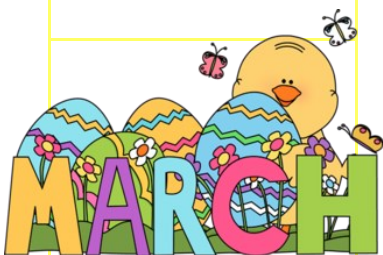




POKE RUN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Christianity only makes sense to Christians. This is something of a circular argument. It makes sense when we stop and think about it. We hold a particular set of beliefs. Without these beliefs, Christianity makes no sense. Consequently, Christianity only makes sense to Christians. Biblical Christianity only makes sense to Christians who hold a particular view of the Bible.

Michael Polanyi, who was in part a philosopher, argues that “we cannot convince others by formal argument, so long as we argue within their framework, we can never induce them to abandon it.” That is, if we wish to convince an atheist of the truth of Christianity, we cannot argue from the atheist’s point of view. Nor can we convince a meat eater that vegetarianism is a healthier option by arguing from the meat eater’s point of view. “That is why,” and this is a bit of a tricky argument in itself, you may have to read it over a time or two, “theological arguments (will always) appear meaningless and impossibly paradoxical if we claim” that they are true to a person who does not believe what we believe. In this case, they will simply make no sense.

For instance, the virgin birth of Jesus Christ makes perfect sense to me and to every person who is convinced of the truth of the Bible. We may hold differently nuanced views of exactly what the Virgin Birth is, or might have been. No one knows precisely what occurred in Mary’s womb. But the virgin birth of God as Jesus of Nazareth makes sense to us. Karl Barth argued that it was a theological necessity. However, to a person who holds to a view that only what is biologically natural can happen, the Virgin Birth, or any virgin birth, is an impossibility. We cannot use science or scientific reasoning to prove that the Virgin Birth occurred as the Bible says it did. We cannot prove it this way if for no other reason than that there is no Holy Spirit in the scientific worldview. Not to mention, to a person who does not believe that miracles are possible, belief in miracles is both absurd and childish, if not irresponsible.

This is what Paul has been talking about in the passages in Romans that we have been reading for the past few Sunday mornings, particularly yesterday’s reading, Romans 5:12-21. There is the everyday world. There is the new world into which God calls us by grace. In the old world of biological life, everything happens by natural law. There is no room for miracles, no room for faith. One lives, one dies, that is all. How sad! In the new world one receives as gift a new life and new possibilities exist, miracles are normal; faith can thrive. The two worlds do not mix. Nor can we argue someone from the everyday world into the new world of the Kingdom of God. We live in one or the other.

OK then, how does the transfer from one world to the other occur? The answer is the Gospel. The Gospel is a message of how we are delivered from one world of sin and death into God’s world of life and health and wholeness. We are not called to convince or argue – we have shown that that is a hopeless exercise – we are called to witness. For you see, the gospel must be heard, another argument from Romans, at Romans 10:14-17. Paul sums up by saying, “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.” The gospel is witnessed to, the Holy Spirit convicts, and one is translated from the old world of sin and death into a world of light, truth, and hope. This new world’s dimensions are not just infinite, but eternal.

Now, for persons of grace given faith, the truths of the Bible make sense, the Virgin Birth makes sense, miracles make sense, placing oneself under the authority of Scripture makes sense.

Christianity makes sense, for you are a Christian.

by Pastor Pete



The season of Lent is a time of prayer, fasting and self-examination in preparation for the celebration of the resurrection of the Lord at Easter. It is a period of 40 days — like the flood of Genesis, Moses' sojourn at Mount Sinai, Elijah's journey to Mount Horeb, Jonah's call to Ninevah to repent and Jesus' time of testing in the wilderness.

Passion / Palm Sunday begins Holy Week, a time in the church year when we remember how Christ gave his life in love for the world. As this day opens, the crowd waves palm branches, wanting to crown Jesus as king. But as the story of the passion unfolds, their shouts of praise turn to demands for his crucifixion; he receives a crown of thorns as he is handed over to be mocked and killed.

Palm Sunday Worship, Sunday March 20th

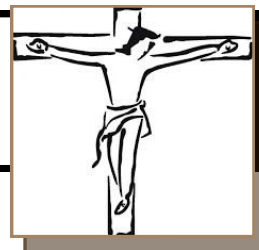


Maundy Thursday begins the Three Days (or Triduum), remembering the new commandment that Christ gave us in word and deed as he taught us how to love one another, washing our feet as a servant. We also celebrate the Lord's Supper, remembering the meal Christ shared with his disciples before his death. Historically, this was the traditional day in which those who had undergone a period of public penance under church discipline would be restored to full communion.

Come and share a meal before Maundy Thursday worship.

Dinner at 6pm, stay for Worship Service at 7:30pm. March 24th

Good Friday is the day we remember Jesus' crucifixion. It is an especially important time to pray for the church and the world, and all for whom Christ gave his life.



Easter Sunday is the center of the Christian year. On this occasion the church joyfully proclaims the good news that is at the very heart of the gospel: that Jesus Christ is risen from the dead. **Come to Poke Run for Easter**
Worship: Services at 8:30am and 11am

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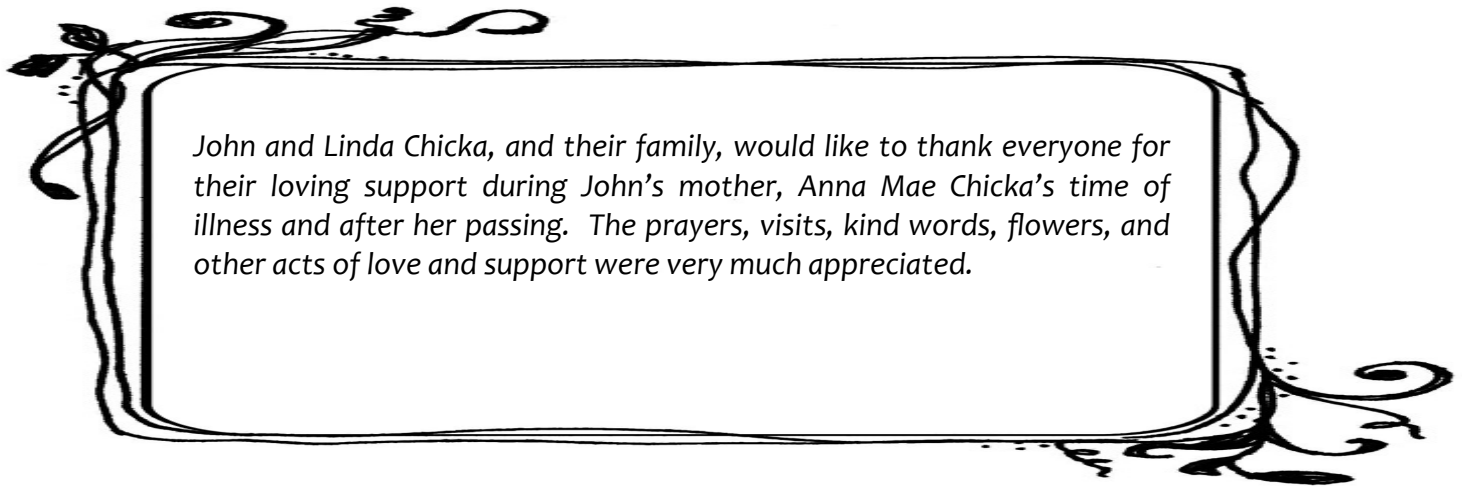




Thank You

Thank you to our February Greeters: Jack & Eleanor Zerbini, Larry & Debbie Seighman, Freda Bowman and Edyth Elwood, Jim & Carol Thompson.

Thank you to our February Lectors: Brian Dombroske, Diane Scott, Jodi Dupill, and Nikki McQuaide,



For our prayers: Ed Bahney, Renee Bates, Renee Beck, Bill Bert, Bob Bierer, Bryan Billeck, Lil Bowman, Max Brooks, Ralph Brown, Carolyn Buckley, Irene Clark, Jeffrey Clark, Lyndsey Coulter, Elvira, Lee & Linda Gardener, Helen Grayem, Allison Grundy, Caleb Hall, Leonard Hartman, Janine Hayle, Rachel Hill, Joyce Hodges, Tiffany Jensen, Leland & Berenice Jones, Marjorie Kaiser, Pat Lengauer, Cliff Lightner, Norm Linhart, Merle Lowman, Samantha McCutcheon, Irma McDivitt, Conrad McQuaide, Amy McQuaide, JoAnn Miller, June Moorhead, Steve Morcheid, Sandy Nemetz, Thad Overly, Wanda Petrilla, James & Winifred Powers, Rafael Rincon, Steve Roman, Ed & Betty Schmidt, Glen Schutlz, Lena Snedecor, Brenda Smith, Callie Spaulding, Terry Wiester, Peter Yurtin, Marnee Gormley, JD Strait, Sarah Brank, Clay Wilabee, the family of Ellen Toy, John Steele, those gripped by addictions, and those who serve in the military.

Please keep the family of Poke Run member Karen Lightner in your prayers, Karen passed away on February 4th.

Please keep the family of Poke Run member Irene Long in your prayers, Irene passed away on February 26th, she was 101.

Occasionally names are removed from the prayer list when the office has not been updated, if you see one removed that should remain, please contact the office.

It is a privilege to lift up those we care about in continued prayer and Poke Run Church rejoices that many of those included on our "Prayer List" are healing and strengthening. If you placed names on our "Prayer List," please contact the office to update us.





NOTE - due to inclement weather – the Poke Run Session met on January 28th for the months of January and February, 2016 . These minutes will be approved at the March 8th meeting.

Session meetings are open to all members of the church. They are traditionally scheduled on the second Tuesday of the month, September through May, at 7pm. In addition, complete Session Minutes are available for Church member review - call the Church office if you have any questions.

New Member Class



New Members Class—

Pastor Pete is putting together a class for anyone interested in joining the Poke Run congregation. If you would like to join or want more information, see Pastor Pete or contact the Church Office. 724-327-5563

Stories of Redstone

Christ at work in our midst

Body and Spirit

Pat Betts thought that she would be hanging up her stethoscope when she retired from her nursing career. God had other plans. First Presbyterian Church, Johnstown believes that the church is called to minister to the whole person and that healthcare should be about physical, mental and spiritual health. So Pat's nursing career found a new chapter within her faith community as First Presbyterian's Parish Nurse. Faith Community Nursing (or Parish Nursing) is a recognized specialty nursing practice approved by the American Nurses Association, with a certification process for current R.N.'s.

Pat's ministry is broad and inclusive in its scope. One of its keystones is blood pressure checks, offered after church during a fellowship hour or a monthly meal (hosted by their Congregational Care Committee, often with a health-related presentation), as well as two weekday mornings. At this time, people can also bring their questions about medications or have help interpreting something their doctor told them.

Outside of the church walls, Pat has accompanied individuals to doctors' appointments to serve as an advocate and to help translate any confusing information. She has taken people to tour senior communities and assisted with the paperwork to move in. Pat connects folks with community resources, such as helping people register with Senior LIFE. Pat also shares in pastoral care duties with Rev. Alice Tondora, visiting the hospitalized and the homebound.

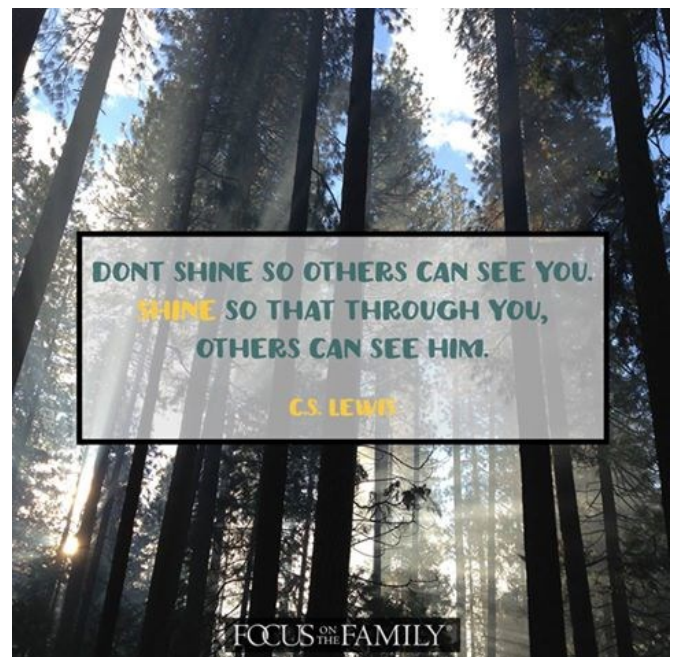


This is ministry: serving the needs of body, mind and spirit. It is likely that there are nurses within your congregation who could begin a similar ministry. What other skills can you envision church members putting to use to serve God in your neighborhood?

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

MISSION OPPORTUNITY:

>The Redstone Mission Team is going to Mayville, New Jersey to restore homes damaged by Hurricane Sandy. They will be staying at the PDA camp at Morningstar Presbyterian Church the week of April 3-10, 2016. If you are interested in joining this team contact Judy Koontz at judykoontz@windstream.net or call 724.668.2843.



**DON'T SHINE SO OTHERS CAN SEE YOU.
SHINE SO THAT THROUGH YOU,
OTHERS CAN SEE HIM.**

C.S. LEWIS

FOCUS ON THE FAMILY



From the Poke Run Board of Deacons: January and February 2016

Debora Ross (2018) Treasurer

Nancy Dombroske (2018)

Ruth O'Connor (2018) Co-moderator

Deb Seighman (2018) Secretary

Corey Kelley (2016) YOUTH

Bev Tagliati (2017)

Nancy Kimble (2017)

Diane Scott (2017) Co-moderator

Carol Thompson (2017)

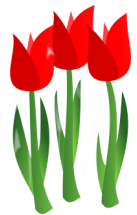
Jan Fitzgerald (2016) Co-moderator

Tammy Kelley (2016) Corresponding

Mario Tagliai (2016)

Sheree Wagner (2016) Treasurer

EASTER FLOWERS: The Deacons will be taking orders for Easter flowers, watch the bulletin for an order form.



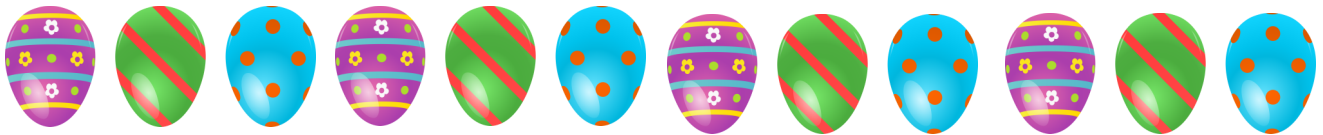
EASTER FOOD BASKETS: Contact a Deacon or the Church office if you would like to order an Easter “Food Basket” for someone in need. You will need to provide the name and phone number for the person who will be picking up the basket. Deadline is March 16th, Pick-up is Saturday, March 19th at 9am.



LUNCHEON

PALM SUNDAY LUNCHEON: The Poke Run Congregation is invited to a Palm Sunday luncheon immediately following the 11a.m. worship service on Sunday, March 20th. Come enjoy food and fellowship as we welcome new members to the Poke Run Congregation!

Please plan to stay for the luncheon and enjoy good food and fellowship. If you are available to help with the luncheon in any way, please contact a Deacon.



The next “Soup for the Soul” will be Wednesday, March 9th.

Potato Soup – doors open at 11:30am, soup is served at noon. Come and bring a friend, help extend a Christian welcome and presence to those God brings to Poke Run!

If you care to contribute a dessert—please call Amy in the office.

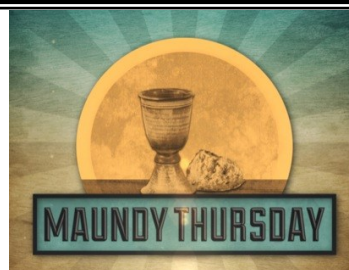
PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN NEWS



Thank you to the Poke Run PW for providing a fun morning of brunch and fellowship and fun. Over 80 people gathered together, ate together, sang together and had fun together. What a wonderful time!

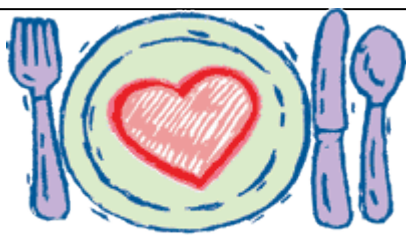


OVERHEARD AT THE BRUNCH—"It looked like a first-class restaurant, with a first-class brunch served by first-class people!"



PLEASE JOIN US:

Circle 2 would like to invite everyone to dinner before the Maundy Thursday service on Thursday, March 24th at 6 p.m. Join us for dinner and fellowship; then we can worship together in commemoration of the Last Supper of Jesus and the Apostles at the Maundy Thursday service that begins at 7:30p.m..



COMMUNITY DINNER

A generous donation has evolved into a new type of Community Dinner. **Saturday, March 5, 2016, 4-6pm!**

Pork & Sauerkraut, Mashed potatoes, green beans, applesauce, pie! \$10 – tickets are limited and ON SALE NOW! – (\$5 for kids 10 and under) - contact the office!

Proceeds will benefit the “Poke Run General Building Fund.”

All help is appreciated as we again reach out to our Community , praying that they will find nourishment for body and SOUL!! Please consider volunteering your time and maybe a pie?!?!?!



SUNDAY SCHOOL

Make the Connection

Sunday School at Poke Run Church

Classes meet each Sunday at 10am.

FOR THE KIDS The Children's Class is an engaging time of song and music, crafts and games, and a Bible message. Appropriate for all school aged children. Spread the word—bring kids—invite kids.

ADULTS We have two adult Sunday School classes. 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 "The Gift of Faith". The class meeting in the Session Room (on the right at the end of the hall) is working through a study guide from Max Lucado's Life Lessons series. "Galatians, Free in Christ"

**JOIN FOR FELLOWSHIP AND REFRESHMENT
BETWEEN THE EARLY SERVICE AND SUNDAY
SCHOOL
(Fellowship Kitchen area near the Church Office)**

Pine Springs Camp

"providing vital encounters with Jesus Christ since 1948"

SUMMER 2016



MAKE SUMMER MEANINGFUL and FUN



Information pamphlets are available in the church office.

Poke Run continues its pledge to send all campers to Pine Springs at no cost—call the office if you are interested.



Graduate Sunday: May 8, 2016

Please contact the office if you have a 2016 graduate in your life. We would like to recognize Poke Run's graduates, high school, college, etc. and certainly share good news of those you love. Please submit your grad information by April 10th.



In preparation for the 2016 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

Background Check (paid and volunteers) and mandatory reporting on child abuse

“As a result of Act 153 of 2014 Pennsylvania General Assembly, it is important that each congregation that has a ministry program (s) that involves children and youth become familiar with the new law pertaining to child abuse. Among other items, requirements for background clearances are specified both in expanding the definition of employees and inclusion of volunteers having direct contact with children.”

The above excerpt is from a letter received from the Presbytery. Although we can all agree that obtaining these reports may be an inconvenience, the reality in today's world is that we all understand the need to provide a safe environment for children. The Personnel Committee continues to work on options to help ease the process. We also are speaking to the Presbytery to stay updated on this process.

Many congregation members may have the clearances due to their current or past work related positions. If this is the case, and you regularly participate with our VBS programs, we ask that you gather your reports and provide a copy to our office. Over the next month, someone from the Personnel Committee may be contacting you and ask if you can get the clearances if you have volunteered in the past. If anyone has any questions or concerns, please contact any member of the Personnel Committee. We look forward to ensuring a safe environment for our children's programs here at Poke Run Church.



Poke Run Mission Team Returns to Marion, Virginia in 2016

Poke Run will once again be heading to Marion, Virginia to join hands with Project Crossroads for a week of mission work this summer. Scheduled for the week of June 19 through 24. Applications are now available for anyone interested in attending the mission trip. please pick up an application from the back of the Narthex, or from the church office. For more information on how you might join hands with us, please see or call Linda Chicka at 724-422-3688 or the Church office.



FIRST FRUITS

Poke Run Church has committed \$3,125 to Redstone Presbytery as part of their 2016 First Fruits campaign. Budget & Finance suggests a donation of \$35.00 per person for the year. Please help Poke Run meet this Redstone Presbytery campaign commitment. To date we have collected 50% of our commitment.

Your giving is important and appreciated.

Budget & Finance Committee

Check the Narthex for your box of Giving Envelopes!

The “2015 Annual Report” will be available in The Narthex on March 6, 2016.



HAPPENING IN OUR PRESBYTERY

Mar 12th—St. Patrick's Day Dance—7pm, Delmont Presbyterian Church
 March 15th—Redstone Presbytery Meeting, 1pm Westmont Presbyterian, Johnstown
 March 20th, 2-4pm, Easter Egg Hunt, Level Green Presbyterian



Friendship Dinner—2nd Wednesday of every month, 5-6pm New Kensington United Presbyterian

COMING IN APRIL

Apr 16—Redstone Presbyterian Women “Spring Gathering,” Delmont Presbyterian Church see Laurie Martin for more information.

Poke Run Offices will be closed on Friday, March 25th.
Don't forget to turn your clocks ahead on Saturday, March 12th!

HAPPENING IN OUR COMMUNITY

March 11,12 and 13—Easter Dramatic Musical, Elderton Presbyterian Church



Pastor Pete and Karen welcomed their new grand-daughter, Freija—Congratulations!

Share your good news—contact the church office!

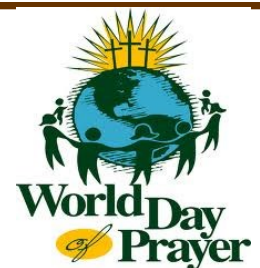
PHOTOS WANTED!!!!

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

The April Ranger deadline is March 21st.
Contact the office with your news.



Women, men and children in more than 170 countries and regions will celebrate the “World Day of Prayer.” on Friday, March 4th.





March 2016

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

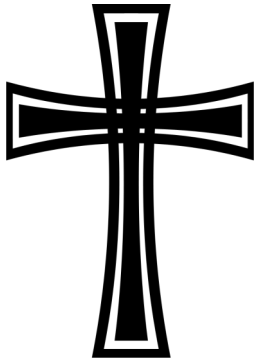
Sat

Offering: Trustees		1 7pm Budget & Finance	2 6:30 pm Bells 7pm Choir 7pm Mission & Stewardship	3	4	5 4-6pm Pork Dinner
6 8:30-11 Worship 10am Sunday School 7pm Bible Study	7 7pm Deacons	8 7pm Session	9 Noon SOUP 6:30 pm Bells 7pm Choir	10	11	12
13  8:30-11 Worship 10am Sunday School 7pm Bible Study	14	15	16 6:30 pm Bells 7pm Choir	17 	18	19 9am Basket Pick-Up
20 8:30-11 Worship 10am Sunday School 7pm Bible Study Palm Sunday Luncheon	21	22	23 6:30 pm Bells 7pm Choir	24 6pm Dinner 7:30pm Maundy Thursday Worship	25 Office Closed Good Friday	26
27 8:30-11 Worship 10am Sunday School Easter Sunday	28	29	30 6:30 pm Bells 7pm Choir	31	Daylight Saving Time begins March 12th. Set your clocks ahead! 	

Worship Together! Easter Services

March 20th Palm Sunday, Luncheon following 11am Service

March 24th, Maundy Thursday Service at 7:30pm, dinner at 6pm

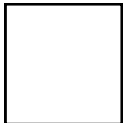


Easter Sunday Services, March 27th

Worship at 8:30am and 11am

Sunday School at 10am

Poke Run Presbyterian Church
1091 Poke Run Church Road
Apollo, PA 15613
PH: 724-327-5563
www.pokerunchurch.com
pokerun@windstream.net



Join us on Sunday for Worship at 8:30am and 11:00am