



THE RANGER

Poke Run Presbyterian Church

The Ranger

DECEMBER 2013

From Pastor Pete

What did you get for Christmas last year or the year before that? Unless the gift, or gifts, was extraordinary or shocking or very expensive and unexpected, you probably can't remember. All our Christmas gifts for which we wait with anticipation, year by year, quickly fade into the background of yesterday.

This year's Christmas is well underway. The gift-giving season now extends from the weeks before Halloween, which is rapidly becoming one of the biggest holidays of the year, reaches a peak on black Friday, and ends with a whimper sometime around New Year. By New Year's Day gifts have been given and exchanged. Life returns to its normal patterns. Christmas lies forgotten in the past. Advent changes all that. Advent proposes a counter to "the Christmas Season." Advent surprises us with a radical reversal of all that the world of stores and toys and presents uses to entice us to buy and to have and to forget. Santa's world arrives and we receive presents because we are good. Christ arrives to remind us that the world is a difficult and dangerous place that needs redemption. Advent leads us to reflect upon what it means that

God became human. Here are three reasons why Advent tells a new and different story that we will not here in the jingles of advertising.

1. Advent-time subverts the dominant culture of self-gratification. During Christmas time advertisers will fill our homes with solutions to every problem we can imagine and some that we cannot. All advertising works pretty much the same. A problem is proposed or shown, say unmanageable hair. A solution is given. Buy and use this product, the ad claims, and you will never have frizzy hair again. In fact, you will have the most beautiful hair in the entire world and all your problems will be solved. In advertising instant gratification of a perceived or created need is the name of the game and it works. Our whole culture buys into it. Reality says that this is a false way of life. The truly valuable things in life take a long time to form, like character. To become a person of character, to build honesty, integrity, and fidelity into a person takes a long time. It is a lifetime effort. Advent goes farther. Advent calls us to wait for God to come to us. Advent calls us to put aside our own wishes and seek the coming promise of God. Advent stands against a Christmas-time culture. The gift of Christ's coming is in future time. And so we wait.

2. Advent anticipates the

coming of God into the world of humanity. God comes into the world in three primary ways. The first way occurred long ago when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea. Only a few participants in God's plan saw or knew anything of His coming. They were odd persons all of them, a young girl, a few shepherds, and magi, whoever magi were, all part of the even more ancient plot that Isaiah and the Hebrew Scriptures kept afloat. Christ will come again at the end of time, a day unknown. When first he came he was judged. When he comes this second time he will judge. (A paraphrase, I believe, of Augustine.) The world is hardly ready and cares less for this second coming. We need a new Isaiah or John the Baptist to call us to repentance. The third way in which Christ comes into the world is by entering into the hearts of individual believers, something that, I trust, we have all experienced. For us in our time Christ's coming to us is the primary experience of God with us.

3. Advent calls us to think deeply about who we are before God. Advent challenges us to step back from our daily lives and take time in prayer and to sit before our God and wait. It must have been deeply disturbing to Mary to be called to bear the Christ child. "How can this be" she wondered even as she accepted the gift. "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." When God calls us to a seemingly impossible task, let us be as willing as Mary to accept

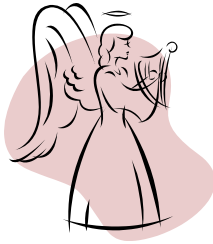
God's gift. We wait for the redemption of this world, our own world, as God calls us to witness to it. Who are we in God's eyes?

As Christians we are always Advent people. We wait with anticipation for God to step into our lives. We wait for God's gift of salvation, a very different gift than the ones of Christmas time and advertiser's pleas. We hope for the return of Christ and a time of cataclysmic change in the world order. We open our lives to the will of God. We wait.

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For our prayers Thelma McCutcheon, Conrad McQuaide, Clifford & Karen Lightner, Irene Clark, Irma McDivitt, James Powers, Carolyn Buckley, Steve Morcheid, Robin, Tom Kimble, Grace Young, Amy McQuaide, Bob Bierer, Lil Bowman, Pat Lengauer, Norm Reinhart, Joanne Fitzsimmons, Jim Thompson, Eugene Witt, Leland & Berenice Jones, Cathy Washburn, Kristen Fairbaugh, Jean Campbell, Tom Martin, Helen Grayem, Sandy Nemetz, the Davis Family, Mario Tagliati, Anna Mae Chicka, Roberta Caldwell, Lee & Linda Gardner, Geniene Ciuca, SSG James Bishop (Poke Run’s “adopt a soldier”) and others who serve in the military.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN NEWS



The Quarterly PW meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 3rd at 7pm. Josh Porterfield will share his *Triennium* experiences and Circle 2 will provide holiday refreshments.

Circle 4 will meet on Thursday, December 12 at noon. The hostess is Emma Dunmire and the leader is Mary Ellen Ross.

Circle 2 will meet on Thursday, December 12 at 7pm at the church. It will be “pot-luck” and the leader will be Sandy Chappell.

The PW would like to thank everyone who participated in the “Thank Offering” in November. We filled a van with donated “shoes.” And it’s not too late to contribute YOUR “worn but not worn out” shoes. Place them in the box in the Narthex. These will be recycled and the proceeds used to combat hunger in the world. Thank you too, for the many donated shoeboxes for “Operation Christmas Child.” And finally, thank you for your generous monetary donations.

Thank You

Thank you to our November Lectors: Tom Kimble, Becky Lange, Debbie Seighman, and Connie Cauvel.

Thank you to our November Greeters: Ron & Evan Hileman, Ruth O’Connor, Irma McDivitt & Cindy Brooks, Heidi & Logan Hileman, and Sandy & Cailleigh Chappell





REMEMBER: The Session will be meeting on Tuesday, December 10th. All 2013/2014 Elders, Deacons, and Trustees should plan to attend this joint meeting. Supper will be served at 6:30pm, followed by the meeting.



In preparation for the 2014 Directory, Information Needed

Please notify the church office if you have had any name changes, address changes, a change in your phone number or a change in your email address. You may call the office at 724-327-5563 or email your information to pokerun@windstream.net Thank you.

HAPPENING IN OUR PRESBYTERY

Dec. 7&8, 14& 15—Salem Crossroads Christmas, Delmont PA—reservations required
 Dec. 8—"Mission Gift Market" - noon—3pm, Maplewood Presbyterian, Greensburg

Coming Up at Pine Springs Camp
 Jan. 24-26—Sr. Hi Retreat
 Feb. 21-23—Jr. Hi Retreat



Poke Run & Redstone Offices will be closed on Dec. 24th & 25th and Dec. 31st and Jan. 1st.

HAPPENING IN OUR COMMUNITY

Overly's Country Christmas is OPEN NOW—at the Westmoreland County Fairgrounds
 Dec. 6& 7 at 7pm and Dec. 8 at 2pm—"Hometown Christmas" at Vandergrift Casino Theater
 Dec. 13th—"Stuff a Bus" toy donation center at Kiski Area Primary North, 5-9pm.
 Dec. 14th—"Jingle Bell Rock" concert 7:30pm at Vandergrift Casino Theater

Monthly on the 2nd Wednesday at the Wash. Twp. Firehall 11:30am—noon
 Blood Pressure Clinic for Seniors— Bring your table service and a covered dish.



Santa's Coming For Breakfast

The Christian Education Committee is sponsoring their annual "Breakfast With Santa" on Saturday, December 7, from 8:30 am. to 11:30 am.

Get a great breakfast at a great price and get that special picture on Santa's knee.

*Tickets are available at the door.
Adults and children ages 11 and over: \$5.00
children ages 3 to 10: \$2.00,
and children ages 2 and under eat free!*

Breakfast includes pancakes and syrup, sausages, and your choice of beverages.

Each digital photo with Santa costs only \$1.00 and is mounted for you in a specially designed card by one of Santa's elves. Picture processing takes about 30 minutes so plan to get your pictures taken with Santa prior to eating or shopping at Santa's Store. You'll find some great Christmas decorating ideas and gift giving items at this year's store.

Proceeds benefit the Christian Education Programs.

And it's not too late to volunteer.

Calling All Elves!

Santa is in need of lots of helpers for his breakfast. If you can help him, contact Linda Chicka at lgchicka@gmail.com, or at 724-422-3688, or call the church office.

Set up/Decorating Night, Friday, December 6, beginning at 6:00pm. We start with a meal so bring a covered dish or dessert!



Deacon minutes – October 7, 2013

The meeting was held at 7pm in the church lounge.

Pastor Pete opened the meeting with prayer and Nikki McQuaide read a poem.

Members present: Sheree Wagner, Karen Staymates, Nikki McQuaide, Laurie Powers, Mary Ellen Ross, Jan Fitzgerald and Pastor Pete.

Absent: Debbie Seigman, Ruth O’Conner and Debora Ross.

Treasurer Report:

Balance	\$4,036.07
Receipts	none
Disbursements	<u>\$530.00</u>
Balance	\$3,506.07

Boxes for college students discussed and will be sent in time for mid terms and finals. Jan Fitzgerald will be in charge.

A short meeting will be called after Sunday service about continuing to help a family in need.

Cookies for the military was discussed and they will be packed on November 2nd. Laurie Powers will get an address so they can be sent there.

Information about the giving tree, food baskets and poinsettias will be put in the bulletin and the ranger.

It was discussed to send food to a shut-in – Mary Ellen will be in charge.

Pastor Pete closed the meeting with prayer at 8pm.

Respectfully submitted by Mary Ellen Ross, Secretary.

Poke Run Deacons have projects underway.



Christmas Poinsettia Orders and Foodbank Donations; due Dec..1st



The Deacon’s Giving Tree is in the Narthex. “Unwrapped” gifts & tags are due back to the church by Sunday, December 15th. Your generosity is appreciated!

Deacons will be Christmas Caroling on Sunday, December 15th

A light lunch will be provided after the 11:00 am service before leaving for Caroling. Please come and join the fun. If you know of someone who would enjoy a song-filled visit please let the Deacons know.



Wednesday, Dec. 18—is the deadline to order **Christmas Food Baskets**. If you know of someone who would benefit by receiving a basket, please contact a Deacon or call the Poke Run Office.

Saturday, Dec. 21—Christmas Basket pick-up. 9-10:30 am.



Please join the Poke Run Deacons as we participate in “**Project Frontlines**” and “**Adopt a US Soldier.**” General information about the program as well as a mailing label for you to use has been posted on the Poke Run Veteran’s board in the Narthex. Our soldier is SSG James E. Bishop. Please keep him and his entire platoon in your prayers

The Deacons were able to send 152 dozen cookies to the troops this year—Thank you!!

From the Poke Run Presbyterian Church Session Minutes October 8, 2013

The scheduled meeting of the Session met in the Sunday school rooms @ 7:00 pm. A quorum was present and, Rev. Peter Goetschius, Moderator, opened the meeting with prayer and devotions.

Elders present: Rev. Peter Goetschius -Moderator, Connie Cauvel - Clerk, Josh Porterfield – Assistant Clerk, Bob Thompson, Tim Martin, Ron Hileman, Glenn Ross, Meri Slaughaupt, Sandy Chappell,

Excused: Cindy McQuaide, Linda Chicka

Guests: Bob Wilson

MSC: To approve the Session Minutes of May 14, 2013

MSC: To accept the Trustee Minutes April 25, 2013

MSC: To accept the Deacon Minutes

MSC: To accept Treasurer Report

MSC: Andy Caldwell to use our kitchen and fellowship hall on Saturday November 9 from 10 A.M. - 7 P.M. for a benefit dinner for a cancer patient

Committee Reports:

Budget & Finance: Tim Martin –

The current bid on the Road Fund is \$25,000. Our balance this year is in the positive. Plus, our investments have gradually increased from the previous years. A new person is wanted to serve on the budget and Finance Committee from the Congregation

Mission and Stewardship: Linda Chicka

The Adelphoi kids were invited and came to volunteer at the community dinner. The kids were guided along by the congregation members.

Linda has sent in our deposit for our mission trip this year.

Dan Carney has invited us to volunteer at the Union Mission in Latrobe.

Congregational Life: Glenn Ross

A luncheon will be provided next Sunday after the congregational meeting.

Technology – Josh Porterfield

Updating locations within our website so Church website will get more hits

Pastor Pete's report: Robin was here on the 15th. Sue Washburn's Ordination. Funeral Nelson Thompson Funeral. Communion on the 6th. Dan Carney was here on the 6th.

Trustees -- We are going to lease a copier, Kyocera TASKalfa 350II Digital Color Document from Cannon. Salesmen from CC Electronics in Greensburg have been in contact with Bob Wilson and the Trustees about the copier.

Correspondence -- We have received a letter from the presbytery, asking for our annual commitment (First Fruits).

Old Business:

MSC: To have Sue Washburn's ordination at Poke Run.

New Business:

There will be Congregational Meeting on October 20th

Discussion:

Everyone at the Session Meeting believes that the new sign is beautiful and visually appealing.

Close with prayer: Tim Martin

Adjourn: 8:08

Respectfully Submitted:

Joshua Porterfield (Assistant Clerk of Session)

Poke Run Presbyterian Church Annual Congregational Meeting – October 20, 2013

With a quorum present the meeting was held in the Church Sanctuary at 11:00 am and opened with prayer by the Moderator Rev. Peter M. Goetschius.

MSC: to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the last meeting of the congregational meeting.

Ecclesiastical business:

The chairperson of the nominating committee presented the slate of proposed Session members (Elders) as follows:

Linda Chicka (renew), Cindy McQuaide (renew), Chad McCutcheon (new) and Josh Porterfield (renew) – Youth with one-year term.

Nominations from the floor were opened with no additional nominations: MSC to close nominations.

MSC: To accept the above slate of officers to serve as Elders on Session.

Proposed member to the Board of Deacons:

Jan Fitzgerald (renew), Sheree Wagner (renew), Mario Tagliati (new), Tammy Kelly (new), Jacob Slaugenhaupt – youth with one year term; and Erin Bruce (new / filling 2 year term unfilled from 2012)

Nominations from the floor were opened with no additional nominations. MSC: To close nominations.

MSC: Accept the above slate of officers for the Board of Deacons

The nominations for Nominating Committee for the year 2014 were opened with the following being nominated: Becky Lange, Shyrl Stange, Valerie Hansen, Nancy Kimble, and Connor Martin.

MSC: To elect the above nominees to serve on the Nominating Committee.

Corporate business:

The chairperson of the nominating committee presented the slate of proposed persons to the Board of Trustees: Bob Fitzgerald (renew), Jim Moorhead (renew), Rick Slaugenhaupt (new).

Nominations from the floor were opened with no additional nominations. MSC: To close nominations.

MSC: To accept the nominees for the Board of Trustees

Nominations for Auditor, a four-year term, were opened and Jan Fitzgerald was nominated. There were no additional nominations. MSC: To close nominations.

MSC: To accept Jan Fitzgerald as an Auditor for a 4 year term.

The 2014 Budget was presented by Tim Martin, chairperson of the Budget and Finance Committee:

Tim commented that Poke Run is truly a remarkable Church blessed with a very generous congregation.

MSC: To approve the Pastoral Terms of Call.

MSC: To adjourn the meeting at 11:50 am. Rev. Goetschius closed with prayer.

Congregation was invited to enjoy a meal prepared by the Congregational Life in Fellowship Hall.



Approved 11.12.2013

You can now find Poke Run Presbyterian Church on Facebook!

Poke Run's email address: pokerun@windstream.net

Poke Run web site is www.pokerunchurch.com



And check out our remodeled website at www.pokerunchurch.com .

Christmas Joy Offering

Like the shepherds, we hear the news and we are stunned: in Jesus, God has come among us as one of us, to accompany us and transform us. As we open our hearts to God's love in Jesus, we find it will not be contained but yearns to be shared with others. One of the ways Presbyterians have traditionally responded to the news of God's great gift is by sharing our own gifts through the Christmas Joy Offering. The Joy Offering supports racial ethnic education at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges, where students develop their gifts and find their calling. It also helps families of active and retired church workers meet unexpected needs through the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions. As we celebrate this good news of great joy - that a Savior has been born to us - may our gifts bear joyful witness to God's uncontainable love.



The next **"Soup for the Soul"** will be on Wednesday, Dec. 11th.

11:30am—doors open, Noon—"Soup's On"

Mark your calendars for the second Wednesday of the month October through May. If you would like flyers to distribute, please contact the Church office.

Remember to invite a friend.

If you are able to volunteer a dessert or your time, please contact the Poke Run Office.

We were Thankful to share a delicious Spaghetti Dinner with our Community!





Thank you for
your support!

Friends & Family of
Sandy Chisnell
Nemetz

Thank you
very much

DEAR POKE RUN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
THE CUB SCOUTS OF DEN 2,
WANTED TO SAY "THANK YOU"
FOR LETTING US USE YOUR
CHURCH FOR OUR DEN MEETINGS,
THANKS & GOD BLESS

Ryder
Brenden
Tyler
Zack
Cody
Nathan
Noah
MAX
Caden



PRESBYTERIAN HOME
OF GREATER JOHNSTOWN

Poke Run Presbyterian,
On behalf of the Residents + Staff
at the Presbyterian Home we wish to
thank you for your donations. Your continued
support, both financially + your prayers are
always well received.

Thank you again!
May God Bless You!
Residents + Staff

The joint meeting of the Session, Deacons and Trustees will be on Tuesday, December 10 at 6:30pm.



December 2013

Poke Run Presbyterian Church

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

<p><i>Communion</i> Dec. 1 Ron Hileman & Karen Staymates Dec. 24 Deacons</p>	<p><i>Offering - Session</i> <i>Christmas Eve</i> <i>Offering-Deacons</i></p>					
<p>1 <i>Communion</i> 8:30-11 Worship 9:45 Sunday School 7pm Bible Study</p>	<p>2 <i>7pm Deacons</i></p>	<p>3 <i>7pm PW Quarterly</i> <i>7pm Budget & Finance</i></p>	<p>4 <i>6pm Bells</i> <i>7pm Choir</i></p>	<p>5 <i>6:30pm Boy Scouts & Cub Scouts</i></p>	<p>6 <i>6pm Breakfast Prep</i></p>	<p>7 <i>8:30-11:30</i> <i>Santa's Breakfast</i></p>
<p>8 <i>8:30-11 Worship</i> <i>9:45 Sunday School</i> <i>7pm Bible Study</i></p>	<p>9 <i>7pm Mission & Stewardship</i></p>	<p>10 <i>7pm Joint meeting Session, Deacons, Trustees</i></p>	<p>11 <i>11:30 Soup /Soul</i> <i>6pm Bells</i> <i>7pm Choir</i></p>	<p>12 <i>12:00 Circle 4</i> <i>7:30pm Circle 2</i> <i>6:30pm Scouts</i></p>	<p>13 <i>6:30pm Cub Scouts</i></p>	<p>14</p>
<p>15 <i>Caroling</i> <i>8:30-11 Worship, 9:45 Sunday School</i> <i>6:30pm Cub Scouts</i></p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18 <i>6pm Bells</i> <i>7pm Choir</i></p>	<p>19 <i>6:30pm Boy Scouts & Cub Scouts</i></p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21 <i>Basket Pick-up 9-10:30am</i></p>
<p>22 <i>8:30-11 Worship</i> <i>9:45 Sunday School,</i> <i>7pm Bible Study</i></p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24  <i>5pm & 7:30pm</i> <i>Christmas Eve</i></p>	<p>25 <i>Christmas Day</i></p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27 <i>6:30pm Cub Scouts</i></p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29 <i>8:30-11 Worship</i> <i>9:45 Sunday School</i> <i>7pm Bible Study</i></p>	<p>30 <i>New Years Eve</i></p>	<p>31</p>				

Poke Run Presbyterian Church

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Apollo, PA 15613

Phone: 724-327-5563

E-mail: pokerun@windstrem.net



www.pokerunchurch.com

In December:

December 7th, 8:30am to 11:30am Breakfast with Santa

Adults & Children ages 11 years and over \$5.00

Children 3 years to 10 years \$2.00

Children 2 years and under eat Free!

December 24th Christmas Eve Services

5:00pm Informal Worship

7:30pm Formal Worship

Do you receive your Poke Run Ranger by regular mail? If you are able to receive it by email—just think, you would receive it FASTER and view it IN COLOR!

If you would like to discontinue your “snail mailed” copy and receive it by email, please contact the office.

