



Take Me With You!

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The Pew Rack

the quarterly magazine of the linden presbyterian church

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WELCOME

IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST - WE WELCOME YOU!

We praise and thank God that you are here today - whether this is your first time or you have been worshipping here for decades, we hope that you experience Jesus Christ's blessing on your life through the worship of this church today.

We invite you to take this magazine with you so that you can get to know more about how we try to keep Christ at the center of our lives and lift up his holy name in worship!

Sunday Morning Information

Here is some information that we hope will help guide you through your time with us this morning, there is more information in the worship bulletin you received when you came in. Please ask a greeter, the pastor, or the person next to you if there is anything we can help you with during your time with us this morning!

RESTROOMS

The nearest restrooms are beneath the sanctuary. Please go down the stairs behind the sanctuary and they will be on your right. Wheelchair accessible restrooms are up the ramp and through the fellowship hall.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

We offer Sunday School for children pre-school age through fifth grade at our 10:30 worship. Children begin worship in the sanctuary and are dismissed to go to their classrooms with their teachers. Classrooms are beneath the fellowship hall and are best accessed during worship by going down the stairs behind the sanctuary. Children return to the sanctuary for communion on days communion is celebrated.

COFFEE HOUR

We invite you to a time of fellowship, coffee, and food after each of our times of worship. This is a great opportunity to get to know folks and share in a relaxing time of friendship.

CHILD CARE

We are pleased to offer childcare at all Sunday morning worship services and at special worship services. Our nursery caregiver, Sandy Oda, is certified and loves children. Our nursery is designed for children birth to age two but can accommodate older children on a case-by-case basis.

FREE WI-FI

We invite you to take advantage of our free wireless internet throughout the church. The guest network is guestlindenpres and no password is necessary to log on.

INFO TABLE

The info table in the fellowship hall has sign-up sheets, church information, mission opportunities, and many resources to help you and your family as we seek to honor God together. If you heard about it during worship, the information will be on the info table in the fellowship hall.

CONTACT US!

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Mission Statement

Linden Presbyterian Church is a Christ-centered, biblically-based community seeking to serving, engaging, and leading all to become deeper disciples of Jesus.

We invite you to join us in our mission of glorifying God through Jesus Christ with everything we have and with all of who we are!

Our Mission

In everything we do we seek to glorify our loving God who seeks out a personal relationship with each one of us. The call on our lives is to let the Lord into every part of our lives, love God with everything that we are and with everything that we have, and to love those around us with a radical love that transforms relationships! We do this in many ways. We are:

Christ-centered We strive to have our whole lives centered on God's one and only Son Jesus Christ. We seek for nothing apart from Christ but do our best to praise him and seek him alone. Our worship and praise is centered on Christ. Our preaching, teaching, and message to the world is centered on Christ and the new life of grace we have in him.

Biblically-based We believe that the only true and reliable source for information on the salvation we have in Christ and God's plan for our lives and the world is contained in God's Word written for us: the Bible. The Bible is our source for what we believe, our preaching, teaching, how we organize ourselves, and our lives.

Community We are a community of seekers, disciples, and apostles of Jesus Christ who come together as God's Church to worship, learn, serve, and do life together. Jesus Christ calls us to do these things *together* and so we form a community to do these things in relationship with each other.

Serving We are a community called to serve one another and to serve the world with Christ's love, grace, and mercy. We strive to serve people with Christ's heart and passion whether it is a church mission activity, at our places of work, and everywhere in between.

Engaging We engage people with the message of forgiveness and transformation in Jesus Christ. This is the best news that the world has ever and will ever receive! We look to communicate this news through ministries that engage each other and the world.

Leading We look to lead ourselves and our brothers and sisters into the knowledge of Jesus Christ. We seek to be faithful in the leadership of our lives, our families, our vocations, our community, and our world.

All The Good News of Jesus Christ is for everyone and we continue to break new ground in making LPC a place for everybody.

Become deeper disciples of Jesus We deeply desire that everything that we do, say, minister, and live is to make ourselves and those around us have a deeper joy and love of Jesus Christ permeate throughout our lives. We desperately attempt to be a community that makes and grows disciples.



Holy but Not Perfect: Our Worship

Christian worship joyfully ascribes all praise and honor, glory and power to the triune God [God the Father, God the Son (Jesus Christ), and God the Holy Spirit]. In worship the people of God acknowledge God present in the world and in their lives. As they respond to God's claim and redemptive action in Jesus Christ, believers are transformed and renewed. In worship the faithful offer themselves to God and are equipped for God's service in the world. - Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA)

Psalm 95:1-7

O come, let us sing to the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation! Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise! For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In his hand are the depths of the earth; the heights of the mountains are his also. The sea is his, for he made it, and the dry land, which his hands have formed.

O come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker! For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.

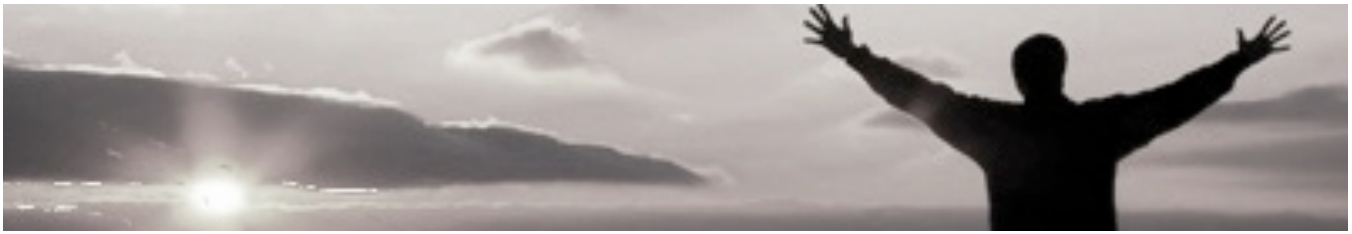
Put another way: we give our whole lives over to the whole God and recognize and celebrate the presence of God in our whole lives. We respond to what Jesus Christ has done for us and for the world and know that our lives have radically changed because of the person and work of Jesus Christ. We offer ourselves in service to God.

All of that is definitely true and yet we fall short of getting it right. While we don't often like to proclaim that we don't do things right in our lives we actually are called to come worship God out of admitting that we don't get it right! We come to worship because we know that God does get it right and we praise him for welcoming us into his presence. Jesus Christ takes our efforts at worship and turns it into glorious praise before God the Father - our worship is holy and pleasing before God.

We come to worship to be transformed and celebrate transformation. In Jesus Christ, we know that we have a new life. We aren't stuck in our old habits and our old ways of thinking. We don't have to play by the same depressing rules. **We are freed to have our joy in Christ!** When we come together to praise God or to be in the presence of others praising God, we are opening ourselves up to the Holy Spirit working in our lives - we are being opened to letting our old identity go and being given a new identity in Christ.

We do this in old and new ways. There are hymns and spiritual songs contained in the Bible. Interestingly, the words are often closer to what we consider hymns today, but the instruments and way they would have been sung are closer to what we consider praise songs today. Some of us connect with formality, some of us connect with casualness. Whatever style of worship God is calling you to engage in (probably all of them!), we want to welcome you and know that you have a spiritual home in our communal worship.

In all of our worship we seek to be focused on Christ and His Word and organize our worship on what is commanded of us in Scripture!



Why Do We Do *That* In Worship?

In this section, we will try to briefly shed some light on why we do what we do in our times of communal worship. All of our times of worship include something along these lines. You'll notice that a theme throughout is that we do these things because we find God's call to do them in the Bible.

Call to Worship Our call to worship is a summons from God to come and worship Him. We are called and reminded to be faithful to the call we have to give all glory to God the Father through Jesus Christ. We use passages directly from or inspired by the Bible.

Singing and Music Whether hymns or praise songs or whatever you like to call them, we sing so that we can make melody to the ears of God. Music and singing are very expressive forms of communication that we have been given to express all manners of praise - through joy and through sorrow. We are told in Ephesians 5:19-20 to "be filled with the Spirit, as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." We encourage you to sing loudly and boldly and let it make a sweet sound to our God!

Prayer of Confession and Assurance of Pardon We confess our sins together that we may confess that Jesus is Lord and Savior and that we need his salvation. We take this time to be released of the sin that weighs us down as a community and as individuals just as Jesus taught us in the Lord's Prayer. We are then assured that because of the work of Jesus Christ and through our faith in Him that all our sins are forgiven.

Sharing in the Peace of Christ This is a tangible way that we show that we are at peace with one another. We have God's peace through Jesus Christ and we extend this peace to others to show that we are united and that nothing stands between us.

Scripture Reading We typically read passages from both the Old and New Testaments because the whole Bible is God's Word written to us and for us and is useful so that we will know of God's love for and actions in the world, the salvation we have in Christ, and the presence of the Holy Spirit amongst us. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 tells us that, "All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work."

Sermon We have the sermon so that the pastor can have a job. Not really. God calls us to proclaim the Word that all may believe because the Good News of Jesus Christ is *heard*. We mine the scriptures so that we may be transformed by and live our lives according to the Living Word Jesus Christ.

Offering The offering is a time to live into the commands of scripture to return what we have been blessed with to the Body of Christ - the Church. It is a time to commit our time, talent, and resources to living a Christ-centered life.

Prayers of the People We are called by God to be a people that are in regular communication with Him and we call this prayer. It is a time to adore God, thank God, and ask that God be active in particular situations in our world and in our lives. We invited you to verbally lift up a prayer to God that our whole community might join you in that prayer - the heart behind the prayer is more important than the words!



Who is That Guy?

a short biography of Pastor Seth Normington

Pastor Seth was born and raised in Spokane, Washington where the weather is nothing like the weather in Seattle. Both his mother's and father's families have a rich farming and ranching heritage but his grandparents were the ones in their families who found something else to do. He was baptized at a Presbyterian church that his mother joined the summer before he was born. He grew up playing every sport he could possibly play. He stopped going to church in fifth grade but things of faith were consistently on his mind.

In junior high and high school, Seth spent most of his time outside of school running cross country and track. In high school, he was at school by 6:30 in the morning to run and almost every day spent time after school running (he was thinner then). During his senior year his parents divorced. He was a captain on the 5th-ranked track team in the nation.

The summer before college, Seth felt called to take a deeper look at his faith but didn't know what to do about it besides reading his Bible. The day before classes started at Western Washington University, he went to the INN with a friend. There he found 600 college students praising God. He knew immediately this is where God was calling him. At the INN, he joined and led small groups, went on mission trips, wrote and performed in skits and videos, and spent a year working at the INN after graduating with a degree in human services.

Feeling called to ministry of some stripe, Seth was in youth ministry in Spokane while earning an MA in Religious Studies at Gonzaga University. He then moved to the San Francisco area to serve as youth director at the Presbyterian Church of Novato. During these years, he went to Tijuana, Mexico seven times to build houses and his heart was struck by the need for mission work and the depths of poverty in our world.

He went to Princeton Theological Seminary in New Jersey where he earned a Masters of Divinity degree and served people with developmental disabilities and led the educational ministry at a local church.

Pastor Seth has been the pastor at LPC since July 2010. He especially loves the opportunity to preach and teach God's Word, celebrate the sacraments, and teach and lead people to deeper discipleship in Christ.

In his off hours, Seth is the assistant coach for Linden High School boys cross country (which came in second in the state last season) and boys and girls track and field. He also enjoys watching shows on Netflix, cooking, golfing, drinking coffee, reading several newspapers/websites each day, pretending to himself that he reads more books than he actually does, exercising, and watching baseball.

You can reach Pastor Seth at pastorseth@lindenpres.com or 810.735.5755.



Youth Ministry

growing disciples

Regular Schedule

Middle School 6:00-7:00

High School 7:30-9:00

Campaigners is a Friday morning Bible study for high school students. We meet at 6:00am for breakfast, good times, and Bible study. We meet at 521 South St. and are happy to provide a ride to school.

Chatting with Jake - January 18, 5:30pm

Parents, come meet up with Jake at the church for coffee and chatting! Are you excited that your child is attending youth group, but you're not sure how to help them grow? Then this meeting is for you! Jake will be collecting emails and phone numbers from parents to be able to send out scripture references, topics covered, and follow-up questions you may want to ask your child on the way home to keep the conversation going. The youth will be in the Fireside Room with pizza during this meeting.

Food Bank of Eastern Michigan – January 24, 9:00am – 12:00pm

Come join our youth as we put our faith into action at the food bank. Middle school high school, and parents are welcome to join! There will be a carpooling caravan leaving from the church at 8:30am.

Winter Weekend for Middle School - February 6th - 8th

The middle school will be attending Timberwolf Lake February 6-8 and all 6th – 8th graders are invited! Spend a weekend in a winter wonderland at a resort just for kids! Forms are on the information table in Whitney Hall or see Jake. Chances to win money for winter weekend are happening at middle school youth group on Sunday nights 6-7!

Valentine's Day Date Night Babysitting – February 14, 5:00 – 9:00pm

Do you want to go out to dinner on Valentine's Day, but don't have a sitter for the kids? The high school youth group members and youth support team are here to help! Drop your kids off at LPC any time from 5:00 – 9:00 for some fun and food while you enjoy a night out. Your freewill donations will help the youth pay their way towards camp.

Rock and Worship Roadshow – February 27, meet at the church and leave by 4:00pm

The youth will be heading to the Eastern Michigan University Convocation Center for a night of fun, music, and loving on Jesus. MercyMe, Crowder, Matt Maher, Jamie Grace, Tedashii, and Group 1 Crew will be playing, and Shaun Groves will be the guest speaker. And it's only \$10 at the door! All of this awesomeness in one place? Sign me up!

Upcoming Sermons: The Book of Ruth

background as we explore the Book of Ruth

For approximately the first six weeks of the year (we will pause on January 25 for a “state of the church” sermon), we will explore the Book of Ruth.

Why preach from the Old Testament?

We hear in 2 Timothy 3:16 that all scripture is God-breathed and useful for teaching and training for righteousness and the reference here would have been primarily to what we consider the Old Testament at the time of the writing. We ignore the rich narratives and instruction of God’s holy word in the OT at our own peril and won’t fully enjoy the New Testament writings, which often refer, allude to, and presume a knowledge of the OT. While we won’t get that all by going through only the Book of Ruth, we will get a greater sense of redemption and our Triune God as we look at this scripture.



Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld: "Ruth in Boaz's Field", 1828

What's the story in a paragraph?

The family of Elimelech emigrates to Moab during a famine and his boys marry Moabite women. Elimelech and the boys die and leave the women widows. Elimelech’s wife, Naomi, releases the women and tells the to go back to their mothers. Orpah does but Ruth clings to Naomi. They go back to Bethlehem and live impoverished lives until a wealthier man takes an interest in Ruth and she gets in a compromising position. What happens next? You’ll have to show up to find out!

The plan (subject to change...):

January 5 - A Family of Sojourners

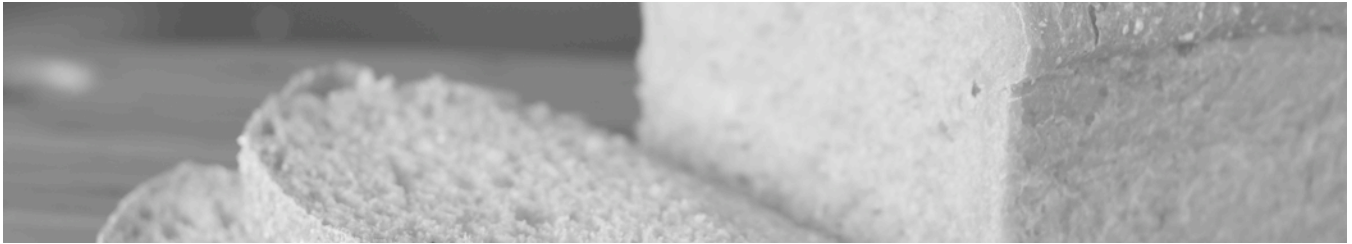
January 11 - Returning Home

January 18 - Amid Alien Corn?

February 1 - The Encounter on the Threshing Floor

February 8 - The Resolution at the City Gate

February 15 - A Son is Born



Upcoming Sermons: 40 Days in the Word

a series during Lent focusing on God's Word

This sermon series, based off of a series done by Rick Warren at Saddleback Church, will help us learn and explore what it means to rely on the Word of God to drive our lives and define our relationship with the Triune God. Fortunately, the sermon titles give us a great outline of what we will cover:

February 15 - Building My Life on the Bible

February 22 - Why Can I Trust the Bible?

March 1 - How the Bible Changes Us

March 8 - Seeing What God Wants Me to See

March 15 - How to Study a Bible Passage

March 22 - Understanding the Meaning of a Text

March 29 - Integrating God's Word Into My Life

We look forward to you joining us in worship for this special time of learning and transformation as we dig into God's Word and how to study it.

Adult Education/Discipleship

a season of growing together in God's Word

During the first quarter of 2015, we will have adult education opportunities that correspond with the the two sermon series that we will be journeying through together (The Book of Ruth and 40 Days in the Word). Pastor Seth will lead these classes at two different times each week. The first opportunity will be on Monday evenings from 7:00-8:00pm. The second opportunity will be Tuesday mornings from 10:30-11:30. Join in when it is convenient for you!

Also, our small group ministry continues to build strong disciples and fellowship. If you'd like to connect with a small group, please contact Pastor Seth.



The Liturgical Calendar

a quick look at some of the holy dates on our calendar this quarter

First of all, what does “liturgical” mean? Liturgy is from the ancient Greek work *leitourgia* (lay-ee-tor-gee-ah). Originally, *leitourgia* was the money and works that the rich gave to support the city or state. The term quite literally means “the work of the people” but takes on a more accurate sense if we said “public work” or “public service.” That’s the sense we are using when we talk about Christian liturgy, it is the public service/worship of the people of God. Worship is the chief service we do to honor God. So the liturgical calendar is the calendar of public worship.

Advent marks the beginning of the Christian liturgical year and is the four Sundays preceding Christmas Day. The word comes from the Latin word for the second coming of Christ. It is a time of waiting and expectation for Christ to return and is a commemoration of the waiting of Israel (and us all) for our Savior to come.

Christmas Day might not need a whole lot of expectation. However, it is interesting to note that in the ancient world the vast majority of people did not have the date of their birth recorded but perhaps only the year. There are many theories, but Early Christianity chose to celebrate Jesus’ birth on December 25, it is not necessarily the day he was born nor is this date in scripture.

Christmastide is more commonly known as the twelve days of Christmas and begins with Christmas Eve and basically goes through Epiphany. It is traditionally seen as a time of festival and splendor.

Epiphany of the Lord or Epiphany (which in ancient Greek means “manifestation” or “striking appearance”) is the celebration of the revelation of God the Son as a human being in Jesus Christ. In the West, we typically commemorate this in conjunction with the Magi seeing Jesus and thus Jesus’ physical manifestation to the Gentiles. The day of the Epiphany is always marked on January 6, however celebrations may take place the following Sunday coinciding with the Baptism of the Lord.

Baptism of the Lord is also what it sounds like. This day commemorates the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River by John. Jesus’ public ministry is inaugurated with his baptism. The Baptism of the Lord is celebrated on the first Sunday after Epiphany (January 11 in 2015).

Transfiguration of the Lord is the commemoration of Jesus’ transfiguration on a mountain (see Matthew 17:1-9, Mark 9:2-8, Luke 9:28-36, 2 Peter 1:16-18). On the Western calendar, this day is celebrated on the last Sunday before Ash Wednesday (February 15, 2015).

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the season of Lent which is a season of fasting and repentance (hence Mardi Gras - Fat Tuesday is the night before) marking forty days, Sundays exclusive, until the resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday. We will worship at 7:00pm on February 18 (Ash Wednesday).



Upcoming Events

a look at upcoming events

Christmas Eve Worship: Lessons & Carols - December 24 at 7:00pm

We will gather together for worship that centers on readings from the Word of God and the beautiful music of the season. We invite you to join us and bring the gang. Childcare provided.

One Worship Gathering and Brunch - December 29 at 10:00am

We will have one worship gathering the Sunday after Christmas Day and share in a wonderful brunch afterwards. Come for an enriching time of worship and a blessed time of food and fellowship.

Presbyterian Women and Men's Club - December 6, January 3, and February 7

Women and men of all ages are invited to check out the fellowship ministry of the Presbyterian Women and Men's Club. Both groups meet at the church at 8:30am on the dates listed above. Gatherings tend to include food, fellowship, Bible study, and prayer. Contact the office to be connected with more details.

Deposit Bottle/Can Collection for Youth Ministry - December 28, January 25, and February 22

Our middle school and high school students will be returning deposit cans and bottles to raise money for summer camps, adventures, and retreats. On these Sunday mornings, you may leave your nicely bagged deposit items near the Fellowship Hall entrance door and our youth ministry will return them to collect the funds.

VBS Planning Meetings – January 14 and February 25, both at 6:00pm

Wait, VBS planning meetings in January and February? Yes! This year, the theme will be based around heroes of the Bible, culminating with Jesus as the Ultimate Super Hero. We are planning our own curriculum this year, so help us hit the ground running! We will be discussing which heroes to include, game/snack/craft ideas, which week of the summer to hold it, and we need your help! Have you ever wanted to help out with VBS, but work weekday mornings and felt like you've never been able to? Here's your chance; we'd love for you to join us! Please contact Kristen Garmyn or Gretchen Sutto with questions or suggestions.

Annual Meeting - January 25

On January 25, we will have one worship gathering at 10:00 followed by our annual meeting and luncheon. The annual meeting is a great time to learn more about the ministries of our congregation and, for members, an important time to participate in the governance of our congregation. We will have a great meal so we invite you to join us!

Ash Wednesday Worship - February 18 at 7:00pm

As we mentioned on page 15, Ash Wednesday is the beginning of the Lenten season of repentance as we prepare for the death and resurrection of Christ. We will gather in worship this day to be reminded of our need for a savior and rest in the assurance that our Savior has come in Jesus Christ.

Gazing Ahead: Calendar

DECEMBER

- 2ND BOARD OF DEACONS MEETING
- 2ND PRESBYTERY MEETING IN MIDLAND
- 6TH PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN AND MEN'S CLUB
- 8TH YOUTH SUPPORT TEAM MEETING
- 10TH COMMITTEE/TEAM MEETINGS
- 17TH SESSION MEETING
- 14TH YOUTH MINISTRY CHRISTMAS PARTY
- 22ND NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
- 24TH CHRISTMAS EVE LESSONS AND CAROLS WORSHIP
- 24-26 OFFICE CLOSED
- 28TH ONE WORSHIP GATHERING

JANUARY

- 1-2 OFFICE CLOSED
- 3RD PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN AND MEN'S CLUB
- 6TH BOARD OF DEACONS MEETING
- 12TH ANNUAL REPORTS DUE
- 14TH COMMITTEE/TEAM MEETINGS
- 16-17 OFFICER RETREAT
- 18TH CHATTING WITH JAKE
- 19TH OFFICE CLOSED
- 25TH ONE WORSHIP GATHERING; ANNUAL MEETING AND LUNCHEON
- 26TH NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
- 28TH SESSION MEETING

For a more complete listing of upcoming events, please look to the monthly newsletter and the weekly worship bulletin. You may also go online to lindenpres.com, call the office at 810.735.5755, or email at lpcoffice@lindenpres.com for more information

FEBRUARY

- 3RD BOARD OF DEACONS MEETING
- 6-8 MIDDLE SCHOOL WINTER WEEKEND
- 7TH PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN AND MEN'S CLUB
- 11TH COMMITTEE/TEAM MEETINGS
- 16TH MAGAZINE DEADLINE
- 18TH ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP
- 23RD NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
- 25TH SESSION MEETING