

march - may 2015

Take Me With You!

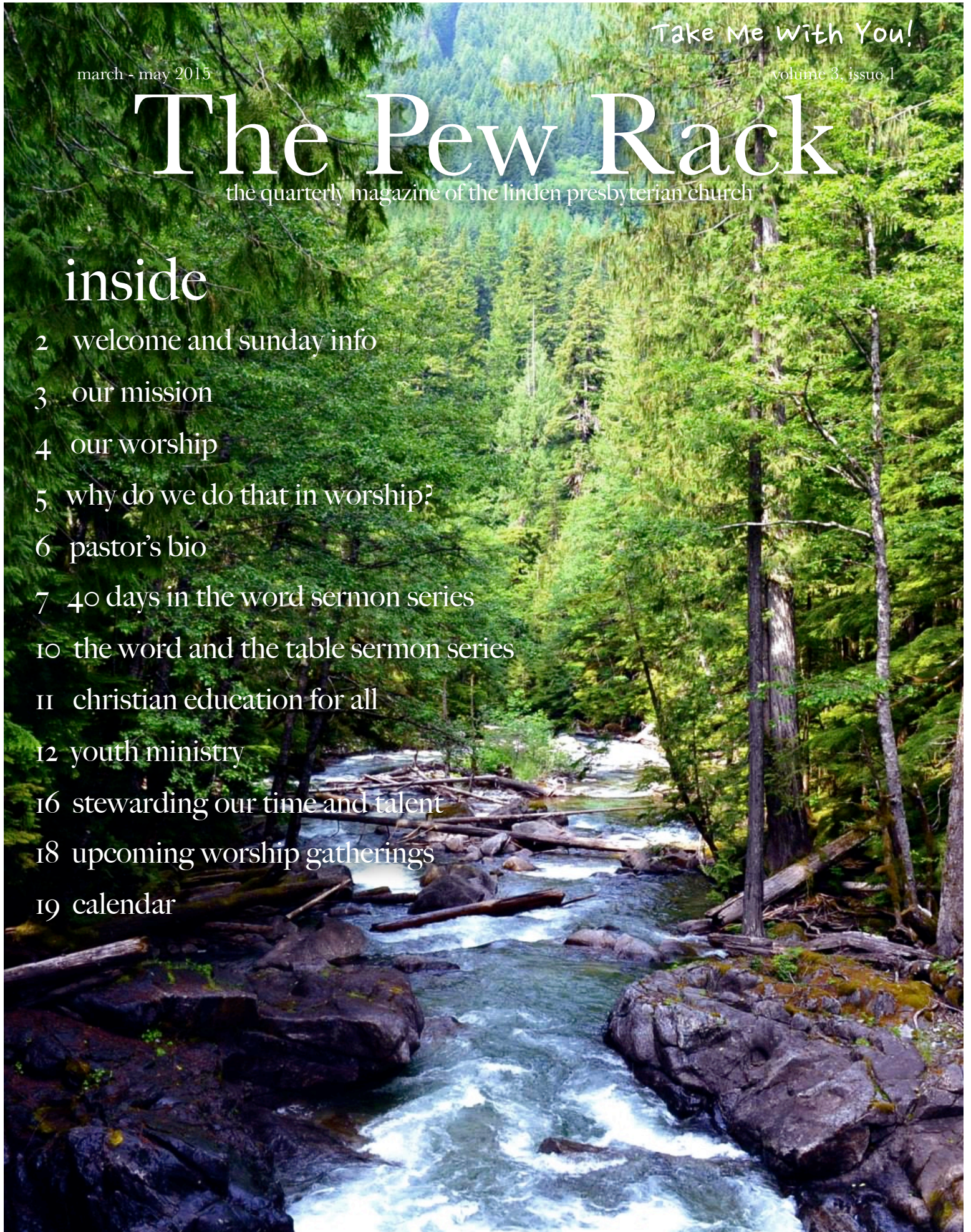
volume 3, issue 1

# 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. Fully accessible restrooms are by the fellowship hall. Please go up the sanctuary ramp to access them.

### 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!

810.735.5755

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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.

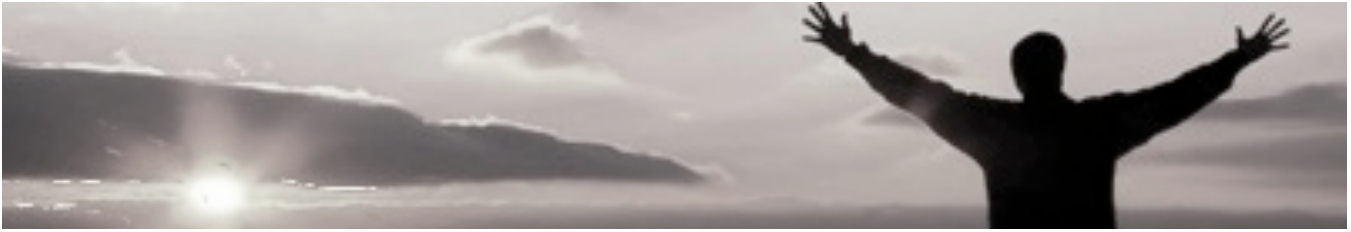
**Put another way:** we give our whole lives over to the whole God and recognize and celebrate the presence of God in our whole lives. We respond to what Jesus Christ has done for us and for the world and know that our lives have radically changed because of the person and work of Jesus Christ. We offer 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 unburden ourselves 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 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 5<sup>th</sup>-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.

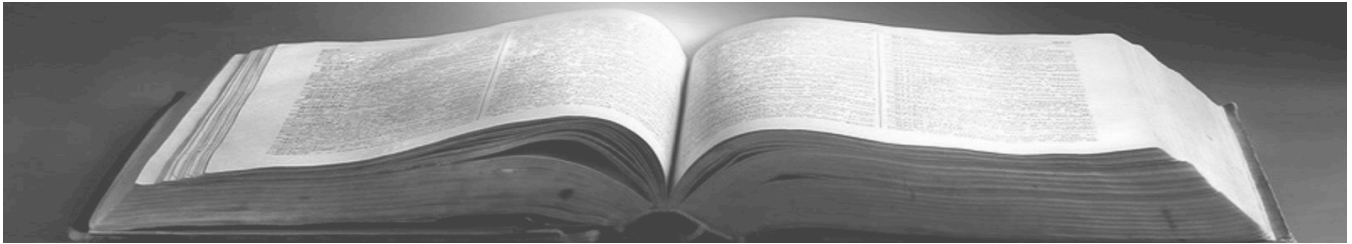
Feeling called to ministry of some stripe, Seth was in youth ministry in Spokane while earning an MA in Religious Studies at Gonzaga University. He then moved to the San Francisco area to serve as youth director at the Presbyterian Church of Novato. During these years, he went to Tijuana, Mexico seven 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 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](mailto:pastorseth@lindenpres.com) or 810.735.5755.



## 40 Days in the Word

background as we end our sermon series based on the confession

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 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.

### Building My Life Based on Scripture

Let's look at James 1:19-21:

*Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires. Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you.*

**Quick to Listen and Slow to Speak:** Is this not the first step in learning? I think the best way to really solidify knowledge is to talk about it or teach it to someone else, but first we must be receivers of knowledge. The best way to receive God's Word is by listening to the Bible read (whether we read it to ourselves or hear another read it). The Holy Spirit has a hard time moving in us if we are never able to quiet ourselves and have a constantly rambling internal monologue and are simply waiting for another to cease speaking so we can get in our next words. Building your life based on scripture requires the cultivation of a listening spirit. This doesn't mean you need to be silent all the time, but you need to grow in your ability to listen.

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## Building My Life Based on Scripture

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**Slow to become angry:** Perhaps one of the great and overlooked spiritual disciplines of our time. Being quick to anger and to fight for your point seems to be becoming a hallmark of our American culture. Such a trait is not how we advance in building ourselves upon the Word. We don't listen when we are angry. We aren't open to movements of the Spirit when we are upset. When we are angry or overwrought we become defensive to everything from the outside. But calmness lowers the blood pressure and the mind pressure. Cultivate the ability to reflect before you react. Establish a habit to help you with this practice. Are you wanting to be angry? Perhaps you could pull out your Bible and dive in for a quick scripture session. Perhaps your first reaction should be to turn to God in prayer. The next part of the verse might help you to realize that your anger isn't the offering God is looking for nor the path to the plan God has for you:

**Your anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires:** Contrary to what we often see in Christian circles, getting "mad as hell and I'm not going to take it anymore" is not the apex of Christian virtues. There isn't even a whole lot of room for your perceived "righteous anger." You are not called to be a doormat, but that doesn't mean you are being called to rage on the people with whom you are in conflict.

**Get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent:** The Holy Spirit is seeking to plant God's Word firmly in your heart but that becomes more difficult if the soil of your heart is filled with weeds (see Matthew 13:1-23). Pray for God to get rid of the filth in your life and be diligent in resisting evil temptations. Anything that is evil is blocking our hearing of God's Word. This process is also accomplished as we study the Bible. The more we are in scripture, the more we know God's will, and the more God is able to conform us to the Word.

**Humbly accept the word planted in you:** You need to be ready to be and do what God's Word tells you to be and do. You need to humbly accept God's Word to you. It is important to recognize what it is in yourself that might be resisting what scripture is speaking to you. To be humble in this situation means to consciously put yourself below God's Word in the pecking order of your ego. Fortunately, we have seen four spiritual hearing aids to doing this: being quiet, being calm, being clean, and now we see that we need to be humble.

**James 1:22-25:** *Do not merely listen to the Word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the Word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like! But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it--he will be blessed in what he does.*

This passage reminds us that we are to be active in doing what the Bible says (more on that in a minute) but also that we are to look at it with our eyes - looking intently into the perfect law that gives freedom. If you are always waiting for someone else to tell you what the Bible says and what you should do, you are hardly building your life on God's Word, you are hoping someone else will do it for you. God doesn't call your pastor (or anyone else) to build your life for you. God calls you to put your complete faith in the Triune God and let the Spirit transform you. Part of that transformation is looking (read: studying) at God's Word. (continued on the next page)

## Building My Life Based on Scripture

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God is not calling us to glance at the Word like we might take a quick glance in the mirror in the middle of the day. We are called to gaze into the Word. To take a long, hard look at it.

**Living a life based on God's Word means studying the Word with hands and mouth.** Our weekly devotional based on the Sunday message is a great way to get your hands on scripture each day. There are always questions for reflection. You can take the next step and not only ponder the questions in your mind but write down your thoughts. Writing down our thoughts and the things we learn helps them become hard-wired in our mind allowing us to recall them quicker and more completely. Our adult education groups (Mondays at 7:00pm and Tuesdays at 10:30am) are great way to use our mouths to learn. As we said earlier, we solidify our own thinking when we talk about it and discuss with other what is going on in the passage and in our minds (iron sharpens iron!).

James 1:25: *The man who looks intently into the perfect law ...and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard but doing it, he will be blessed in what he does.*

Bible study is not an occasional sideline to the rest of life. James 1:25 instructs us to continue to study scripture. The next step is not forgetting it. Choosing to memorize certain verses might be of tremendous use (more on this in the future). And then we must do it. My elementary school soccer coach said (which you've heard me quote often): practice doesn't make perfect, practice makes permanent.

**By doing what the Word says, we have it ingrained in our lives by our actions.**

Matthew 7:24-27:

*"Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."*

May you hear God's words and take action!

Join us each Sunday during Lent to discover how we build our lives upon God's Word!

Want to hear a sermon again or catch up on one you missed? Each sermon from this series will be available online at [lindenpres.com](http://lindenpres.com).



## The Word and the Table Sermon Series

From Cas Wepener in *Reformed Worship*:

There are many boundaries around individuals and groups, some of which are more evident than others. Less than two decades ago, South Africa still had laws defining many of those lines or borders within society. These days, although the laws of apartheid are to be found only in history books, there are still many different boundaries segregating groups from each other in South Africa, as in all other societies around the globe. When these boundaries are no longer defined in terms of race, they are often made on the basis of other distinctions, such as income level or faith group.

Knowingly (and sometimes unknowingly), individuals and groups define and uphold these boundaries through their actions. Among the factors defining these boundaries most clearly are food and table customs. South African philosopher Martin Versfeld once commented, “Nothing is more indicative of what you are than your food and table customs.” The table at which we dine is a symbol of the society we live in. Therefore, by closely observing the table customs of different groups, and by watching how people act and interact around the table, we can learn about the boundaries of those groups.

During this seven week sermon series we will explore what Jesus and the disciples did around the tables they found themselves at in the Lukan narratives (the Gospel of Luke and Acts). How do we behave around the table? How does this translate into our outlook on life and how we treat others? We will dig into the Word of God (using our new skills and desire from the *40 Days in the Word* series and look at how God is calling to us through these scriptures to transform our tables and our hearts.

April 19 - To See God; Luke 24:13-35

May 17 - We Are What We Eat;  
Luke 24:13-35

April 26 - God Is With Those At The Table; Luke 7:36-50

May 24 - God Is With Those With  
Whom We Eat;  
Luke 10:1-11:18

May 3 - We Are How We Eat; Luke 14:1-14

May 31 - To See Each Other;  
Acts 2:41-47

May 10 - God Is How He Eats; Luke 14:15-24



## Christian Education for All Ages

by Gretchen Sutto, elder leading the Christian Education team

### Adult Education -- Mondays at 7:00pm or Tuesdays at 10:30am

Throughout March, April, and May we will meet each week (except the week of April 6) to discuss and explore in greater depth the material we looked at on Sunday during worship. Pastor Seth leads a free flowing discussion where you are encouraged to bring your questions and thoughts in a safe, supportive, engaging environment. We would love for you to join us!

### Vacation Bible School -- Monday, August 3 – Friday, August 7. 9am – 12pm

Calling all superheroes! VBS 2015 will be taking a look at some of the super heroes of the Bible this summer. Students from grades PreK – 6 will learn about super heroes from both the Old and New Testaments, ultimately culminating with the greatest hero of all, Jesus. We'd love for you to join us in finding out how these ordinary people from the past became heroes of their day and how you can be a hero, too! Volunteers are always welcome and appreciated! - mark your calendars! Sign-ups will be available as we move towards summer.

### VBS Planning Meetings – March 11, April 8, May 13. All will be at 6:00

VBS is already taking shape! Mark your calendars for August 3-7 and join us for some Super Heroes of the Bible fun! Our next meeting will be Wednesday, March 11 in Whitney Hall. We will begin planning the games, snacks, and crafts, and we'd appreciate your input! If you're available, please feel free to join us. Please contact Kristen Garmyn or Gretchen Sutto with questions or suggestions.

### Mile of Pennies

Do you have any loose change in your pockets, car, or wallets that you wouldn't mind parting with for a great cause? Help out the Christian Education Committee and drop it in the jar in Whitney Hall! We are trying to raise a mile of pennies – that's 84,440 coins (which comes out to a whopping \$844.40!). Through June 30, all money raised will go towards fundraising for Vacation Bible School, specifically with advertising in mind. We'd like a banner to go up outside in the spring and an ad to go in the Tri-County this summer. Beginning July 1, that money will directly benefit the Sunday School in the classrooms. Nickels, dimes, quarters, and dollar bills also are accepted!

### Sunday School

This past Advent season, our K-2 students learned the story of Christmas with the use of the book *What God Wants for Christmas*, and it was a success! Following in similar footsteps, all of our Sunday School children will learn about Jesus' last week throughout the season of Lent with the book *Benjamin's Box*. We hope your children/grandchildren/neighbors can join us!

**The Christian Education team** meets the second Wednesday of each month at 7:00 in Whitney Hall. Everyone is welcome to join us!

### Confirmation

A confirmation class is currently being planned for this spring. If you know of a young person, around 8<sup>th</sup> grade through 10<sup>th</sup> grade, who would like to learn what it means to become a full-fledged member of the church, please contact Pastor Seth or Gretchen Sutto. Classes will run once a week through the weeks of April 13 - May 18, with May 31 being our Celebration Sunday. Stay tuned for specific dates and times.



## 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. All high school folks are welcomed and encouraged to attend!

### Ministry with Youth Mission Statement

The youth ministry at Linden Presbyterian Church is committed to love, nurture, inspire, and equip our youth to be faithful, lifelong disciples of Jesus Christ who reach out to the community and beyond.

### Values

**Welcome** We seek to live as a unique community of faith in which everyone feels welcome.

**God based** We seek to be more like Jesus, living out the fruits of the spirit, remembering that God is the center of everything we do.

**Spiritually Grounded** We base our programming on the foundation of a common faith in Jesus Christ.

**Excitement** We strive to create an environment that attracts youth and families, both members and non-members.

**Growth** We endeavor to be lifelong disciples who are continually growing in our faith.

**Love** We strive to be aware of the needs of others and to demonstrate love and compassion to all who come in contact with our youth ministry.

**Safety** We provide trustworthy adult leaders for all youth and a welcoming environment in which youth feel safe asking questions and seeking support and guidance.

### Youth Support Team

The Youth Support Team is a team of adults that supports the mission and continuity of our ministries with youth by partnering with the youth ministry intern and the pastor to holistically nurture, support, promote, pray for, and lead our ministry. The team includes Gretchen Sutto, Susan Malinowski, Fred Lewis, Denny Manner, Tammy Neuville, Kim Herbert, Kevin Whisman, and Gayle Wagner.



## Special Youth Ministry Events

by Gretchen Sutto, Youth Support Team member

### Easter Sunday

Easter Morning Sunrise Service has always been one of my favorite services of the year. The sun is just peeking over the horizon, the air is crisp, and being outside in His creation just makes me feel more connected to God. We're there in the morning around the time the women, John, and Peter would have been arriving at the tomb, and we get to begin our day with that same overwhelming joy knowing that our Savior lives!

This year's Sunrise Service will add an extra dose of wonderful as our youth will be leading the service – reading the liturgy, leading in the prayers, and sharing the message. I know it's cold, and it tends to be windy and sometimes snowy, but the unexplainable peace and excitement that surround you are well worth it!

After service, you can make your way to Whitney Hall for an Easter Breakfast, which will run from 8:00(ish) – 10:30(ish). Any donations made at the breakfast will go towards sending our youth to camp this summer.

The menu is pretty fancy this year: sausage, pepper & mushroom strata; apricot-raisin hot cross buns; bacon & egg muffins, ham on biscuits with gravy; fruit-granola parfaits, and more!

### 30 Hour Famine – April 25-26

Our high school youth will once again be participating in the 30 Hour Famine through World Vision. They will push their physical bodies to the limit by fasting from food for 30 hours and by sleeping in boxes outside overnight. While they are struggling physically, they will learn that they need to rely fully and wholeheartedly on God to make it through. It's a tough couple of days, but the strength they gain by living out Philippians 4:13 will help carry them through other hard times in their lives. The youth will also be raising funds to send to World Vision for them to distribute throughout the world to those who do not have the option to end their daily famine after 30 hours.

### Confirmation

A confirmation class is currently being planned for this spring. If you know of a young person, around 8th grade through 10th grade, who would like to learn what it means to become a full-fledged member of the church, please contact Pastor Seth or Gretchen Sutto. Classes will run once a week through the weeks of April 13 - May 18, with May 31 being our Celebration Sunday. Stay tuned for specific dates and times.



## International Missions: Children International and Compassion

by Kristen Garmyn, elder leading the Missional Connections team

Have you ever stood in line for a donut during Coffee Hour and looked to your right at the bulletin boards on the wall? If you have, you may have seen an adorable little girl looking back at you. Her name is Megha Das and she is our sponsored child through Children International. LPC has been sponsoring a child with Children International for many years. Our previous child, Gulafsha, received sponsorship until she was old enough to graduate from the program. It was so exciting to see her grow and to know we were supporting her faith, her education, and providing her much-needed resources. We sponsor Megha as a congregation through the Missional Connections international mission initiative.

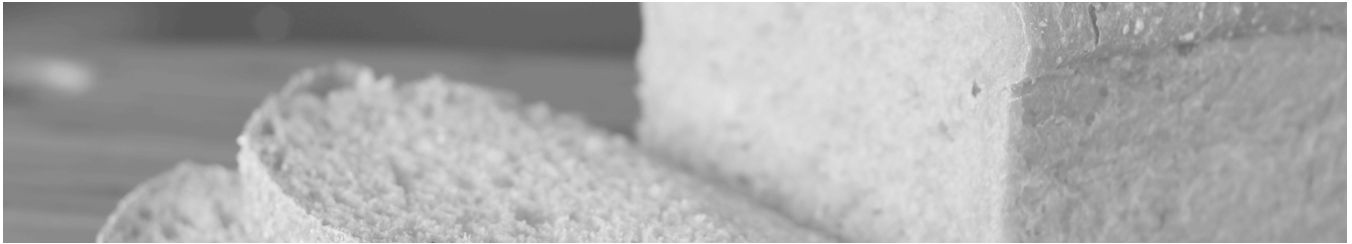
Children International serves children by ensuring they receive (among other things):

- The opportunity to hear the gospel and learn about Jesus
- Regular Christian training
- Educational opportunities and help
- Health care
- Hygiene training and supplementary food if necessary
- A caring and safe Christian environment to grow in self-confidence and social skills
- Personal attention
- Guidance
- Love

On **April 26<sup>th</sup>**, you have an an exciting opportunity to sponsor a child as an individual, family, or small group through another international children sponsorship program! Linden Presbyterian Church has registered for the **2015 Compassion Sunday** event. This is a day where churches all over the nation participate in an enormous sponsorship day through Compassion International! **Our goal in 2015 is to have 10 children sponsored!** Each year we participate in Compassion Sunday, this congregation responds with increasing love and compassion for these children in poverty. Help us spread the word of God and provide life-changing resources and education for a child in need.

If you feel called to serve in this way, please check out the Compassion Sunday table in Whitney Hall on April 26<sup>th</sup> during coffee hour after both services. There will also be a few video presentations and information available before the actual date. Please pray about becoming involved in this type of mission work! You can make a huge difference in the life of a child!

Furthermore, if you would like to participate in communication with our sponsored child Megha Das, please let me know! Thank you for continuing to support our international missions here at Linden Presbyterian Church!



## Deacons Provide a Ministry of Caring

According to the Book of Order, “The ministry of deacon as set forth in Scripture is one of compassion, witness, and service, sharing in the redeeming love of Jesus Christ for the poor, the hungry, the sick, the lost, the friendless, the oppressed, those burdened by unjust policies or structures, or anyone in distress. Persons of spiritual character, honest repute, exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, sincere compassion, and sound judgment should be chosen for this ministry.”

We are blessed to have a core group of deacons who take on this high Scriptural calling to care for the people of this congregation and beyond. They provide tangible and intangible care to us when we are in need.

Our deacons are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year via the Deacon on Duty to be caring presence and a ministry resource in times of need or crisis. You can always find the current Deacon on Duty by looking to the newsletter or the Sunday worship bulletin.

Our deacons serve communion to those amongst us who are unable to join us for worship due to poor health or another concern. This is a wonderful ministry that brings a caring deacon alongside our members and friends to celebrate the sacrament with them on a regular basis. After all, the church is not a building it is a group called by God to be the presence of Christ to one another.

Our deacons are active in prayer for those on our prayer list and any other concerns that may need to be lifted up to the Lord. Contact the Deacon on Duty or the office to share your prayer need with the deacons.

**Amongst these and other ministries of the deacons there is something new!** This spring you will notice that you will receive a phone call, a card, a face-to-face chat (or maybe all three!) with a deacon. The deacons are starting a “parish model” for their ministry. This means that everyone will have a deacon. We never want anyone who comes through our doors to feel like they are alone. You can always turn to the deacons for a listening ear, a strong shoulder, or to receive the resources you might need. So even if you come to worship every week, expect a deacon to reach out to you as the deacons seek to build personal, Christ-centered connections with each and every person. They will ask you how you are doing, a little about yourself, and how they can be praying for you. **Our deacons want you to know that you are personally cared for all the time!**



## **The Stewardship Stop: Reflection on Time and Talent**

compiled by Laura Huston, elder leading the finance and stewardship team

### **What is Stewardship of Time and Talent?**

It is the wise and responsible use of the special gifts God has entrusted to each of us. It is believing that God has created each one of us with unique abilities and attributes—including our personalities, interests, motivations, life experiences, talents and skills, hopes and dreams—which make us who we are. We are one-of-a-kind creations of God with unique contributions to make in this world.

### **Why is this important?**

Our lives have real meaning only when we use our gifts in accordance with God's will. As we grow in stewardship, we grow in our relationship with God. We grow in our ability to hear and accept God's call and to let our life be guided by God's will, not our own desires and impulses.

### **How can I be a good steward of my time and talents?**

In short, put God at the center of your life. We are provided with many opportunities each day to be good stewards. We just need to be aware of the choices we make and the significance of our decisions.

### **Time...don't let it slip away!**

No gift is greater than time, and yet, nothing is so easy to waste. Contrary to our cultural norms, good stewardship of time doesn't mean being busy all the time. Time spent in prayer, nurturing relationships with our family and friends or just enjoying the beauty of the world around us is time well spent. In fact, taking "time out" to nourish ourselves spiritually can be the best thing we can do to deepen our relationship with God.

### **Questions to Ponder**

Take some time to reflect on these questions and perhaps take them to prayer, asking for God's guidance, with gratitude for this marvelous gift.

1. How do I spend free time?
2. When have I most appreciated time?
3. What do I think God wants me to do with my time?
4. What obstacles keep me from being a good steward of time?



## **The Stewardship Stop: Reflection on Time and Talent**

(continued from page 15)

### **What Are My Talents?**

We are often held back from recognizing or sharing our gifts because of a narrow definition of “talent.” We think “talented people” are extraordinary achievers or have easily identifiable gifts, such as musical ability or artistic talent. We must remember that each one of us was created by God and was given the ability to serve God and each other in some way.

Talents include being a good listener, being able to organize people, relating well to children or teens, being patient with others and numerous other less recognized gifts. Our gifts often change during our lives: in our youth our gift may be energy; when we’re older, it is knowledge. We are each one-of-a-kind creations of God with unique contributions to make in this world.

As Christians we recognize that our gifts of talents and skills are meant to be cultivated and shared with others, beginning with our family and friends, with our church community and with the world. Sharing the gift of ourselves is how we express our gratitude for being created as a unique and gifted people.

### **How can I be a good steward of my talents?**

Begin by recognizing and acknowledging the talents you have been given. A first step in the process is gift discernment. When we regularly pray about our gifts and how God is calling us to use them, we are more likely to be fulfilled in our lives.

### **Practical ways to share your talents:**

- ❖ Be available to your family and friends. Be open to the needs of those around you and be willing to provide assistance.
- ❖ Be an active member of your church. Your church is enriched and strengthened by the participation of its members.
- ❖ Get involved in your community. You touch and are touched by many people and groups who could benefit by your gifts—school, homeless shelter, nursing home, hospital, community center and others.
- ❖ Advocate for the things you believe in. Your voice can make a difference in your community, the nation and the world.

**Our lives are God’s gift to us; how we live is our gift to God.**

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it's a fantastic season of worship!

**10:00am**

**7:00pm**

**7:00pm**

**12:00pm-6:00pm**

**7:00am**

**9:00am & 10:30am**

**6:00/7:00pm**

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## Gazing Ahead: Calendar

### March

- 3 Board of Deacons meeting
- 3 Presbytery meeting
- 7 Presbyterian Women and Men's Club
- 11 Committee/Team meetings
- 18-20 Synod Assembly
- 23 Newsletter deadline
- 25 Session meeting
- 26 Serving Dinner at Carriage Town
- 28 Spring Cleaning Day
- 29 Palm Sunday: procession at 9:30; one worship at 10:00am

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](http://lindenpres.com), call the office at 810.735.5755, or email at [lpcoffice@lindenpres.com](mailto:lpcoffice@lindenpres.com) for more information

### April

- 2 Maundy Thursday Worship at 7:00
- 3 Good Friday Worship at 7:00
- 4 Presbyterian Women and Men's Club
- 4 Easter Saturday Prayer Vigil from 12:00-6:00
- 5 Easter Sunday at 7:00 (gazebo), 9:00, 10:30
- 6-13 Pastor Seth in Tijuana building houses
- 7 Board of Deacons meeting
- 15 Committee/Team meetings
- 18 Work Day at Carriage Town
- 29 Session
- 25 Christmas in Action
- 26 Compassion Sunday

### May

- 2 Presbyterian Women and Men's Club
- 5 Board of Deacons meeting
- 7-9 Rummage Sale
- 13 Committee/Team meetings
- 14 Ascension Day BBQ and Concert
- 18 Magazine Deadline
- 18 Newsletter Deadline
- 24 Pentecost
- 27 Session
- 28 Serve Dinner at Carriage Town