



Dr. Odessa Brown Perry

July 5, 1931 - January 10, 2026

A Wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies.

(Proverbs

31:10)

First Lady Emeritus, Dr. Odessa Brown Perry, was born in Portsmouth, Virginia and was the

fourth child of Winfred and Hettie Brown. Odessa received her formative education at Truxton

Elementary School and thereafter graduated from I. C. Norcom High School in Portsmouth,

where she met Robert W. Perry. Robert did everything to get Odessa's attention, and Odessa

always responded with her bright and beautiful smile. This is where their love story began.

She sets about her work vigorously, her arms are strong for her tasks.

(Proverbs 31:17)

Odessa attended Norfolk State University where she majored in accounting.

She eventually

became a civil service employee in the Accounting Department of the Norfolk, Virginia Naval

Shipyard. Odessa then continued her education at Virginia State University.

Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value. (Proverbs

31:11)

While employed at the Naval Shipyard, she became reacquainted with her high school sweetheart. Their love and devotion led to their marriage in 1954. To this blissful union of seventy-two years, three children were born: Jacquelyn P. Anderson, Vincent Perry, and Crystal Perry Holden.

She brings him good not harm all the days of her life. (Proverbs 31:12)
Shortly into their marriage, the young couple moved to New York City. Odessa later returned to government employment with the Selective Service. Her impeccable administrative skills assisted her in securing employment as a Legal Administrator with two of Brooklyn's leading attorneys. While living in New York, the Perrys became members of Mount Sinai Baptist Church.

During this time, Odessa observed a great change in her husband's life and she witnessed his answering of the Call to a life of Gospel Ministry. Robert Perry's acceptance of the Call brought great blessings to the young couple. In less than a year, Robert was ordained and accepted the Call to Odessa's home church, Mt. Carmel Baptist Church in Portsmouth, Virginia in 1963. They were able to go "back home" and bless their children with quality time shared with both maternal and paternal grandparents and family members.

She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat of the bread of idleness.

(Proverbs 31:27)

While at Mt. Carmel, Odessa worked tirelessly at her husband's side. She

served as President of the Senior Missionary Society. She was elected President of the Tidewater Association of Ministers' Wives. Dr. Odessa kept her commitment to God and her growing family while working as a bookkeeper for the Portsmouth, Virginia Board of Education and Executive Secretary for the Tidewater OIC, respectively. When Reverend Dr. Robert W. Perry was called to be the Pastor of Union Baptist Church in Stamford, CT in 1972, the congregation was anointed with a double blessing with Odessa. She brought to Union a wealth of talent and expertise and graciously stepped in to replace Union's faithful church secretary and clerk who retired. Mrs. Perry diligently labored as Union's Office Manager, Church Clerk, and Secretary for twenty-four years. She speaks with wisdom and faithful instruction is on her tongue. (Proverbs 31:26)

The impeccable skills and abilities that Mrs. Perry brought to these positions made her a valuable asset to Union Baptist Church. She was instrumental in modernizing office equipment and systematic procedures. She brought Union into the computer age and assumed the responsibility of entering valuable church statistics and data into the new computer system. She developed an office system and procedures capable of handling the multiple demands of the

church's complex schedule, strategic networking, and growth planning. During her tenure in these capacities, she trained many African American youth and adults for service in the business field.

She selects wool and flax and works with eager hands. (Proverbs 31:13)
While supervising the operations within the church office, fulfilling her duties as First Lady and caring for her three children, Odessa also found time to pursue her educational goals. She graduated from Fordham University, where she earned a degree in Business Economics Administration.

Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all. (Proverbs 31:29)
Within two years after her arrival in Connecticut, Mrs. Perry was elected Vice President of the Connecticut State Ministers' Wives and Ministers' Widows Association (CT State MWMW), which is part of the International Association of Ministers' Wives and Ministers' Widows (IAMWMW), for a 4-year term. She later served as President of CT State MWMW for eight years, and as President of the Northeast Region of IAMWMW. In addition, Mrs. Perry was a member of the Executive and Advisory Council of the International Association of Ministers' Wives and Ministers' Widows, a member of the Stamford-Greenwich Ministers' Wives Coterie, was the Corresponding Secretary of the International Association of Ministers' Wives and Ministers' Widows, Inc. and served as the Recording Secretary of Church

Women United of

Stamford and Darien. Odessa was also on the Board of Directors for The Perry Players'

Theater, Inc. (Resident Theater Company at the Rich Forum/Stamford Center for the Arts).

She is clothed with strength and dignity. (Proverbs 31:25)

First Lady Emeritus Odessa Perry was a nationally recognized editor of "The Herald," the

national magazine of The International Association of Ministers' Wives and Ministers' Widows,

Inc. Because of her outstanding work as an editor, she was awarded an Honorary Literary

Doctorate Degree from Virginia Seminary and College in Lynchburg, Virginia.

In 2005, Dr.

Odessa B. Perry was inducted into the International Association of Ministers' Wives and

Ministers' Widows Gallery of Fame in Richmond, Virginia.

In her hand she holds the distaff and grasps the spindle with her fingers.

(Proverbs

31:19)

Dr. Odessa Perry traveled extensively with her husband to state, national and international

events. She accompanied Reverend Dr. Perry on an evangelistic mission to the Soviet Union in

1984. In 1994, Dr. Odessa Perry, traveled with her husband and daughter throughout South

Africa on a missionary venture. While there, they participated in the dedication of the Union

Baptist Church in Whittlesea, South Africa, birthplace of President Nelson Mandela. Union

Baptist Church in Stamford, CT was instrumental in helping to build the church

with financial
and spiritual support.

She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy.

(Proverbs 31:20)

At home, Dr. Odessa's missionary work was continuous. She was an active member of The

Willing Workers and Helping Hand Ministries for many years. On many occasions she took

church members into her own home to help nurture them physically and spiritually back to good

health. She also counseled many individuals. Dr. Odessa B. Perry, with quiet grace, always

placed service above self. She was truly a blessing to her church and community.

Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also and he praises her.

(Proverbs

31:28)

First Lady Emeritus Odessa Brown Perry was a dedicated and compassionate mother who

diligently nurtured her children in religious ideals and maintained a profound and abiding love for

her family. She savored the significant quality time which she was privileged to spend with her

children, grandchildren, great grandchildren, and great-great grandchild, and others

Honor her for all that her hands have done, and let her works bring her praise at the city

gate. (Proverbs 31:31)

Odessa Brown Perry was a congenial and sociable individual who generously embraced others

with her warm and endearing smile, exuberant personality, and contagious laughter. A lady of phenomenal style and grace, she enhanced others' lives through tangible acts of benevolence and was, indeed, an exemplary resource of spiritual inspiration for many people. First Lady Emeritus Odessa Brown Perry will be lovingly remembered as a faithful Christian, devoted wife and mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, great-great grandmother, mentor, counselor, office administrator, benevolent relative, friend, and an honorable servant of God and humanity whose love and inspiration will be infinitely sustained in our hearts. Dr. Odessa Brown Perry truly embodied the Biblical description of the virtuous woman personified in Proverbs 31.

Charm is deceptive and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. (Proverbs 31:30)

In addition to her parents, she was predeceased by her beloved husband: Reverend Dr. Robert

W. Perry. She leaves to cherish her treasured memory two daughters:

Jacquelyn P. Anderson

(Ernest), and Crystal Perry Holden (Curtis), and one son: Vincent Perry; four grandchildren:

Michael Reed (Allie Reed), Vincent Perry II, Sierra Perry, Jordan Perry, four great grandchildren:

Ariel Reed, Mya Reed, Aliyah Reed, Nala Perry, and one great-granddaughter, Ariya Simmons,

and a host of nieces, nephews and cousins and extended family members.

Visitation will be held on Friday, January 16, 2026 from 10:00AM - 11:00AM

followed by a service of celebration at 11:00AM at Union Baptist Church, 805 Newfield Ave., Stamford, CT.

Interment will follow at Spring Grove cemetery

Cemetery Details

Spring Grove Cemetery

41 Hecker Ave.
Darien, CT

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 16. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Union Baptist Church
805 Newfield Ave
Stamford, CT 06905-2998
(203) 322-0881

Service

JAN 16. 11:00 AM (ET)

Union Baptist Church
805 Newfield Ave
Stamford, CT 06905-2998
(203) 322-0881

Tribute Wall

JH

“ My condolences and prayers of strength go out to Family and friends.
May Mrs. Perry, rest in eternal peace.



James Homer - January 16 at 07:31 PM

PM

“ Patrice & Marilyn Moore planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dr. Odessa Brown Perry.

Patrice & Marilyn Moore - January 16 at 03:54 PM



“ Comfort & Sweetness Gift Crate was purchased for the family of Dr. Odessa Brown Perry.



January 16 at 03:54 PM



“ Decadent Delights Chocolate Gift Basket was purchased for the family of Dr. Odessa Brown Perry.



January 16 at 11:58 AM

WB

“ Walter and Oneida Lynn Blackwell planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dr. Odessa Brown Perry.

Walter and Oneida Lynn Blackwell - January 16 at 11:58 AM



“ "Forever in Our Hearts" Memorial Photo Frame was purchased for the family of Dr. Odessa Brown Perry.



January 15 at 06:20 PM

WW

“ Willie & Henry Wheeler planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dr. Odessa Brown Perry.

Willie & Henry Wheeler - January 15 at 06:20 PM

SL

“ To the Perry Family;
Another angel has earned her wings. We mourn with you the loss of Mrs. Perry. Although her assignment on earth is complete she now resides with our Savior. We are appreciative of the friendship formed over the years with your family. The love, guidance, leadership and support will be missed tremendously as it was second to none. May God shine his light upon her and Rev. Perry. We pray God will hold you all close to his heart and warm embrace during this difficult time. May they both rest in eternal peace. Johnnye Mae Britt, Sandra Lewis and Family



Sandra Lewis - January 15 at 06:05 PM

SF

“ To Perry Family:

May God continue to bless you all during the time of sorrow.



Shawn/Linda Ford - January 15 at 05:12 PM

SN

“ To Jackie, Vincent, and Crystal: my sincere and deepest condolences.

Stephanie Nelson - January 15 at 08:10 AM

JP

“ To the Perry family I give my sincere condolences too you all. Mrs Perry was a bright ray of sunshine too us all. I call her Mrs America because she was one of the beautiful Queens. When you see her she always embrace you with a beautiful smile and a precious hug. Now she reunited with her King. And they are embracing one another with our Father in Heaven. May you rest in peace Love Joy Poteau.

Joy Poteau - January 14 at 08:03 PM

RS

“ To the Perry Family at Large,
Well Poppa Perry's favorite scripture, Romans 8:28 has come alive..All things now have worked together for Poppa Robert and Momma Odessa's good as they are now united and untied embraced by God..as momma was exceptional her spirit reigned throughout her natural life..she was a warrior personified and she now has been yoked with her partner..although she will missed in the flesh, we know without a doubt that her spirit will remind all of us that she is still with us..she has left a legacy that cannot be copied or compared for she is now amongst our ancestors who will be shouting from the balconies of heaven pushing us on...Virtuous and a phenomenal woman yes!
Love and continual strength,
Your Sis, Reverend Dr Dawn C Snell and Family

Rev Dr Dawn C Snell - January 14 at 05:51 PM

TF

To the Perry family,I am sorry for your loss.

The Pettiford family - January 20 at 11:47 PM