

## by Pastor Pete

I am going to talk today first about a system of thought, or belief, called "Calvinism." As we have received it, it is a harsh and unforgiving framework. Unfortunately it has been used, unfairly I believe, to caricature John Calvin, the great sixteenth century Reformer from the writings of whom, among others, the present form of our Reformed faith has emerged. Then, I am going to challenge this miserable system with quotes from Calvin's own works and show that his thought was much broader than five simple statements can grasp. I will close with a comment or two about Calvin the person and his life.

You may have heard of the acronym **TULIP**. **TULIP** is a shortened form of what is called five point Calvinism. We receive it from The Synod of Dort which met during the years 1618-19 in order to attempt to settle a major dispute going on in the churches. Fancy that! Here are the five points:

**T**otal Depravity – or, all human beings are so totally depraved and under the control of sin that they cannot of their own free will choose not to sin. Or, everything that we do is somehow tinged with sin. This means as well that we cannot possibly save ourselves.

**U**nconditional election – God chooses us for reasons of God's own. God's choice is not dependent upon anything we are or have done. We do not get to choose, God does. This has the unfortunate effect that those not elect to salvation are automatically elect to damnation. This is known as double predestination. (Yes, some people actually believe this.)

**L**imited atonement – only a few, a given number known only to God are

chosen. Some gentler souls have suggested that perhaps this number is infinite.

**I**rresistible grace – those chosen by God cannot resist his grace; you cannot choose to walk away from election.

**P**erseverance of the saints – those so chosen are chosen for eternity.

This my friends, is so-called raw Calvinism. Some of our brothers and sisters on the conservative side of the Reformed Church hold to these beliefs with great fervor. Some have modified them; some are not "five" but "three point" Calvinists, or "three and a half," and so on. Churches outside the Reformed faith do not agree with much of any of it.

But is this what Calvin himself taught? I will list some quotes that I have taken directly from his Commentary on the Four Gospels. Here is one: "God invites all indiscriminately to salvation through the gospel ... (his message) has reference to the whole human race." What do you think? Was Calvin a Calvinist? Not likely. One quote is hardly sufficient; consider this, "... he (Christ) is never sought in vain by those who desire to know him." And then this remarkable statement rendered in his handling of Peter's misunderstanding of the Transfiguration, pushing the limits of universalism, "... what if Christ had been confined ... to the narrow limits of twenty or thirty (persons)? ... Where would have been the redemption of the whole world? Where would have been the communication of eternal salvation?" If that does not do it for us, this is even more remarkable: "Those who infer ... that faith is a gift of God are mistaken; for Christ does not show what God produces in us, but what God requires from us."

Yes, Calvin taught "Election" or predestination, but he taught in a highly nuanced form. Calvin was one of the great intellects of the world, past or present, and he could easily work with paradox.

He taught what Scripture said in any instance and held this whole complex teaching in his spacious mind.

Calvin was trained, not as clergy but as a lawyer. His academic dissertation was not on a theological topic but on *Seneca*, an early pagan politician and philosopher who followed Greek Stoic thought and some would say expanded and bettered it. One of my professors at seminary, Charles Partee stated that Calvin read *Seneca* every day of his life up until the very day he died. By some counts Calvin quotes from over 120 different non-biblical writers in his first great work, the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Many of these writers were pagan philosophers and many were persons with whom Calvin disagrees but finds their thought invigorating as well as provoking.

We know very little about Calvin's personal life. His letter written to a friend on the death of Calvin's wife is touching. Of his conversion we know less, except that it turned him into a servant of God like no other. In his later days he was sickly. He couldn't sleep so he studied and wrote. He preached, while ill, until he coughed up blood and was forced to stop. Occasionally in a sermon, taken down in shorthand by a faithful follower, one finds, "I can go not farther," as the last words.

What we know is that we cannot restrict the thought of this great servant of God to five points.

*If you have appropriate News to share in the Ranger—please submit it to the office. The next Ranger deadline is May 20.*



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*Thank you to everyone who served during our worship services in April.*

**Thank you to our April Greeters:**

Doug & Nadene Bruce, Mario & Bev Tagliati, Tammy & Brenden Kelley, and Ron & Carole Bowman

**Thank you to our April Lectors:**

Amy Wilkinson, Josh Porterfield, Bob Fitzgerald and Eleanor Zerbini

**Special thanks** to everyone who helped in any way with the TIGF Event on Good Friday.

**Special thanks** to Amy Wilkinson, Katie Ballas & Melissa Goetschius for sharing their music on Easter Sunday.

*For our prayers:* Dolly Remaley, Thelma McCutcheon, Conrad McQuaide, Karen Lightner, Clifford Lightner, Irene Clark, Irma McDivitt, James Powers, Carolyn Buckley, Grace Hartman, Steve Morcheid, Robin, Tom Kimble, Grace Young, Amy McQuaide, John Chicka, Bob Bierer, Lil Bowman, Pat Lengauer, Norm Reinhart, Nelson Thompson, Joanne Fitzsimmons, Walt Lange, Beth Porter and those who serve in the military.

If you wish to add someone to our prayer list, please call the church office. The list is periodically updated; if someone has been dropped from the list

Thank you to everyone who comes out to help the Trustees on their Work Days—There will be 2 opportunities to help this month.

**MAY 18—8:30AM—NOON Work Day = all help welcomed**

**MAY 23—6PM—DARK Cemetery Memorial Day Planting**



## News for Women of the Church

### May 4—Community Dinner—don't forget your pies!

**Circle 2** is meeting on May 16th at 7pm. The hostess will be Cindy McQuaide and the leader will be Valerie Hansen

**Circle 4** will meet at 12:00pm on May 9th. The hostess is Miriam Painter and the leader is "Everyone!"

May 28—PW Redstone Spring Retreat—9am-2:30pm at Pine Springs Camp—Deadline to register is May 15—

## NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

**MAY 2, 2013**—an annual day of observance held on the first Thursday of May, designated by the [United States Congress](#), when people are asked "to turn to God in [prayer](#) and [meditation](#)". Each year



## WORLD FAIR TRADE DAY

**MAY 11, 2013**—The WFTO [logo](#) is for organizations that demonstrate a 100% commitment to Fair Trade in all their business activities. Only monitored WFTO members are authorized to use the [logo](#). Launched in 2004, the Fair Trade Organization Mark (WFTO Logo) shows that an organization follows the WFTO's 10 Principles of Fair Trade, covering working conditions, transparency, wages, the environment, gender equity and more.



## Poke Run Graduation Sunday, May 12, 2013

**Kathleen Ballas**—daughter of Tim & Sandy Ballas, granddaughter of James & Winifred Powers

Katie is graduating from Kiski Area High School and will be attending Mercyhurst University

**Kaitlyn Nichole Elwood**—daughter of Greg & Barb Elwood, great-granddaughter of Edyth Elwood

Kaitlyn is graduating from Blairsville/Saltsburgh High School and will be attending a Veterinary Assistance Program in Pittsburgh, PA.

**Krista Gibbon**—daughter of Don & Debbie Gibbon, granddaughter of Karen Staymates

Krista is graduating from Indiana High School and will be attending Saint Vincent College

**Elizabeth Wilkinson**—daughter of Dave & Amy Wilkinson

Lizzy is graduating from Kiski Area High School and will be attending Thiel College

**Sarah Thornton**—daughter of Matt Thornton and Sue Washburn

Sarah is graduating from The Ellis School and will be attending the University of Pittsburgh

***POKE RUN CHURCH ROAST BEEF COMMUNITY DINNER***  
***MAY 4, 2013 FROM 4 TO 7 PM***  
***ADULTS \$12.00***  
***CHILDREN \$3.00***  
***FOR RESERVATIONS CALL 724-396-3227***



Deacon Minutes – March 4, 2013

The meeting was held at 7:00 pm in the church lounge.

Laurie Powers opened the meeting with prayer.

Members Present:

Laurie Powers, Sheree Wagner, Jan Fitzgerald, Nikki McQuaide, Mary Ellen Ross, Ruth O'Connor, and Debora Ross.

Treasurers Report:

Balance \$4650.44

No Receipts for February

Disbursements:

Donation to Westview Cemetary Fund \$40.00

Balance 3/1/13 \$4610.44

Palm Sunday Dinner was discussed and planned.

Shopping for food baskets will be Friday, March 22 at 6PM.

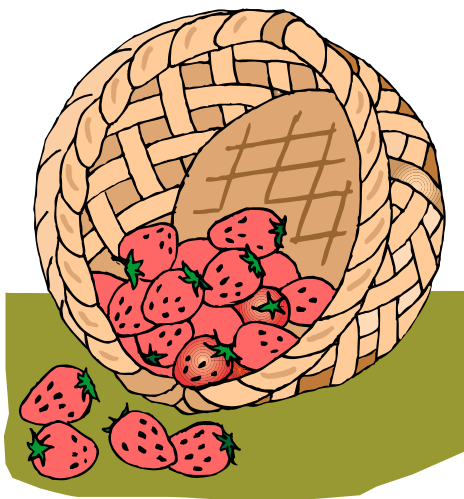
Food baskets will be picked up Saturday, March 23 at 9 AM.

Flowers will be purchased for the tables for the Palm Sunday Luncheon and then taken to our Shut Ins

Ruth O'Connor closed the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully submitted:

Mary Ellen Ross, Secretary



***POKE RUN CHURCH DEACON'S  
ANNUAL STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL***

***MAY 18, 2013***

***3 – 6:00 PM***

***ADULTS \$7.00***

***CHILDREN AGES 3-12 \$3.00***

***CHILDREN UNDER 3 – FREE***

***Enjoy Ham Bar-B-Que's; Salad Bar &  
a Variety of Strawberry Desserts***

## **Mark Your Calendar!**



This year's Vacation Bible School will be Sunday, July 21st through Thursday, July 25th during the evening with the closing Worship service on Sunday, July 28th.

Look for details coming in next month's Ranger and bulletin inserts! Contact Linda Chicka, 724-422-3688, or [lgchicka@gmail.com](mailto:lgchicka@gmail.com) if you are interested in helping.

### **HAPPENING IN OUR PRESBYTERY**

May 11th Congruity Presbyterian Church, New Alexandria- **Turkey Dinner**, 4-7pm

May 18th Westminster Presbyterian Church, Greensburg—**Vendor/Craft Show**, 1-4pm

\* Look for informational flyers hung in the Educational Wing hallway.

### **HAPPENING IN OUR COMMUNITY**

May 4th Holiday Park United Methodist—Plum Boro—**Indoor Yard Sale**, 9am-3pm

May 5th Delmont Presbyterian Church- **Organ/Piano Pop Concert**, 7pm

May 18th **Springtime Tea**—Tri-City Life Center, Lower Burrell, 10am-1pm

\* Look for informational flyers hung in the Educational Wing hallway.

### **SUPPORT BSA TROOP 552**

3rd ANNUAL MULCH SALE

### **HIGH QUALITY HARDWOOD MULCH**

NATURAL – 3 CUBIC FOOT BAG – \$5.00

RED, BROWN OR BLACK DYED – 2 CUBIC FOOT BAG – \$5.00

**FREE LOCAL DELIVERY**

**Contact Jeff Wilkinson at 724-335-0710**



## Pine Springs Camp

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Brochures are now available on-line or in the church office for attending camp at Pine Springs this summer. Again, Poke Run will offer full camperships for anyone wishing to attend retreats or summer camp. Please contact the church office (724-327-5563) or Laurie Martin (724-727-3361) if you are interested.

Other upcoming and exciting events at Pine Springs are:

Mountain Bike Race – May 4

Pine Springs is most grateful for the many forms of support that Poke Run has offered for many years. Please continue to keep the ministry of Pine Springs Camp in your prayers and actions.



### Information Needed

If you have a new phone number, address, email, or any changes to your family information please email them to our email address at [pokerun@windstream.net](mailto:pokerun@windstream.net). Anyone who does not have email may send them to the church office or call 724-327-5563 with the updated information. **Also, if you know someone outside our congregation who would enjoy receiving the *Ranger* or other Poke Run communications, please let the office know.**

### DIRECTORY UPDATE

The office has been contacting those who are listed in the Church Directory (by snail mail or email) to update church records. If you have not been contacted, it might be because your information has not been listed—contact the office to be certain you are not missed! 724-327-5563. We are hoping to have an updated Directory this month.



Please join us for our monthly free

*Community*

*“Soup for the Soul”*

*Luncheon*

*AND BRING A FRIEND!!!!*

May 22, 2013

Doors open at 11:30am

Soup's on at NOON!



## Music Appreciation Sunday

Join the Congregational Life committee on Sunday, May 19th to celebrate the Poke Run musicians who share their gifts in our worship services. A luncheon will be served following the 11am service.



### Choir:

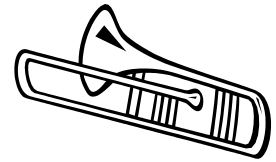
Miriam Painter  
Betty Schmidt  
Laurie Martin  
Katie Ballas  
Pat Lengauer  
Don Lengauer- Soloist (Christmas)  
Albert Moorhead  
Mary Ellen Ross  
Cindy McQuaide  
Nikki McQuaide  
Amy Wilkinson  
Lizzy Wilkinson- Soloist (Christmas)  
Patrick Wilkinson  
Glenn Ross  
Jan Fitzgerald

### Instrumentalists:

Linda Moorehead- Piano  
Katie Ballas- Flute  
Melissa Goetschius- Trumpet  
Doug Bruce- Trumpet  
Connor Martin- Trombone

### Hand Bell Choir:

Laurie Martin  
Connor Martin  
Amy Wilkinson  
Jeff Wilkinson  
Jan Fitzgerald  
Deb Seighman  
Edyth Elwood  
Freda Bowman  
Cindy McQuaide  
Sean O'Neil



### Youth Choir:

Logan and Evan Hileman  
Austin and Avery Weyel  
Gianna and Athena Wray  
Jadyn, Morgan, and Eleve Scheftic

### Music Director: Sean O'Neil

### Early Service Musician:

Linda Moorhead



## LOST AND FOUND

As we get closer to Community Dinner time, you might be looking for that lost pie plate! Please be aware that there are numerous dishes, including pie plates, unclaimed in the downstairs storage room. In addition, there are a couple stray glass loaf pans sitting on the top of the refrigerator in the upstairs Fellowship area. ALSO, there is a lovely little girl's white fur coat, size S in the narthex.

**Poke Run Presbyterian Church Session**  
**Minutes March 12, 2013**

**T H E R A N G E R**  
**P A G E 8**

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, Bob Thompson, Glenn Ross, Tim Martin, Meri Slaugenhaupt, Sandy Chappell, Ron Hileman, Cindy McQuaide, Linda Chicka,

**Elders Excused:** Josh Porterfield.

**Guests:** Bob and Diane Scott

**MSC:** To approve the Session Minutes of February 12, 2013

**MSC:** To accept the Deacon Minutes of February 4, 2013

**Treasurer's Report** – Amy Wilkinson

**MSC:** to accept Treasurer Report

**Committee Reports:**

**Budget & Finance:** Tim Martin

UBS representative attended the March Budget and Finance meeting. Investment Funds are doing very well. Sheryl Stange has volunteered to count the offering each week on Monday or Tuesday when the secretary is in the office. The secretary will complete the spread sheet. Committee will review process for starting new funds. First Fruits contributions are up to \$900.

**Mission and Stewardship:** Linda Chicka

Adelphoi visits continue and are very well received

Bob Wilson is working on Community Garden which will include help and opportunities for the Adelphoi kids and also Scouts.

Global Compassion – is working with Haiti to ship silos that can be assembled with just a Wrench that will be used as homes Safe T Home \$5,700 with \$1,000 for shipping

Over 30 people attended Soup for the Soul in February

One Great hour of sharing continues

**Personnel:** Bob Thompson

Amy will continue to sub for Lil our thoughts and prayers are with her as she continues to recover.

**Congregational Life:** Glenn Ross

Appreciation dinner in Ethel's Brewer's honor on March 10 was very well attended and enjoyed by all

**Pastor Pete's report:** March 2013

Served Communion at the Ash Wed. Service at Pine Run Feb. 13. Lenten Service here at Poke Run –Feb. 20. Soup for the Soul – Feb. 27. Preached at Union March 6.

**Old Business:**

Triennium for youth - Linda will discuss with her Sunday School Class

**New Business:**

**MSC:** To accept Bob and Diane Scott as new members at Poke Run

**MSC: to Approve New Calendar Dates:**

April 20 Shriners Fundraiser Andy Caldwell

May 12, 2013 Graduation Sunday (Mother's Day)



May 19, 2013 Choir Appreciation  
September 21, 2013 Shriner's Fundraiser

**Report on Poke Run Roll:**

June E. Penrod: passed away January 2, 2013  
Margaret L. Peterson: Passed away January 10, 2013  
Bessie Ethel Weister McDivitt Passed away Feb. 13, 2013  
Elvie C. McKown passed away February 21, 2013

Robert and Diane Scott will join Poke Run Presbyterian Church March 21, 2013

**Discussion led by Pastor Pete:**

PCUSA wants to plant 10001 new churches (worship & discussion led by Pete)  
They published a manual for beginning a new church with guidelines to make our church healthier.  
Can we help others to become a healthy, thriving church?  
Decide who is Jesus Christ & why is it important to tell people?

Close with prayer: Sandy Chappell  
Respectfully Submitted:

Adjourn: 8:45 PM  
Approved: March 12, 2013



Connie Cauvel (Clerk of Session)

Thanks to everyone who helped with the Westmoreland County Foodbank in April!  
Over 1,460 Senior boxes were packed.  
Next Foodbank day for Poke Run is August 17th!



**You can now find Poke Run Presbyterian Church on Facebook!**  
**Facebook "Likes" as of April 22nd— 42 Join in!**

Poke Run's email address: [pokerun@windstream.net](mailto:pokerun@windstream.net)

## Cemetery Preparations for Memorial Day

With Memorial Day this month, we want to begin our preparations for placing flowers on our veteran's graves. Over the past several years, we have located and marked almost 150 graves of men and women who have served in our armed forces from wars ranging from the Revolutionary to the Vietnam Wars. Members of the Trustees, Boy Scout Troop #552, and the Congregation will be planting memorial flowers in tribute of these servicemen and women on the evening of Thursday, May 23 beginning at 6:00p.m. If you would like to assist with this project, please see Linda Chicka. Bring your shovel!



## Recognizing our Service Men and Women

Our congregation has many men and women who have served in the military. We would like to acknowledge all our church members who have given service to our county, living or deceased. Please let us know if you or any of your family have served, and the timeframe and branch of the military in which they were active. Please call or email the office with this information, or Linda Chicka at 724-422-3688 or lgchicka@gmail.com.

### **POKE RUN YOUTH**

#### **Poke Run Sunday School**

Continues to meet each Sunday at 10:00 AM with classes for all ages.

**Pine Springs Camp** — The 2013 Pine Springs Camp schedule is available! And Poke Run remains dedicated to sending kids to PSC! Contact the office for more information.

#### ***"2013 Youth Triennium"***

The 2013 Youth Triennium will be held on July 16-20 at Purdue University. Youth entering High School (9<sup>th</sup> grade) thru Graduating Seniors are eligible. Please visit their website for more information:

<http://presbyterianyouthtriennium.org> **Scholarships are available, please call the office if interested.**

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS—2013 VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL—July 21st—26th!**

March 27, 2013

Dear Pastor Goetschius and Members of the Congregation,

Diane and I would like to express our gratitude for the warm welcome we received on Palm Sunday, as we became members of your Congregation. The sincere and friendly atmosphere of the Church is overwhelming.

Diane and I are looking forward to the years ahead, as we worship, learn and serve the Lord as a part of the Congregation.

Again, we would like to express our appreciation for such a warm and generous reception.

Sincerely yours,

Diane and Robert E. Scott



# Poke Run Church

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Offering - PW

Communion—C. Cauvel & A. Ballas

"The Lord bless you and keep you." Numbers 6:24

May 2013



Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

			1 6pm BELLS 7pm CHOIR	2 6:30pm SCOUTS	3	4 POKE RUN COMMUNITY DINNER! 4-7pm
5 8:30 & 11am WORSHIP 9:45am SUNDAY SCH 7pm BIBLE STUDY	6 DEACONS 7pm	7 BUDGET & FINANCE 7pm	8 6pm BELLS 7pm CHOIR	9 6:30pm SCOUTS	10	11 
12 8:30 & 11am WORSHIP 9:45am SUNDAY SCH 7pm BIBLE STUDY 	13 MISSION & STEWARDSHIP 7pm	14 SESSION 7pm	15 6pm BELLS 7pm CHOIR	16 10am CONGR LIFE 6:30pm SCOUTS	17	18 Trustee Work Day 8:30am—noon STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL 3-6pm 
19 Communion Day of Pentecost 8:30 & 11am WORSHIP Luncheon for All 9:45am SUNDAY SCH 7pm BIBLE STUDY 	20	21	22 11:30 SOUP 7pm Trustees	23 6:30pm SCOUTS 7pm TRUSTEES <i>Cemetery Planting</i> 6pm	24	25
26 8:30 & 11am WORSHIP 9:45am SUNDAY SCH 7pm BIBLE STUDY	27 Memorial Day 	28	29	30 6:30pm SCOUTS	31	

## Ordering Sanctuary Flowers

May 12th Graduation Sunday!

May 19th Music Appreciation  
Sunday with luncheon follow-  
ing 11am service

To order flowers for the sanctuary, please sign up on the flower chart and contact the church office with your announcement. Flower charges are: 2 arrangements \$44 (includes delivery fee) This will include mixed arrangements of mums and carnations. You can also provide your own arrangements; please let the office know this prior to the Monday before, so that a duplicate is not ordered. All checks should be made out to Poke Run Church; please note on your check that it is for flowers. Any questions? Contact the Church office.



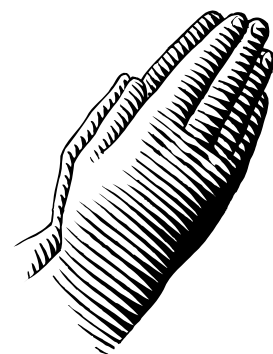
# TGIF 2013

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This year's Good Friday "TGIF" day focused on **"Jesus Teach Us to Pray!"** Children from Poke Run and our community gathered for a day of laughter and learning as they experienced Christ's love and realized that prayer is a lifeline for that love. There was "dressing up" and acting out Jesus' parables, learning how people of the Bible prayed, exploring when, how and why we pray, running, creating, playing and fun! And of course it started with a good breakfast and ended with a great lunch!







**Special Thanks** to  
everyone who attended  
and volunteered at TGIF  
2013!

Especially: coordinators  
Laurie Martin and Erin  
Bruce, and photographer  
Bob Scott!

1091 Poke Run Church Rd.  
Apollo, PA 15613

Phone: 724-327-5563

E-mail: [pokerun@windstream.net](mailto:pokerun@windstream.net)  
Web site: [www.pokerunchurch.com](http://www.pokerunchurch.com)



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## DEACON'S STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL

***SAVE THE DATE!***

**May 18, Saturday  
From 3:00 to 6:00pm**

**Adults \$7.00**

**Children ages 3-12 \$3.00**

**Children under age 3 are Free**



Come and enjoy a Buffet of Sandwiches (Ham Bar B Q; Ham Salad; Egg Salad & Hot Dogs) along with a variety of salads and for desert- strawberries, ice cream and your choice of cakes or shortbread.