

MESSAGE FROM PASTOR DAN

Summer 2025

Dear Church Family,

It has been quite a while since I last addressed you all through the newsletter and so it's high time to do so :) I'm always grateful for the various seasons of the year as each tend to give us a new perspective on things, along with rest. (Perhaps more so in the summer?)

Speaking of rest, this summer we are taking a bit more of a purposeful targeted rest which will come in the different rhythms of life here at OEPC. The first and most notable 'rest' will come in the area of the Sunday Morning CE hour. Starting Sunday, June 22 all Sunday morning CE will be on a much needed break. Many of you serve in this area and we/ I am so grateful for your gifts that you give to this congregation in this vital ministry. But like all things, there are times that are needed for rest, and so to all the teachers and assistants we thank you for your gifts and pray that this time of rest will rejuvenate and refresh your souls. Sunday morning CE will return on Sunday, July 27 (which includes Adult CE, and Kidz Connect 'Sunday morning.' The Youth will remain on break and will be encouraged to join the Adult Ed CE hour during this 'summer period.'). This 'summer period' will go through Sunday, August 24 at which time we will not meet on August 31. By then the CE team will have the fall and winter schedule laid out ready to begin in September.

Other vital ministries will be taking a much needed rest such as Sisters, Senior Fellowship, Men's Bible study (TBD), and small groups. A huge a thank-you to each of these leaders as well. VBS (Bible Adventures) is in full prep mode and getting ready for our week in July. The youth and Kid's Connect programs will be on a summer schedule. There will be opportunity for you to meet new families at the Kidz Connect Summer Hangouts which are planned one per month beginning in June. (You may find the specifics on our webpage). This is a distinct opportunity for each of you to reach out to our families that live in the neighborhood and who send their kids to our pre-school. These times will allow you (long-time church members) to get to know these families as we attempt to make lasting connections with them by sharing Jesus! So the opportunities to rest and rejuvenate over the summer along with meeting new folks abound.

With this different schedule and with big things on the horizon your Session has called for a day of prayer and fasting. This will take place on Sunday, June 1. We invite you to participate in any way that you can. It's understandable that some may not be able to fast from meals due to health concerns. If this is you we invite you to be creative. (Perhaps fasting from all social media on that day would be an appropriate fast?) The point being that we encourage you to participate in big or small ways. On the evening of June 1 we will be holding a time of corporate prayer and worship to which you will be invited to join beginning at 6:00pm. The plan is to go for an hour to an hour and a half. We will have a time of worship through music followed by prayer stations set-up either in the Sanctuary or Fellowship Hall (or both) with suggested scripture and topics on which to pray. There will be opportunity for you to write or draw pictures in those stations of things that the Lord brings to your mind. At the close of our time we will join together to pray over the stations as a whole. We will have tables set up to pray for things specifically in our church in the areas of; leadership, direction for the ART project, growth and direction in the area of discipleship and community outreach, youth, Kidz Connect, adult ministries (Sister's, Men's Bible study, Senior Fellowship), missions both local and foreign. General questions like: Lord, what new thing are you doing in our midst? What thing or things do we need to let go or change in order to reach the lost?

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Why is this important, you ask? As the body of Christ there are things that anchor us. Things like the Gospel, the preaching and teaching of the Word; worship, fellowship, mission, community outreach. All important and vital functions of the body. But there are times where we need to re-think and cast new vision in how to reach and implement these important facets of how we do life here at OEPC. And it's important that we seek God and his leading in each of these areas and not our own. And so in coming together as the body here at OEPC we look for God to give clarity and unity in all of these areas and perhaps in areas we haven't thought of before. So the invitation is to come! Paul said in Phil 4:6, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

One vital component that we will be lifting up in this prayer time is the ART project. We will seek the LORD in the direction we're to proceed. One thing is clear is that there are areas in this physical plant that are in need of attention and so we will seek the Lord in how best to go about them. On this topic there have been folks who've asked if there is any sort of ART Fund that is open to which folks may give. The answer is yes. The Finance Team under the direction of the Session has opened an account to receive any gifts that are given toward the project in whatever direction the Lord leads. If you have already set-aside some gifts and would like to contribute you may do so by sending your donation to the church office marked: *Account # 31310 – Capital Campaign.*

One thing is for sure. This is the Lord's house, we have seen him move here in the past, and we know that the wind of the Spirit is moving amongst us now. Our prayer is that our eyes will be opened to see where he is moving and join him in this great work. God bless you and see you in worship!

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