



The Weekly Chalice

January 2nd 2025

Sumner First Christian Church | 432 Wood Ave, Sumner, WA | sumnerfcc.org

The second Friday of January (this year, January 10th) is known as "quitting day." It is the day by which a good portion of people have given up on their new year's resolutions. We start the new year with fresh perspective and energy. We are hopeful for change. But everyday life, rhythms and habits pull us back into "things as they were."

I am wondering what resolutions, if any, did you make? Or maybe what things do you hope for in 2025? I don't know that there is any one right way to set an intention and keep it, but for me it helps to try not to bite off more than I can chew (advice I have to repeatedly remind myself of). It also helps to realize that there are so many good and worthwhile things in the world...and I am only one person. I cannot do everything that is worthwhile and holy and good. I have to prioritize and make some choices.

Ministry is hard, in part, because of how ill-defined it is. What is the minister's job description, really? What are the expectations of church goers, really? These roles are ill-defined because there are so many good and worthwhile things that could fit into them. We have a hard time saying no and feeling guilty when we do.

I read an article in the *Christian Century* many years ago by Barbara Brown Taylor in which she said something along the lines of this: "There are so many worthwhile pursuits in this world and you will be asked to do many of these worthwhile things, but you will

have to learn to say no to some of them in order for your yeses to really matter." In essence she was warning against the temptation to spread one's self too thin. It's easy for any of us to do. So maybe at the start of this year, instead of making a list of things to do or specific goals to accomplish, consider first what is most important to you. To what are you saying yes or no? What things do you need to say no to in order for your yeses to really count in 2025?

Here is a Kate Bowler blessing for us on the way:
Blessed are we who see the impossibility of solving this absurd, insultingly short life.

It can't be done.

*God, there are lists on lists and errands on errands.
And it tastes like tin in my mouth of the unfinished-ness of my life.*

*Am I counting items instead of knowing what counts?
God help me live here.*

Seeing the whole truth of what is.

*Blessed are we who walk toward the discomfort
bringing what gifts we have
and our sufferings to whether of illness or loss,
grief or betrayal, confusion or powerlessness.*

*Blessed are we who scoot up close so we can whisper
our loves, our fears.*

All that feels too heavy to carry alone.

And all that we wish we could hold on to for longer.

Show me what I love.

Show me what I never want to lose.

*And show me what I no longer need here in this
beautiful, limited life.*

UNDERSTANDING
YOUR

Grief



TEN ESSENTIAL TOUCHSTONES
FOR FINDING HOPE AND
HEALING YOUR HEART
(SECOND EDITION)

ALAN D. WOLFELT, PH.D.

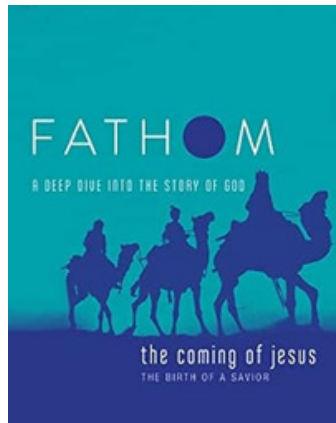
Our December grief gatherings went very well and the group decided to do a 10-week study of the book *Understanding your Grief: Ten Essential Touchstones for Finding Hope and Healing Your Heart* by Alan D. Wolfelt. The gatherings will be held on **Fridays from noon-2:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.**

You are welcome to bring a sack lunch. Books and the Companion Journal can be purchased online as well as through your local book store. **The first gathering will be on Friday, January 10th and will conclude on Friday, March 14th.** For more information or if you have questions, please contact Pastor Rochelle (Pastor@sumnerfcc.org).



From Haley I.: "Thank you so much for all of your donations for my 5th graders. They loved going 'shopping' the last day before winter break and were able to get anything they needed. There were so many 'thank you's' and they really enjoyed all of the items that were donated. So thank you so much. You made their Christmas!!"

Our next **youth/young adult Bible Study** will be **Sunday, January 12th @ 9:00 a.m.** We meet in the small meeting room of the office. Pastries are provided. Bring your favorite coffee or tea and join us for good conversation and study.



We will be finishing up our Fathom Study of the Coming of Jesus. Hope to see you then!



Pastor Rochelle will begin a Baptismal preparation class for those interested in learning more about the basics of Christianity and those interested in considering becoming baptized. Classes will be held on Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m. in the small meeting room of the church office. We will be using *Prepare the Way* materials from our denomination and a schedule of classes is listed below. Baptisms will be planned for Easter Sunday, April 20th

Sunday, January 19th @ 9:00 a.m.: Welcome, Hear and Believe

Sunday, January 26th @ 9:00 a.m.: Repent and Confess

Sunday, February 9th @ 9:00 a.m.: Be Baptized

Sunday, March 9th @ 9:00 a.m.: Receive Forgiveness

Sunday, March 16th @ 9:00 a.m.: Receive the Holy Spirit





In 1990, a simple prayer: "Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those who are without a bowl of soup to eat" was delivered to a small youth group at Spring

Valley Presbyterian Church in Columbia, SC led by Brad Smith, who was serving as a seminary intern at the time. This gave birth to an idea. Why not harness the energy and enthusiasm of Super Bowl weekend, a time when people come together for football, food and fun, to unite the nation for a higher good? Individuals and groups could collect dollars in soup pots and canned food for those in need and send every dollar and food donation DIRECTLY to a local charity of THEIR choice. The first year, they invited 22 area churches to join the team and collected \$5,700 with 100% of donations

distributed to local-area charities. That was 1990. Since then, Tackle Hunger, with its signature Souper Bowl of Caring event has become a national, grass-roots, youth-inspired movement where ordinary people are doing extraordinary good. Over \$193 MILLION in dollars and food has been generated while benefiting thousands of soup kitchens, food banks, meal programs and other hunger-relief charities in local communities.

We will be collecting food items for the Sumner Food Bank throughout January, culminating in our Souper Bowl celebration on Sunday, February 9th. All changed collected in our change jar will also be donated to the Sumner Food Bank.

January						2025
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 10:30 am AI Anon 12:30 pm AA	2 12:00 pm AA 7:00 pm GA	3 12:00 pm AA	4 12:00 pm AA
5 9:00 am Children's Worship & Wonder 10:30 Worship Service Elder Meeting after Service	6 12:00 pm AA	7 10:30 am Prayer Group 12:00 pm AA 6:30 pm AA	8 10:30 am AI Anon 12:30 pm AA	9 12:00 pm AA 7:00 pm GA	10 12:00 pm AA	11 9:00 am – 12:00 pm SCP Clean Day 12:00 pm AA
12 9:00 am Fathom Youth 10:30 Worship Service Board Meeting after Service	13 12:00 pm AA 6:30 pm SCP Board Meeting	14 10:30 am Prayer Group 12:00 pm AA 6:30 pm AA	15 10:30 am AI Anon 12:30 pm AA	16 12:00 pm AA 7:00 pm GA	17 12:00 pm AA	18 12:00 pm AA
19 9:00 am Fathom Youth 10:30 Worship Service	20 12:00 pm AA	21 10:30 am Prayer Group 12:00 pm AA 6:30 pm AA	22 10:30 am AI Anon 12:30 pm AA 6:30 pm Book Club via Zoom	23 12:00 pm AA 7:00 pm GA	24 12:00 pm AA	25 12:00 pm AA
26 10:30 Worship Service	27 12:00 pm AA	28 10:30 am Prayer Group 12:00 pm AA 6:30 pm AA	29 10:30 am AI Anon 12:30 pm AA	30 12:00 pm AA 7:00 pm GA	31 12:00 pm AA	12:00 pm AA