



The Weekly Chalice

July 23rd 2026

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

"O Lord, you have searched me and known me." -
Psalm 139:1

The opening words of Psalm 139 are some of the most comforting and disquieting: God searches and knows us. There is no masking, no veil to cover our faces or our past, no saving face. God searches and knows us. Every bit of us. Nothing is hidden.

The words of Psalm 139 provide more comfort to these words as they describe a God who is with us before, during and at the end of life. But the anxieties arise in our minds: if God searches me and completely knows me, will God accept what God sees? Will God be repelled by what God finds? Will God still love me and accept me?

There is a dichotomy in our faith between works and grace. Both are present in our Scriptures and both can create a sense of conflict for the individual and for communities of faith: Does God expect and accept us by our good works and the more perfectly we do these works the more acceptable we will be to God? Or does God see us, faults and all, and love us regardless of what we do or do not do? You will find affirmative answers to both in our Bible.

As human beings, we have a biological need to make connections and bond with others. It is so ingrained in us, that we will go to great lengths to achieve it

and find ourselves in the depths of despair when it is lacking in our lives. When connection and acceptance seem to be missing, we won't ever be able to get it though coercion, or force...we won't be able to get it through dishonest representation of ourselves. To be loved and accepted fully and unconditionally requires honesty.

Brene Brown, in her research involving thousands of interviews with people, found that people with the strongest sense of love and belonging are the ones who believed they were worthy of it. And that belief was built through being vulnerability and not through being perfect.

Many years ago when I first started ministry, I would write out my prayers. I think they were really beautiful. I spent a lot of time meditating on them, writing and rewriting to get the words just so. They were perfect. People loved them. And then I started doing hospital visits where people wanted me to pray for them on the spot. I didn't have time to meditate and get the sentiment and words exactly perfect. I had to lean into the moment, trust the holy spirit and be vulnerable. Somehow, those imperfect words were perfect for imperfect moments. People loved them too.

I think this is what it means to stand before God who searches and knows us completely. We may not be perfect or do all things perfectly, but we will be loved. We will belong.

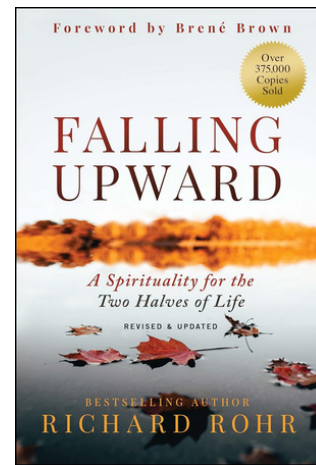
-Rochelle+



We will be collecting backpacks and school supplies for the Sumner Bonney Lake School District Back to School fairs held in August. Community donations are an important part of ensuring there are plenty of supplies for students in our community. In the coming weeks, consider purchasing and donating some of the needed items and thank you in advance for your generosity and support:

- *Backpacks
- *folders
- *notebooks
- *pens/pencils
- *erasers
- *makers
- *rulers
- *colored pencils
- *notebook paper
- *pencil cases
- *calculators
- *Lunch boxes
- *AND/OR...anything else that would be useful for students starting a new school year.

We will be taking donations up to Sunday, August 9th.



Join us for our monthly book group as we begin Richard Rohr's book *Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life*. Our meetings are moving to the last Wednesday of the month at 6:00 p.m. on Zoom. If you are interested in joining, please message Pastor Rochelle for a Zoom invitation:

Pastor@sumnerfcc.org

We hope to see you on Wednesday, July 29th @ 6:00 p.m.! There are a few copies of the book available. If you are able to reimburse, the cost is \$15. Books can also be found through your local library, at or through your local book store or online in print and digital formats.



Free backpacks and supplies for students in need attending schools in the Sumner-Bonney Lake School District are available at Resource Fairs in August:

Thursday, Aug. 13

Noon-2 pm
Daffodil Valley Elementary
1509 Valley Ave., Sumner

Monday, Aug. 17

Noon-2 pm
Liberty Ridge Elementary
12202 209th Ave Ct E., Bonney Lake

Thursday, Aug. 20

4 to 6 pm
Sumner Middle School Commons
1508 Willow St., Sumner



Pastor's Update

This year marks my 21st year of ministry at Sumner First Christian Church. Many things about the congregation and our life together have changed since my arrival in 2005. As is the case with many churches like ours, we have become smaller in regular church attendance and participation. As this has unfolded, church leadership has adjusted in many ways throughout the years including considering and implementing cost-savings measures to meet changing income/expense needs. Covid was a particularly difficult period of time during which my hours and role as Pastor were decreased from full to part time. I have functioned in a part-time capacity since then.

To adapt, I have done a series of second jobs since 2020 to work bi-vocationally. I have just completed a Master of Science degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling that I began in the winter of 2024. I wanted to update you about my continued role at Sumner First Christian Church and my role outside the church as a mental health professional.

I am currently awaiting full licensure in Washington State as an Associate Clinical Mental Health Counselor and I am grateful for the encouragement and prayers you've offered along the way. Several people have asked whether I can provide counseling here at church or meet with members as their therapist. I want to take a moment to explain how these two forms of care—pastoral counseling and licensed therapy—relate to each other, and why they must remain separate.

As your pastor, I am always here to offer spiritual care: prayer, guidance, support, and a listening ear.

Pastoral counseling focuses on faith, meaning, hope, and the spiritual dimensions of life's challenges. It is rooted in our shared commitment to Christ and the life of this congregation.

Licensed therapy, however, is a clinical healthcare service governed by state law and professional ethics. It involves assessment, treatment planning, evidence-based interventions, and formal documentation. Because of these regulations, therapists cannot enter into "dual relationships"—situations where they hold two roles with the same person. Being both someone's pastor and their therapist is considered a dual relationship, and therefore is not permitted.

This means I cannot serve as a therapist for members of our congregation. But I can continue to walk with you pastorally, and I can help connect you with trusted counselors in our community if you are seeking therapy. My hope is that our church remains a place where people feel safe, supported, and encouraged to seek whatever kind of help they need—spiritual, emotional, or clinical.

I also wanted to take a moment to update you on my schedule and availability. I am in clinic on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. **If you have a pastoral need that arises on those days, please contact the church office (253) 863-7858 or one of our Elders (Kris K., Kathy H., John R., Robin C., Debbie I.). Their information is in the church directory.** Our office administrator Bev will resend copies of the directory to all members for your reference. **I am in office on Wednesdays. If you would like to visit with me, please contact me to make an appointment. My email is Pastor@sumnerfcc.org and my phone number is listed in our directory. Regular office hours remain Tuesday-Thursday 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. and it is always good to check with Bev first before coming by (Office@sumnerfcc.org). Please know that emails and voicemails will be checked regularly.**

I am honored to serve you, and grateful for the many ways we care for one another. -Rochelle+

be aware

It has come to our attention that some church members have received scam emails in Pastor Rochelle's name. Please know that neither Pastor Rochelle nor the church office will ever reach out asking for gift cards or money. Always look at the sender email (ours is Office@sumnerfcc.org, Pastor@sumnerfcc.org) as scam email will differ from our own. And if you ever have questions, please call us first. Thank you.



join us on Saturday, August 22nd from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. for a church work day.

We will be doing some indoor cleaning, painting, and working in our front garden to weed, trim back hedges and prepare the labyrinth for the fall. Plan on bringing tools and supplies. We will share lunch together. Please let Pastor Rochelle know of any dietary restrictions (Pastor@sumnerfcc.org).

JULY 2026

Soul Circle

A women's spiritual retreat



Teachings, Meditations & Rituals
to Celebrate Your
Authentic Feminine Wisdom

Based on the book
Big Magic: Creative Living Beyond Fear
by Elizabeth Gilbert

Take time for rest and rejuvenation at the women's fall spiritual retreat. If you are interested, you can get [more information and register here.](#)



Cane Ridge West
Conference &
Retreat Center
Sept. 18-20, 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 10:30 am Prayer Group 10:30 am AI Anon 12:30 pm Sober Sisters 7:00 pm SLAA	2 12:00 pm AA 7:00 pm GA	3 12:00 pm AA	4 Independence Day 12:00 pm AA
5 10:30 Worship Service	6 12:00 pm AA	7 12:00 pm AA 6:30 pm AA	8 10:30 am Prayer Group 10:30 am AI Anon 12:30 pm Sober Sisters 6:00 pm Elders Meeting	9 12:00 pm AA 7:00 pm GA	10 12:00 pm AA	11 12:00 pm AA
12 10:30 Worship Service Board Meeting after Service	13 12:00 pm AA	14 12:00 pm AA 6:30 pm AA	15 10:30 am Prayer Group 10:30 am AI Anon 12:30 pm Sober Sisters	16 12:00 pm AA 7:00 pm GA	17 12:00 pm AA	18 12:00 pm AA
19 10:30 Worship Service Deacon's Meeting after service	20 12:00 pm AA	21 12:00 pm AA 6:30 pm AA	22 10:30 am Prayer Group 10:30 am AI Anon 12:30 pm Sober Sisters	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 12:00 pm AA 6:30 pm AA	29 10:30 am Prayer Group 10:30 am AI Anon 12:30 pm Sober Sisters 6:00 pm Book Club via Zoom	30 12:00 pm AA 7:00 pm GA	31 12:00 pm AA	