

Poke Run Presbyterian Church “The Ranger” JANUARY 2019

We have just emerged from the Christmas season and weathered another New Year. Perhaps we celebrated; perhaps we celebrated too much, or, perhaps we did not celebrate at all and watched the New Year creep, or rush, in at its own pace. Perhaps we do not much care at all about the New Year. Or we may be carrying a piece of the old year with us as I am, still thinking about Christmas. No, I am not reflecting on the holiday or the celebration or the gifts, nice as they all are. I am thinking about the story we tell each year of angels and shepherds and those we call wise men and Mary and Joseph and even hateful old Herod. All this and more still whirls around in my head.

Then there is the simple statement attributed to the medieval mystic Meister Eckhart, “It makes no difference if Christ was born in Bethlehem if he is not born into your heart.” This bears much reflection. Eckhart, being a mystic is certainly not thinking literally. He is thinking of the changes – the commitments – and the total reorientation of one’s life – that must occur in one’s life if one is to take seriously the claims of Jesus. These claims are not so much stated by Jesus as lived. They are the events that define His life.

A child is born in Bethlehem slightly over 2000 years ago, if we have our calendars right. Stories surround this child like the rings of Saturn, beautiful, multicolored, and in apparent motion. From the virgin birth to the resurrection and ascension of Jesus, stories, what has come to be called the “oral tradition”, abound. Being true stories they matter. These stories raise questions. Most important of these questions is, “Who is this child?”

To answer these questions we are going to jump into the life that follows Jesus birth. We will explore events in the life of Jesus as seen through the eyes and writing of the Gospel of John. John takes a different approach to Jesus’ life than do the other gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke. These three draw from the same well of tradition. John brings in sparkling new ideas and concepts and paints for us a picture of Jesus unlike the first three. We will try to see in each of these stories how John slowly shows us just who Jesus is.

John calls the events in Jesus life “signs.” Each sign tells us something that may otherwise have been hidden, or unseen. A sign points us to a greater reality hidden beneath the surface. Taken together they will provide a kind of map that lays out the terrain of Jesus life. They allow us to see more than is there. Jesus is a man, yes. Jesus is a prophet, yes. Jesus is a wonder worker, yes. Jesus is far more than this. For the next few week’s sermons I have chosen seven events from Jesus’ life to ponder over and from which we can learn. Each sign is a pointer to Jesus true identity. This will take us up to Lent.

But, I have not yet answered the question posed above, just why is it important to know who Jesus is. First of all, it is crucial to know that Jesus is not just another human being. He is that and more, infinitely more. He is, “God, (who) humbles himself to man, even to the final and most radical depth of becoming man, not to deify man, but to exalt him to perfect fellowship with himself.” (Barth, CD 4.2, [177]) And so we have Jesus of Nazareth, a simple Mediterranean peasant plodding about the earth 2000 years ago, who is God!

It is the events of Jesus’ life that reveal to us precisely this. It is his self-revelation that we will read of in

the gospels and particularly in the Gospel of John over the next few weeks. These events of Jesus self-revelation are the elements of his life witnessed and recorded by the apostles. And these actions, turning water into wine, healing the blind, deaf, and lame, raising the dead, and walking on a wild tempestuous sea, reveal to us Jesus’ true being.

It is important to know this, Jesus’ real nature, for, in the words of Luke in the book of Acts, “... there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among (humanity) by which we must be saved.”

Matthew, Mark, and Luke. These three draw from the same well of tradition. John brings in sparkling new ideas and concepts and paints for us a picture of Jesus unlike the first three. We will try to see in each of these stories how John slowly shows us just who Jesus is.

From
Pastor Pete



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Thank you to everyone who placed a Christmas Eve yard sign. Remember to return them, so that we can use them again NEXT YEAR! (Look for boxes in the back stairwell and the Narthex.)

Christmas Eve
Photo at right—**Meri Slaughaupt**

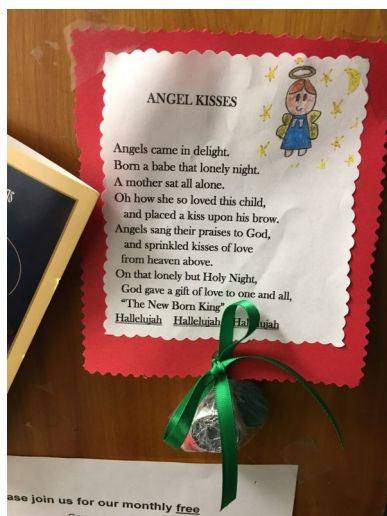


Thank you to everyone who participated in our Advent and Christmas worship services.

Our December Lectors: Barbi Findley, Cindy McQuaide, Jodi Dupill, Lizzy Wilkinson, Tim Martin, Connor Martin, Logan Hileman

Our December Greeters: Cindy Brooks, Irma McDivitt, Doug & Deb Ross, Bob & Iris Kiebler, Brian & Nancy Dombroske, The Poke Run Deacons, Tim & Laurie Martin

Our Advent Readers: Nicole and Meghan Goodiski, Bob & Diane Scott, Freda Bowman, Cindy McQuaide, Nikki McQuaide, Monroe Wright, Pastor Pete & Karen Goetschius, Cliff, Jodi & Ally Dupill, Connie Cauvel, Jim Moorhead, Amy and Lizzy Wilkinson, John & Sheree Wagner, Brett, Mandy, Paige and Bria Stevenson, Jacob & Jessica Slaughaupt



Thank you to **Jessica Slaughaupt** and **Karen Staymates** who made and shared the "Angel Kisses" pictured above. Their gift and poem helped us celebrate the Season.

"Dear...all,

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. It is overwhelming the love you have showered on my family & myself. Thank you so deeply for such a generous love offering.

My family & I have been protected and provided for in so many ways. It is hard to describe all the devastation ...that Hurricane Michael has had on this area. The effects of it will be seen and felt for many years... Many people had to just up and leave the area their homes were destroyed as well as their workplace. ...Compared to so many, my family has really, really been protected....

Please please know, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts. God Bless ALL of you. Have a wonderful Christ-filled Christmas..

Beauty will rise from ashes

Love, thanks & gratitude,
In Christian love,

Carol Gearhard Croff





Epiphany is the celebration of God's manifestation or self-revelation to the world in Jesus Christ. In particular, we celebrate the revelation of God's promise and purpose to the nations of the world, as the magi came from the East to worship to the Christ child, and God's covenant of grace is extended to all who believe the good news of Christ Jesus. The symbolism of light is important: not only because of the star that guided the magi, but as it relates to the bright dawning of God's self-revelation in Christ. **Celebrated January 6th**

Baptism of the Lord At the beginning of his public ministry, Jesus presents himself to John to be baptized in the Jordan. The heavens open, the Holy Spirit descends as a dove and we hear the voice of God: "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased" (see Psalm 2:7). At this festival of the Christian year, we not only remember Jesus' baptism, but we celebrate our own: the baptism we share with Christ. Accordingly, this Sunday is an appropriate time to celebrate the sacrament of baptism or the reaffirmation of the baptismal covenant. It also foreshadows the season of Lent, as Jesus was immediately driven into the wilderness for 40 days after his own Baptism. **Sunday, January 13th**

From Presbyterian Mission.org



For our prayers:

Ali Ankney, Scott Ankney, baby Noah, Carol Bartachellei, Renee Bates, Matt Beacom, Ronda Bertelle, Lil Bowman, Ron & Carole Bowman, Mike Brewer, Skye Brewer, Max Brooks, Ralph Brown, Carolyn Buckley, William Caldwell, Nora Jane Caporali, Dave Carroll, Caileigh Chappell, Franki Chappell-Vaia, Irene Clark, Collin, Carol Croff & family, Kelly Daugherty Farley, Tommie DeSantis, Hannah Dixon, Jim Dunmire, Sara Dyer, Shirley Elwood, Terry Fairbanks, Elmer Foley, Laurel Frey, Lee & Linda Gardener, Nancy Gearhard, Meghan Goodiski, Marnee Gormley,

Helen Grayem, Allison Grundy, Trevor Hawk, Janine Hayle, Betty Henry, Don Henry, Brenda Hughes, Leland & Berenice Jones, Marjorie Kaiser, Rob Kemerer, Kim, Joann Kole, Steve Kosinski, Joel Ladik and wife Katie, Rhett LaRue and family, Dana, Allison Lengauer Jordan, Pat Lengauer, Cliff Lightner, Norm Linhart, Heather Lynn, Freda Mahen, John Mango, the McCutcheon family, Irma McDivitt, Ronnie McDivitt, Mary Lou McKay, Amy McQuaide, Conrad McQuaide, JoAnn Miller, Lori Moneymaker, June & Roy Moorhead, Steve Morcheid, Sam Musmanno, Sandy Nemetz, Leanne O'Connor, Thad Overly, Sandy Pajak, Sarah Parrish, Evelyn Pfeffer, Randy Pfeffer, Winifred Powers, Reno, Rafael Rincon, Steve Roman, Debbie & Larry Seighman, Valerie Shondelmeyer, Linda Shoop, Joanne Smith, Dorothy Sottoriva, Carol Soule, Mary Jane Staite, Dinah Staymates, Mildred Striner, Arlene Switzer, Bev & Mario Tagliati, Amy Teele, Craig Thompson, the family of Jim Thompson, Jill Tocco, Sue Washburn, Adam Weaver, Linda Wengert, Neale & June Wiester, Clay Wilabee, Bruce Wise, Kate Wolford. Those gripped by addictions, Those who have faced devastation by weather events and Those who serve in the military, Pray for Our country, and Our world.

The family of Poke Run friend Nancy Brunner, who passed away on December 6th.

It is a privilege and blessing to lift each other up in prayer as surely our heavenly Father rejoices as we come to Him with all of our needs. Thank you for praying for those listed above. If you placed a name on our prayer list, please update the office occasionally so that we can more fully include them in our prayers and petitions. Thank you.

"The family of Jim Thompson would like to thank Pastor Pete for his care during their time of need, and the Poke Run congregation for all the cards, visits and prayers during Jim's illness. And a special thank you to the Poke Run Presbyterian Women for the lovely funeral dinner....Dear friends at Poke Run, Thank you for all your kindness and love during Jim's long journey to peace and eternal rest. Thanks for the lovely floral arrangements. Love, Carol, Heather & family, Andy & family."



From the approved minutes of the Poke Run Presbyterian Session meeting of November 13, 2018.

A quorum was present and, Rev. Peter Goetschius, Moderator opened the meeting with prayer and devotions. **2018 Theme: "How to bring God's Word to all people in this place and time"** Book of Order Study: F-1.03 The Calling of the Church

Session Members present: Rev. Peter Goetschius -Moderator, Connie Cauvel – Clerk, Sandy Chappell, Ron Hileman, Bob Wilson, Brett Stevenson, Laurie Martin, Tom Kimble

Excused: Caileigh Chappell

Committee Reports:

Budget & Finance – Tom Kimble (did not meet) Pete reviewed Treasurer Report. Generous giving continues.

Christian Ed & Youth: Sandy Chappell Trunk or Treat very successful – Lots of fun – perhaps even better inside. Good turnout – Sandy recommends we have in the afternoon. Everyone enjoyed!

Mission and Stewardship: Bob Wilson –Discussed "Opioid Overdose Reversal training" to be held at Poke Run on November 27

Personnel: Laurie Martin – Completed Music Program job descriptions

Congregational Life: Connie Cauvel Dinner went well

Nominating: Sandy Chappell & Brett Stevenson Thank you for your good work!!

Ad Hoc Committees

Kitchen - Sandy Chappell, Laurie Martin, Bob Wilson -Tim has received the final drawings. They will want a down payment that we are prepared to send.

Fishing Team: - Tom Kimble-Considering more outreaches and events. Always trying different ways to get the word out.

New Business:

Reviewed: Annual Questionnaire for Presbytery

Laurie Martin reported: "The Ice Cream Social" was very successful and fun for all ages, it was well attended -nearly 200 people. Children that attend Pine Springs Camp and their families were very involved in the event. Over \$2000.00 was raised to support the Campership Fund.

MSP: To move December's "Soup for the Soul" from Wednesday December 12 to Wednesday December 5, in order to start construction for kitchen a week earlier. Request from Tim Martin. (Electronic Session Vote November 8)

MSP: To change January Soup for the Soul to January 23 to accommodate Construction.

MCP: Baptism of Collins Leigh Wright on December 9, 2018

December 11 Joint Session Meeting

Discussion: We need to write or obtain short job descriptions for Session members leading committees, to give them a set of guidelines.

Close with prayer: Nikki McQuaide

Respectfully Submitted:

Approved: December 11, 2018



Session meetings are open to all members of the church. Complete Session Minutes are available in the office for Church member review.

The next Session meeting will be held at 7pm on January 8, 2019.

Communion is shared during the Early 8:30am Worship service every Sunday. In addition, communion will be celebrated during the following Worship services in 2019.

January 13th 11am

March 6th—Ash Wednesday

April 14th—Palm Sunday

April 18th—Maundy Thursday

April 21st—Easter

June 9th— Pentecost

July 7th 11am

August 4th 11am

September 8th 11am

October 6th—World Communion Sunday

December 1st-1st Sunday of Advent

December 24th—Christmas Eve





December 2nd was "Ordination Sunday" at Poke Run Church, pictured above, left to right, Pastor Pete Goetschius, Clerk of Session Connie Cauvel, Trustee Bill Craig, Elder Nicole Goodiski, Deacons Meghan Goodiski and Nancy Dombroske, Elder Terry Weister, Trustee Sheree Wagner, Elder Valerie Hansen, Trustee Tom Fitzsimmons, and Deacons Ruth O'Connor and Diane Scott.



The McQuaide family celebrated the baptism of Collins Wright, daughter of Will & Jamie (McQuaide) Wright, granddaughter of Jim & Cindy McQuaide, great-granddaughter of Freda Bowman.



**The next "Soup for the Soul" will be Wednesday, January 23rd
NOTE DATE CHANGE!**

11:30am—doors open, Noon—"Soup's On"
Soup this month is "Ham & Bean"

Mark your calendars for the second Wednesday of the month October through May. **DESSERTS NEEDED:** If you are able to provide a dessert, please contact the Poke Run Office.



Deacon Ministry

The Poke Run Deacons

continue their valuable ministry into 2019.

If you know of someone who would benefit by service from the Deacons, a visit, a card, assistance, prayer; please contact them.

Barbi Findley
Nancy Kimble
Sandy Ballas

Nancy Dombroske
Diane Scott
Cindy Brooks

Ruth O'Connor
Meghan Goodiski
Shelly Chappell-Vaia

Shyrl Stange
Tammy Kelley

Thank you to everyone who participated in the 2018 Deacon Ministry by contributing to the foodbasket program, buying gifts for the Salvation Army Tree and decorating the church narthex and sanctuary by contributing to the Westmoreland County Foodbank or purchasing a seasonal poinsettia in honor or memory of a loved one. **Watch for more ways you can help the**

2019.



Deacons in

From the Deacon Minutes of November 5, 2018 as submitted by Shyrl Stange, Secretary

The Deacons discussed Old Business including boxes for college students and those away from Poke Run, the Thanksgiving Basket program and *Poke Run Friends*. Under New Business, they discussed



Sunday School at Poke Run Church

Classes meet each Sunday at 10am.

FOR THE KIDS Children's Class! – music and FUN!

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

The class meeting in the West Wayside room (on the left at the end of the hall) is using the David C. Cook series titled **"God's World and God's People"**

The class meeting in the Session room (on the right at the end of the hall) is using the study **"When God Doesn't Fix It"** by **Laura Story**

Join in the fellowship area for refreshment between the early service and Sunday School.

FREE—in the Narthex: copies of the two publications, ***The Upper Room*** - daily devotional, and ***Today's Christian Living*** - magazine

TODAY'S
Christian
LIVING

THE UPPER ROOM
DAILY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE



Miss Karen Goestchius & Miss Ruth O'Connor led the Sunday School children for a Christmas music presentation. It was a joyous addition to Advent Worship. (picture at left)





Thank you to everyone who helped with and attended the ever popular “Breakfast with Santa!” The proceeds from this event benefit the Poke Run Christian Ed program and Mission Work. Special thank you to **Linda Chicka**, coordinator. We were especially blessed by the help of the Kiski Area High School Key Club (pictured below left.) and members of our valuable Kitchen Crew, Joe Dulude and Leila Stormer, below right.



Becky Lange (below left), greets fans from “Come n Play”, Freda Bowman celebrates with granddaughter Collins Wright (center) and Santa gets to hear what Eastan Weyel wants for Christmas! (right)



THINKING AHEAD: As you are receiving mailed packages, please save any bubble wrap (little bubbles or pillow type) and turn it into the office – it will be used for TGIF Good Friday program 2019!



PINE SPRINGS CAMPERSHIPS

Though summer may seem far away it's time to think about SUMMER CAMP!!! It's only 160 days until June 9th, the beginning of the summer season at Pine Springs Camp. Last year Poke Run established a formal campership fund with a goal to bring as many campers as possible to have a vital encounter with Jesus Christ that leads to growth in Christian faith and discipleship. All children who attend Poke Run programs or are associated with Poke Run through family membership are eligible for camperships.

March 1 is the deadline for campers to be eligible to receive a campership. They should

submit a completed Pine Springs Camp Registration form and the Poke Run Campership registration to apply. 2019 Pine Springs Registration Brochures and PR Campership Applications are available through the church office or by contacting Laurie Martin (martinlk297@gmail.com).



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN NEWS



Women of the Church will be meeting on Thursday, January 17th, at 7pm at the church. The hostess will be Laurie Martin and the leader will be Karen Goetschius. They will be planning some of their annual events. If this is a group you might be interested in getting involved with, come out for a soup dinner on the 17th and find out what it is all about. HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!.



Buccaneer Boutique - If you care to donate, there is a collection box located in the Narthex. Thank you!



Office Hours at the Church 9:30am—2:30pm most days. Call ahead to be sure Amy is there! The office will be closed on **January 21st**.

Never hesitate to contact Pastor Pete at 724-454-2278.

Please share any contact information updates with the Church Office so that you do not miss out on any information. Next Ranger Deadline: January 22nd

NEW ADDRESS: Mary Ellen Ross 169 Holcome Drive, Liberty SC 29657

“GIVING ENVELOPES” for 2019 are available in the Narthex. If you do not find one labeled for you, please feel free to take a blank box to use. If you need help getting your box of envelopes, please contact the Church Office. **The “FIRST FRUITS” offering is Poke Run’s commitment to the larger church. Please consider an offering of \$42.50 per member.**



2018 Giving Statements will be mailed before January 31st—thank you for your patience.

The Poke Run Church Annual Financial Review DATE CHANGE!

All Auditors and Treasurers should come prepared for the 2018 Poke Run Financial Review. The audit is on Saturday, January 26 beginning at 8:30am and will continue until every group has been reviewed. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend.



KITCHEN PROJECT UPDATE: REMEMBER: There will be NO ACCESS to the storage room, Kitchen or Fellowship Hall during the remodeling. The Committee would appreciate that you strictly follow this and stay out of these areas for safety reasons. Thank you,

The Kitchen Committee Bob Wilson, Ron Hileman and Tim Martin

Special thanks—to everyone who stayed after December Soup to clean out the kitchen and storage room in preparation for construction—it was AMAZING!!!!



THE POKE RUN TRUSTEES The Trustees are BUSY!—and they would like to thank all of the volunteers who help out when asked—and the anonymous helpers who see things that need done and jump in and help. They were recently up in the space above the sanctuary—check out these pictures! Top left, Coming through the sanctuary ceiling, Top Right, old knob and tube electric (unused), Bottom right, Hand hewn beams measuring 13.5" by 2.5", Bottom left, looking up into the steeple!! Thanks *Doug Ross* for the great pics!



Please use your best judgement for coming out to church events. And remember, there is no "winter maintenance" in the Poke Run cemetery. The Trustees report that the pavement makes things exceptionally slick up there, so please please use extreme caution when driving through the cemetery.

Stories of Redstone

Christ at work in our midst

"No Crib for a Bed"

Here in the United States, we are preparing our homes, our main streets and our church sanctuaries for Christmas. Everywhere you turn, you cannot help but be reminded of the holiday season. However, we wonder if many of our Christian brothers and sisters around the world might have a much more intimate and deeper understanding of the Christmas story, even if they do not celebrate in the same elaborate fashion as we do. This fall, Redstone was blessed to be visited by Pastor James Par Tap and Deaconess Nyankuac Ngor Chol Kadjang from the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in South Sudan. As they visited with us, they shared stories of strong faith in the midst of incredible hardship. As they asked for prayer, they reminded us of the more than three million people who have fled the civil war in South Sudan and currently reside in refugee camps in nearby countries or in IDP (Internally Displaced Persons) camps in South Sudan. We are reminded of Mary and Joseph and young Jesus, fleeing the threat of violence and living as refugees in Egypt as we hear about our Sudanese brothers and sisters who have no safe home.



This Christmas, as we sing in "Away in a Manger" that Jesus had "no crib for a bed", let us remember to pray for those who live under the threat of violence and oppression. Let us especially pray for our Sudanese brothers and sisters who have been both our teachers and our friends in the faith.

Communicate the Word...Carry on the Work...Change the World
Together!



More information available on-line—and outside the Poke Run office.

HAPPENING IN OUR PRESBYTERY

Jan-26 Redstone Presbytery Meeting
New Hope Presbyterian, 1-4pm

2ND WEDNESDAYS OF THE MONTH—
"FRIENDSHIP DINNER" FREE—
UNITED PRESB, NEW KENSINGTON

**THE POKE RUN OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED
ON JAN 21ST.
THE REDSTONE PRESBYTERY OFFICE IS
CLOSED ON FRIDAYS.**

 Presbytery
of Redstone
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)

NEWS FROM THE PEWS



Jessica Slaughaupt appeared at the Byham Theater in the Mark Milovats Christmas Show.



Bill & Nancy Craig welcomed their new greatgranddaughter Charlie Love Pugliese



Boy Scout Troop 551—Spaghetti Dinner 34th Annual "All you can eat" Spaghetti Dinner
When: Saturday January 26th 3-7pm Where: Cross Road Community Presbyterian, Leechburg PA
Tickets: \$8 adult \$6 children 10 and under
Order Tickets by calling 724-571-7633 Ethan Woodhall or Amy Heinlein Blair





2019



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<div> THE POKE RUN OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED ON JAN 21st Call Pastor Pete in case of an emergency 724-454-2278 </div>			1	2	3	4
				9am Christmas Decorations Down		5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
8:30 & 11am Worship 10am SunSch 7pm Bible Study	7pm Deacons	10am Bible Study 7pm Session	6:30pm Handbells 7pm Choir			
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
8:30 & 11am Worship 10am SunSch 7pm Bible Study		10am Bible Study	6 Praise Team 7pm Choir	Circle 2		REDSTONE Meeting
				2		
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
8:30 & 11am Worship 10am SunSch 7pm Bible Study	OFFICE CLOSED	10am Bible Study	noon "Soup for the Soul" 6pm Handbells 7pm Choir	7pm Trustees		8:30amPRPC Financial Review
27	28	29	30	31		
8:30 & 11am Worship 10am SunSch 7pm Bible Study		10am Bible Study	6 Praise Team 7pm Choir			

PHOTOS WANTED!!!!
 The Office can use emailed photos from cameras or cell phones. We'd love to include more pics from church functions.



Poke Run Presbyterian Church
1091 Poke Run Church Road
Apollo, PA 15613
724-327-5563



Worship Services every Sunday at 8:30am and 11am.

Sunday Worship: 8:30am and 11am

Sunday School: 10am adults & kids

PHONE: 724-327-5563

EMAIL: pokerun@graced.comcastbiz.net

Sundays 7pm Bible Study

Tuesdays 10am Women's Bible Study



Like us on Facebook featuring the Daily Verse

Check out our website at www.pokerunchurch.com

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