



Fern Prairie United Methodist Church  
March-April 2026 Newsletter

Hello friends and family! We pray that this new season of spring refreshes your spirits and deepens your faith. During this Lenten season we are challenged to find ways to open our hearts and minds to listen more closely and to follow God's will in our lives.

Last month we listened to our guest speaker, Jon Nichols, chaplain at Open House Ministries, share about the programs and ministry happening there in our neighboring community of Vancouver. It was moving to hear about the positive impacts we can make, no matter how small or insignificant they may seem. In particular, Jon requested that we offer up prayers for their continued work in addressing the needs of the families they serve there. A future visit is scheduled to take place so that we can gather more information on ways we can support them as a congregation.

The collection bin for Camas-Washougal Treasure House has been updated with wish lists. Please check it out in the fellowship hall! You will find the suggestion list for donations on a monthly rotation. Thank you, Joan A, for organizing and distributing for us!

Plans are in the works for special Easter music, "Fern Sunday" and Easter gardens, and UMCOR Sunday. Thank you Brenda and Joan H for bringing this all together. And a special thanks to Heike for her vision and tireless work to make this year's Earth Day celebration one to be remembered. We will be including local small farm vendor tables to share the community ties that we have been so blessed to be a part of at Fern Prairie. We support organic, sustainable, renewable gardening practices. You can expect to see lots of plant starts, repurposed and upcycled yard and garden art and tools, and creation care centered products. Our local girl scout Troop #10292 will be hosting a kids craft table during the event so it is definitely family-friendly! Tell all your friends and family about this fun event!

Please let us know how we can be of and in service with you. God bless your walk these next two months.

Website: [fernprairieunitedmethodist.org](http://fernprairieunitedmethodist.org)

<https://secure.myvanco.com/L-ZA35>

Some words from Pastor Don:

## MODELING

It may come as a surprise but I wasn't always bald. I once got a perm (that's a painful episode I'd like to forget) and I oftentimes had bleached highlights way back in the day. Whilst in high school, a salon owner asked if I would like to be a hair model in a PNW competitive event. I was flattered. I learned that it was an all-day unpaid thing, however, so I politely declined.

Fashion and beauty are obsessions for many people. Stylish clothes, attractive footwear, and flashy accessories fill fashion magazines. Tips on makeup and hair styles are also abundantly supplied. And a myriad of lotions and creams are touted to plump, rejuvenate and smooth aging skin. Billions of dollars are spent to achieve aesthetic perfection except reaching that ideal is an impossible goal.

I am reminded that few in scripture are described as physically attractive. Aside from the Old Testament David and Bathsheba, most are described in unflattering ways: John the Baptist for his burlap tunic, Zacchaeus for his dwarfish height, vain religious leaders who are preoccupied with their appearance, gluttonous corpulent kings, and so on.

Physical beauty was meaningless to Jesus. Jesus insisted that enduring beauty comes from an abiding faith and a pure heart. He also asserts that sins disfigure, defile and degrade us. So Paul tells the people of Ephesus:

*13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. 14 Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. 15 As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. 16 With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17 Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. (Ephesians 6:13-17)*

Trouble is, many may think Paul's fashion tips are too burdensome — they're too heavy, cumbersome, uncomfortable and unwieldy. We often prefer to clothe ourselves in casual, effortless, lightweight, unfussy and stretchy leisurewear rather than don all the unflattering heavy hardware that Paul prescribes. But in a world in upheaval, we may need more faithful disciples to suit up for battle as agents of peace. We may need to heed Christ's call to gear up to lovingly combat robust and rampant racism, prejudice, greed and a myriad of other malevolent adversaries that seem to be advancing almost unimpeded.

Paul calls us to stand up and join the ranks of Christian soldiers who are already kitted in godly hardware and are courageously deployed to places where love is desperately needed. Will you try the armor on for size? I promise that it will be a perfect fit and it will be precisely what you need to wear to easily defeat a plethora of wily foes.

Full disclosure: It's unlikely we will be asked to participate in a modeling contest or grace the glossy cover of a fashion magazine whilst wearing righteous trappings. Sin seems to sell. But we are called to model Christ nonetheless and I think wearing love in all of its manifold expressions is always attractive, stylish and in season. (— Pastor Don)

### **Calendar of Upcoming Events:**

#### **March:**

**1** Rev. Tom Tucker

**8** UMCOR and Covenant Relationship Sunday

**15** Rev. Steve Caskey \*Potluck Potato Bar following service

**22** Rev. Keith Hackett/Holy Communion \*Council meeting following service

**29** Fern Sunday and Easter Gardens

#### **April:**

**5** Easter Day

**12** Rev. Carol Davies

**18 Saturday** Earth Day Market 10:00-3:00pm

**19** Earth Day Service \*Followed by special treats 😊

**26** Rev. Keith Hackett/ Holy Communion