



The Weekly Chalice

August 13th 2026

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



There is a song that every
kid in Texas learns:

The stars at night are big
and bright
(clap, clap, clap, clap)
deep in the heart of Texas

The Prairie sky, is wide and high
(clap, clap, clap, clap)
deep in the heart of Texas.

And nothing makes the words of that song more true than a trip to West Texas. I had been to central Texas in high school to Lake Brownwood Christian Retreat Center and sat out on a dock with a bunch of other high school kids and looked up in that big night sky and had seen the Milky Way and remembered feeling like the stars were so bright and vivid that I could reach out and touch them.

I remember going home with a friend from TCU to Alpine, TX and going the Macdonald Observatory adjacent to the Big Bend National Park and having my breath stolen from me at the sight of stars and planets and the beauty of the deserts and mountains in that setting. It was an antidote to what Dr. John La Puma describes in his book as an *Indoor Epidemic*. In his book, Dr. La Puma details peer-reviewed scientific research that demonstrates the healing power of the natural world and how we are ailing as a species as we are further and further removed from the gift that God

has given to us in creation. We are currently overstimulated and soul tired from our devices, the indordinate amount of time we spend indoors, our detachment from creation and from people who have never touched grass making decisions that destroy the natural world around us.



Our National Parks System have always been an antidote to an indoor epidemic and our gateway to the splendor of God's creation. The National Park System began with a bold and hope-filled idea: that some places are so wondrous, so full of God's handiwork, that they should be preserved for the benefit and enjoyment of all people. In 1872, Congress established Yellowstone National Park, the world's first national park, setting aside more than one million acres as a "public park or pleasuring ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people." This movement grew and over time, the United States added parks, monuments, and historic

sites, eventually creating the National Park Service in 1916 to steward these lands "unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations." Today, the National Park System includes more than 400 areas covering over 84 million acres, including Mt. Rainier National Park, each a testament to our shared commitment to protect creation for all.

In terms of water, there are over 150,000 miles of rivers and streams that flow through national parks. There are more than 4 million acres of water bodies—including lakes, reservoirs, and ocean areas—that lie within park boundaries. These waters sustain ecosystems, wildlife, and human communities. They are places of renewal, recreation, and spiritual reflection. They remind us of the Psalmist's words: "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it."

These lands and this water are always susceptible and vulnerable to the monied interests that would exploit, develop and mine them. This is happening right now in Big Bend National Park. Big Bend National Park in West Texas is one of the most remote and rugged landscapes in the country—towering canyons, desert mountains, and the winding Rio Grande. It is also one of the least-crossed regions of the entire U.S.—Mexico border, with illegal crossings dropping 74% between FY 2023 and FY 2025 (from 11,823 to 3,096 apprehensions).

Despite this low level of crossings, the federal government has begun bulldozing portions of Big Bend to construct border-security infrastructure, including: a 24-foot-wide patrol road planned to run across the park, 17 miles of vehicle barriers and extensive surveillance technology, construction activities that have already cleared vegetation, disturbed wildlife habitat, and damaged riparian forest near Santa Elena Canyon. The Department of Homeland Security has waived dozens of environmental laws, including the Endangered Species Act and the National Environmental Policy Act, to expedite construction.

This project is extremely unpopular as local residents,

river guides, conservationists, and former National Park Service leaders have voiced strong opposition because the region is already naturally protected by steep cliffs and remote terrain, construction threatens critical wildlife habitat, including species identified as threatened, blasting and road-building may alter the flow of the Rio Grande, potentially violating the 1970 Boundary Treaty between the U.S. and Mexico, and the project sets precedent for further degradation of public lands as former Big Bend superintendents warn it would be "the most egregious assault on the integrity of the entire National Park System" in more than a century.

Politics become spiritual when decisions by those in power threaten the sanctity of creation and the land with which we have been entrusted. If you would like to voice your opposition to these actions or others that threaten the land and water of creation (or anything else that is of value to you) consider contacting your law makers:

Sen. Maria Cantwell (D)

- Washington, D.C. Phone: [202-224-3441](tel:202-224-3441)
- Tacoma Office: [253-572-2281](tel:253-572-2281)
- Email Contact Form: <https://www.cantwell.senate.gov/contact/email>

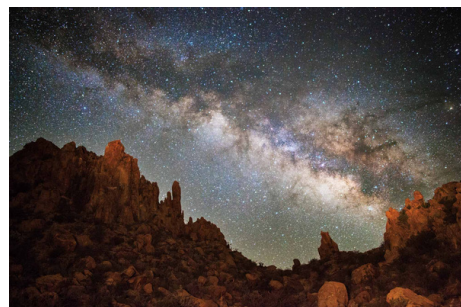
Sen. Patty Murray (D)

- Washington, D.C. Phone: [202-224-2621](tel:202-224-2621)
- Tacoma Office: [253-572-3636](tel:253-572-3636)
- Email Contact Form: <https://www.murray.senate.gov/contact>

U.S. House of Representatives (for Sumner)

Rep. Marilyn Strickland (D)

- Washington, D.C. Phone: [202-225-9740](tel:202-225-9740)
- Email Contact Form: <https://strickland.house.gov/contact>





The Rio Grande River, Big Bend National Park



Much thanks and gratitude to everyone who contributed to our school supply drive (and special thanks to Robin and Gretchen for counting and delivering the items to the Sumner Family Center). Our official count of items includes:

Backpacks - 39	Crayons (box) - 43
Erasers - 53	Folders - 6
Glue bottles - 17	Glue sticks - 32
Highlighter pens - 4	Index cards (pack) - 1
Pens, ballpoint - 34	Markers (pack) - 8
Paper (pack) - 22	Sticky notes (pack) - 2
Pencil grips - 8	Pencil pouches & boxes - 15
Pencil sharpener - 2	Pencils - 520
Watercolor sets - 3	Rulers - 12
Scissors - 49	
Pencils, colored (box) - 10	
Notebooks, 3-ring binder - 6	
Notebooks, spiral & composition - 43	
Lunchbox w/ water bottle - 1	
Total Items - 930/120 pounds	

A big thank you to Sumner First Christian Church for an amazing Fill the Canoe effort! The church collected an incredible 930 items, totaling 120 pounds of school supplies. Thanks to Red Canoe Credit

Union's \$1-per-pound match, those donations also resulted in an additional \$120 contribution to support local students and families.

We're so grateful for your generosity and for helping bless the students of the Sumner-Bonney Lake School District as they head into the new school year prepared and ready to learn! Thank you, again, on behalf of the Sumner-Bonney Lake School District and the Sumner-Bonney Lake Family Resource Center.

- Cindy Conlin, Family Resource Coordinator



Join us and spread the word:
Sumner-Bonney Lake School
District Back to School Resource
Fairs:

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



Join us for an end-of-summer church potluck on Sunday, August 30th following .

worship. Sign up or plan on bringing your favorite summer dish to share as we bid farewell to summer and look forward to the arrival of fall and the beginning of the season of creation



Tom & Erma L. are celebrating their **70th wedding anniversary** Wednesday, August 19th.



OUT OF OFFICE

Since Covid, we have been livestreaming our Sunday morning worship service. The livestream and recording is a wonderful ministry of outreach and means of expanded participation. We are currently in need of additional video operators and slide "clickers" for Sunday morning worship. Training and shadowing opportunities are available. If you are interested, please contact Pastor Rochelle (Pastor@sumnerfcc.org) and thank you in advance!

Pastor Rochelle is out August 17-19 and the office will be closed August 20th. If you need assistance, please leave a voicemail @ 253-863-7858, or email office@sumnerfcc.org-- messages will be returned on August 25th. Please contact an Elder for any pastoral emergencies that arise. There will not be a newsletter next week with the next one published August 27th.



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).

AUGUST 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 12:00 pm AA
2 10:30 Worship Service	3 12:00 pm AA	4 12:00 pm AA 6:30 pm AA	5 10:30 am Prayer Group 10:30 am Al Anon 12:30 pm Sober Sisters 6:00 pm Elders Meeting	6 12:00 pm AA 7:00 pm GA	7 12:00 pm AA	8 12:00 pm AA
9 10:30 Worship Service Board Meeting after Service	10 12:00 pm AA	11 12:00 pm AA 6:30 pm AA	12 10:30 am Prayer Group 10:30 am Al Anon 12:30 pm Sober Sisters	13 12:00 pm AA 7:00 pm GA	14 12:00 pm AA	15 12:00 pm AA
16 10:30 Worship Service	17 12:00 pm AA	18 12:00 pm AA 6:30 pm AA	19 10:30 am Prayer Group 10:30 am Al Anon 12:30 pm Sober Sisters	20 12:00 pm AA 7:00 pm GA	21 12:00 pm AA	22 9:00 am Church Work Day 12:00 pm AA
23 10:30 Worship Service	24 12:00 pm AA	25 12:00 pm AA 6:30 pm AA	26 10:30 am Prayer Group 10:30 am Al Anon 12:30 pm Sober Sisters 6:00 pm Book Club via Zoom	27 12:00 pm AA 7:00 pm GA	28 12:00 pm AA	29 12:00 pm AA
30 10:30 Worship Service Potluck	31 12:00 pm AA					