

**Fern Prairie United Methodist Church
July- August 2026 Newsletter**



Summer salutations friends and church family! We hope that sunshine floods your soul and praises ring in your hearts for all the Creator's blessings you experience. As the words of St. Francis of Assisi and paraphrased by William H. Draper remind us:

All creatures of our God and King,
Lift up your voice and with us sing
Allelujah, allelujah!
Thou burning sun with golden beam,
Thou silver moon with softer gleam,
O praise him, O praise him,
Allelujah, allelujah, allelujah.

The past two months have been filled with celebrating those mother and father figures who have served as mentors and models in our faith journeys. We are grateful for the memories of those who have passed on and those who continue to lead and guide us today. We also would like to thank all the helping hands that keep the business end of things running for us...in particular, Kathy and Joanne who diligently keep our finances in order. Your experience and expertise are greatly appreciated!

Please come and see what the grounds crew have accomplished in making the outside of the building look so inviting. And also check out the shelves and wish list in the fellowship hall that encourage our ongoing donations to our local Treasure House. Suggested items change monthly but bring what you feel you can to help others in our community. Every item helps!

In gratitude we offer Pastor Don's meditational reading:

EFFORT

I returned to school one month after suffering from a massive traumatic brain injury. A jagged scar was still visible, marking the site that changed my life. Beneath it was a fractured skull that was put back together with titanium twist ties. Under that was an injured brain with a porous memory that trapped some but not all details that flowed through it. And below that was a frightened young man who worried he wouldn't achieve his ambitious academic goal of finishing 32 credit hours of studies (16 from the prior quarter) with straight A's no less. I settled in my chair in my furnished dorm, gazed at a tall stack of daunting textbooks and thought, "This is the hardest thing I've ever done."

I rode dozens of miles of uphill grades for three straight days on a remote stretch of California highway. My pedals spun at 60rpm in low gear, rhythmically ticking like clockwork that didn't mark the advancement of time but the slow progress of a very weary solitary cyclist. The sun shimmered on the asphalt before me like a broad black ribbon, wringing every ounce of water from the scorched landscape. A negligible breeze flowed through my sodden synthetic jersey that dripped of perspiration. Vultures circled overhead conferring over the odds that I would be their next meal. And I was thinking, "This is the hardest thing I've ever done."

Some church members confide in me about the loss of their spouses. They gaze at pictures on walls that capture happier times. They had posed before wedding cakes, beautiful sunsets, or beloved children with foolish grins. But now their faces were drawn and pale like those who emerge from a horrific car wreck spared from physical injury but traumatized nonetheless. Shocked and shaken from their ordeal, their talk is scattered and nonlinear, leaving the listener to rework it into coherent speech. The cadence of their speech is often slowed as the widow or widower tearfully mutters in a tortured pace, "This is the hardest thing I've ever done."

Truth is, life is hard sometimes. Injury, hardship, grief and more will strike all of us individually and corporately. Our planet, nation, community, our church and our families can be traumatized, leaving many of us meekly saying, “This is the hardest thing I have ever done.”

Contrary to what some preachers promote, I believe most Christians are not spared from hardship and adversity. In fact, we may bear crosses because of our faith. But take comfort! A great spiritual / hymn says, “We shall overcome someday.” Those who are broken or mourn need not wallow in sorrow forever. We can still find some solace because our Comforter is beside us, our Shepherd is before us, the Spirit is within us, and all the saints are marching behind us. Praise God! (— Pastor Don)

Calendar of upcoming events:

July

5- Marilyn/ Intro to our summer special services

12- Service in the grotto (For those experiencing difficulty with the uneven terrain please feel free to park right in front and we will do our best to amplify sound accordingly.)

18- Saturday 4:00pm Please come and welcome Katherine Parker, our Covenant Relationship Missionary in Nepal. Katherine always has an interesting photo documentary and stories to share about what work is being done on the other side of the globe. She and others are truly inspiring! Camas UMC as well as others have been invited to join also.

19- Summer service in the sanctuary

26- Rev. Carol Davies and Holy Communion Sunday

August

2- Music Connexions with Brenda

9- Summer service in the sanctuary

16- Summer service in the sanctuary

23- Final summer service followed by potluck picnic (Location TBD and invites will be mailed out ahead)

30- Rev. Carol Davies and Holy Communion Sunday

Contact information: Church website: fernprairieunitedmethodistchurch.org

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

***Please remember, we hold you in our prayers and are available to assist and accommodate you in any way we can. Our prayer chain is continuously ongoing and we welcome all your comments and suggestions on how we can improve your worship experience at Fern Prairie UMC. You are an important part of our family!**