



The Weekly Chalice

October 22nd, 2026

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



In preparation for All Saint's Sunday, November 1st, I have been looking at different materials and came across this really beautiful reflection that I wanted to share with you here. If you have a loved one whose name you'd like read and remembered on November 1st, be sure to write that name on our list in person or send Pastor Rochelle an email at Pastor@sumnerfcc.org. -Rochelle+

All Saint's Sunday, By Paul E. Detterman

Death is a very real word and a very real reality. For followers of the One who defeated death, it is the next logical step in our eternal trust walk with triune God.

Just last week I had the honor of sitting with a close relative who was dying. At age 95 she was coming to the end of a rich and full life with an uncommon amount of grace. Her vision had long-since been depleted due to macular degeneration. A once-svelte body had become increasingly dysfunctional through

the ravages of age. But her heart was tender and her spirit was bright. As I sat by her bed on what would become the last Friday afternoon of her life, she asked me to dial the numbers of friends and relatives and hold her Jitterbug phone close to her ear so she could talk one last time with people she cherished and say a final "goodbye."

I'm a pastor. I've been with people who were dying—many times. I've been around people and their foibles a lot. What shouldn't have surprised me like it did was the inability of the people she called to deal with her beautiful gesture of outreach. They didn't know how to respond to someone they would likely never speak with again. Such is the stigma actual death still enjoys in our "advanced" contemporary culture. After some small talk, the conversations would go something like this:

Well (insert uncomfortable pause of varying lengths), thanks so much for the call.

You're sounding great!"

(She just told you she was DNR, lying in a hospice bed, with only days to live.)

"Um (another pause) so, I guess I'll see you soon then...."

(No...no, I'm pretty sure you won't. That was kind of the point.) (continued...)

Most of us don't know how to deal with death. Even followers of the resurrected Christ say things like, "I hear she 'passed'." That's what you say when someone gets the results of an exam—not at the end of a life.

Death is a very real word and a very real reality. For those whose religion is based on other philosophical systems, death might just be the cessation of this accidental molecular anomaly we call "life." But for followers of the One who defeated death, it is the next logical step in our eternal trust walk with triune God.

Why am I writing this in a worship blog in October? Because the church has a solution to our discomfort with disassociation from ongoing life on terra firma: All Saints' Day.

On All Saints' Day (or, for most of us, the Sunday closest to it) we can boldly mention the (culturally) unmentionable, remembering all whose lives have been made holy because "of the unmerited work of Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit." (The Worship Sourcebook, 2nd edition, p. 754).

What a world. On the one hand, our entertainment of choice is often filled with death and destruction. We pay good money to see lots of people we don't know die. On the other hand, we don't know how to respond when someone close to us calls to say their final goodbye. Happily, this world has a Savior who has triumphed over death, that Savior has a mission, and that mission has a church. So, when we gather as a church, let's mention the unmentionable—call it by its name, and proclaim Christ's victory on the first Sunday in November and every other Sunday. And if someone calls you to say goodbye, thank them for their life and their love and celebrate with them that this life we know is just the foretaste.



Gwinwood Retreat Center will hold its annual meeting at 11:00 am on Saturday, November 14, and we hope you can be there! The meeting will be in person at Gwinwood (you can also choose to join virtually via Zoom). Lunch will be provided.

Church Owners (western Washington Northern Lights Region Disciples churches) may register two delegates plus their pastor to vote on agenda items. Non-voters are also welcome. If you are interested in attending and/or being a voting representative, let Pastor Rochelle know by November 5th.



The Northern Lights Region has begun a program of Regional Eldership for local congregations. Below is the introduction letter from our Regional Elder, Tom Yates, who we hope to have visit us in worship soon.

Dear Tahoma District Clergy and Congregations: I am reaching out to introduce myself in the role of Regional Elder for the Tahoma District. This is an initiative of the Northern Lights Region, introduced at the Assembly in Kennewick. The intent of this effort is to support and extend the reach of the Regional Minister as he seeks to support this very large (geographically!) Region. It is an honor and a (continued...)

privilege to be asked to fill this role. Though I am not a stranger to many, here is a bit about myself. I am a cradle Disciple. My parents were members of Opportunity Christian Church in Spokane when I was born. When we later moved to the west side and settled in the northern Seattle suburb of Alderwood Manor, our family became part of a new church start that was known at the time as Edmonds-Lynnwood Christian Church. I am a happy alumnus of Gwinwood every summer that I was eligible to go to church camp. In high school I was elected to the state CYF Council, planning and conducting weekend events across Washington. After graduation from Bothell High School, I enlisted in the US Air Force Reserve at McChord AFB where I served as a Chaplain Services Specialist.

During the 1969 Disciples General Assembly in Seattle I performed with Covenant Players, a Christian based repertory theater company that I had met in the chapel program at McChord. That experience led to 14 years with the Players, touring, performing and leading teams all over the US, Canada, Europe, and the Pacific Rim.

After marrying Patty, whom I met in Covenant Players and starting a family we moved from the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania area to Southern California and took up residence in Disciples Seminary Foundation housing at the School of Theology at Claremont. After serving student ministry positions in four congregations including an interim ministry at Delhaven Christian Church in LaPuente I was called to be Sr. Minister at First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Longview, WA. With an M.Div. and a D.Min in hand we moved back to my home state and spent six years of pastoral ministry in Longview and then an additional seven years of ministry leading First Christian Church, Vancouver.

Through an opportunity to serve the community hospital in Longview by carrying a pager two nights a week on-call as a chaplain and later joining a US Army Reserve unit in Vancouver where I was commissioned into military chaplain ministry, I recognized that my gifts and graces were best suited for ministry outside the bounds



of a local congregation. Long story is that I became a full-time hospital chaplain and part-time Army Chaplain. After 9/11 my unit was mobilized and deployed first to Afghanistan for a year and five years later to Iraq, also for a year of duty. I trained in Korea and many parts of the United States during that time as well. Very shortly after retiring from both the Army and the hospital I was called by Disciples Home Missions to the position of Chaplain Endorsing Officer for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). That awesome ministry gave me the honor of serving and supporting over 350 Disciples Endorsed Chaplains across the country and in posts aboard ship and on installations in several overseas locations.

Although I am retired now from that position as well, I do work a few shifts a week back at PeaceHealth Southwest Medical Center in Vancouver. I certainly consider the call by the Northern Lights Region to serve as a Regional Elder to be both an honor and a privilege. I look forward to getting acquainted with clergy and congregations in our corner of this vast Region.

Regional Elder is a volunteer position designed to be relational, not administrative. It is hoped that the Elder may be a non-invasive resource and genuine pastoral support for pastors, their families, and congregational leaders. In military parlance the Regional Elder may be a "force multiplier" for ministry. By my count there are twelve active congregations in the Tahoma District and I am setting a goal (continued...)

to visit one congregation each month in this first year long trial period. I would love to have an invitation from you to visit worship and be given a very brief opportunity to share information about the Regional Elder pilot project.

I look forward to this ministry of support and service. Respectfully and with prayers for your ministry as well, The Rev. Dr. Tom Yates



October 2026



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As November nears, it is a time of harvest and thanksgiving. We turn to stewardship during this season to remember and give thanks for what we have and to prayerfully consider how God calls us to care for and share these resources of time, talent and money in our church. We will be sharing stories of our ministry and impact as a church and will ask that you consider how you might begin to or continue to support the church through your resources. We are grateful for all of your gifts and for the ministry of Sumner First Christian Church!

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