Grady, on his recovery after heart transplant surgery, Dave Corby, Don Mueller, Lynda Lambert, Elayne Guy, Henry & Christine Spencer, all those Church members families and friends currently fighting illnesses.

Upcoming Yellow Hat Schedule for October 2025

10/05/25 World Communion Sunday
10/12/25 Friendship House (Robin Cross)
10/19/25 Autism Walk (Dawn Buckworth)
10/25/25 Our Daily Bread Sue Holden

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 – 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 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 dlnmueller90@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 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.