

Poke Run Presbyterian Church— “The Ranger” December 2017



The writer of Ecclesiastes, whoever she or he may have been, tells us that there is a season, a time for every matter under heaven. The writer also tells us that God ... has made everything beautiful in its time, and, has put eternity into the human heart. These are powerful statements, and so, it might be enlightening to follow them into the future and to see, just what is beautiful and where eternity might lead us. To do that I am going to keep words of Paul in 1 Corinthians 13 on the edges of my mind as I write. The words are, “So now, faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.”

So now, here is my rather wobbly and torturous path from Ecclesiastes to St. Paul. It began with a book. Books should make us think. Good books must be read with paper and pen or pencil – or laptop – not so that notes can be made but so that thoughts can be recorded. Thoughts are fleeting and must be captured if they are to be useful. There are times to read frivolous novels for entertainment and balance, just as there are times to watch TV shows and sports and news and ... see Ecclesiastes chapter 3 for more details. There are also times to read books that impact you “like a hammer blow between the eyes” – from Camus I think, or Kafka, writers I read 50 years ago when still a child who thought he was an adult.

Here is the line in a book that got me to thinking, “... a Benedictine monk – forever unknown – said that there is no such thing as faith or prayer or love, only people who believe, who pray, and who love.” The philosopher in me immediately set to work on this. Question, “Do faith or prayer or love have an independent existence?” Yes, I know that is what we call an “existential” question but I believe it is an important one with which we must struggle, and that is what I am asking you to do. Struggle with this for a moment, please. Another way to ask this that might make it clearer is, “If there were no human beings, leaving God out of the picture for a moment, - if there were no human beings, would there be faith or prayer or love?”

You see, faith must be in someone; we cannot have faith in natural process, they just happen. Prayer must be to someone from whom we expect a reply. Love must be a relationship between two or more persons who have learned to trust each other. In other words, faith and prayer and love exist only in relationships. Relationships can be broken. Now for another moment I want to step into the realm of sin and evil, and then we will come back to love and God’s gift of God’s self, completing, or perhaps squaring the circle.

I am going to define, or redefine, as does Tim Keller, sin. I am going to say that sin is what fractures or damages or even weakens relationships of love – or faith, or hope. This is only a partial definition but it will do for this short essay. More broadly, sin is what damages, weakens or destroys the good. For me, sin and what repairs the damage of sin is nowhere more visible than at the German concentration camp Dachau. As you go through Dachau it becomes apparent that over time conditions for the imprisoned Jews became more and more horrific. As one person close to us said, “It just gets worse and worse.” The feeling is a mixture of what you feel at Gettysburg and the Viet Nam Wall, combined with terror and dread. You can literally feel it. It does get worse and worse until you reach the ovens where thousands of bodies were incinerated. It is sickening. One feels here the evil that destroys love. Then, just beyond the ovens, is a beautiful Carmelite chapel where exactly the opposite happens. You enter the chapel through a rose trellis into a quiet and peaceful space. It is unlike anything else I have experienced. Here in the midst of the remaining terror, is love. It is indescribable. Here is beauty, faith, hope, and love gathered within the prayers of Carmelite nuns. It overcomes the evil and the fear and the hate and the dread.

And so we have, faith, hope, and love, and the greatest of these is love.

This is the love we anticipate in Advent, a love that comes to us through the birth of Christ, a relationship that is God given, for to us, for us.



From Pastor Pete



2—Thanks/Prayers

4—Office

3-4—Session/ Office

5-6—Deacons

6—Christian Education

7—Presbyterian Women

8—Redstone, Happenings

9—Soup/ “News”

10— Fun

11—Calendar

Thank you to our November Greeters:

*Karen Staymates, Jessica Slaugenhaupt, Jim & Carol Thompson,
Tim & Barbi Findley, Andy & Eva Bantrock*

Thank you to our November Lectors:

Tom Kimble, Shyrl Stange, Valerie Hansen, and Jeffrey Wilkinson



For our prayers:

For our prayers: Scott Ankney, BABY, the family and friends of Ed Bahney, Abbey Ballas, Renee Bates, Kelly Bell, Ronda Bertelle, Lil Bowman, Sarah Brank, John Britz, Max Brooks, Ralph Brown, Carolyn Buckley, Caileigh Chappell, Irene Clark, Deb Delfavero and the family of Danny Deemer, Jim Dunmire, Sara Dyer, Shirley Elwood, Terry Fairbanks, Jean Fanelli, Elmer Foley, Laurel Frey, Lee & Linda Gardener, Nancy Gearhard, Marnee Gormley, Helen Grayem, Allison Grundy, Alex Hansen, Frank Hansen, Trevor Hawk, Janine Hayle, Joyce Hodges, Brenda Hughes, Leland & Berenice Jones, Marjorie Kaiser, Kim, Rhett LaRue and the LaRue family, Allison Lengauer Jordan, Pat Lengauer, Tammy Libengood, Cliff Lightner, Norm Linhart, John Mango, Irma McDivitt, Mary Lou McKay, Conrad McQuaide, Amy McQuaide, JoAnn Miller, June & Roy Moorhead, Steve Morcheid, Sam Musmanno, Sandy Nemetz, Carol O'Malley, Thad Overly, Sarah Parrish, Evelyn Pfeffer, Randy Pfeffer, Winifred Powers, Rafael Rincon, Steve Roman, Glenn Ross, Larry Seighman, Joanne Smith, JD Stait, Mary Jane Stait, Dinah Staymates, Jennifer Steiner, Mildred Striner, Ken Swank, Arlene Switzer, Bev & Mario Tagliati, Amy Teele, the Tonecha family, Craig Thompson, Jim Thompson, Jill Tocco, Terry Wiester, Clay Wilabee, Kate Wolford, Peter Yurtin, those gripped by addictions, and those who serve in the military.

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.



The season of Advent begins next Sunday, December 3rd

"In Advent we expectantly wait for the One who has already come. We anticipate the promised justice of God's new world, yet we praise God who raised the "righteous branch" to rule with justice and righteousness. We hope for the restoration of the afflicted, the tormented, and the grieving, yet we delight that healing has come in Christ. We long for the beating of swords into plowshares, yet we rejoice that the Prince of Peace has appeared. We yearn for the barren deserts of our inner cities to flourish, yet we laud the desert Rose that has bloomed. We dream of the land where lions and lambs live in harmony, yet we acclaim the child born to lead us into the promised land. Christ has come! Christ is risen! Christ will come again! In Advent, we are living between the first and the second coming of the Lord. ...— placing us between memory and hope, past and future ..."

from PrebyterianMission.org

Advent
*A Season of Hope
& Expectation*



Christmas Eve , December 24th
8:30am & 11am Worship Service
10am Sunday School



Christmas Eve
5pm & 7:30PM Candlelight Service

**From the approved minutes of Poke Run Presbyterian Church Session
October 10, 2017 (regular meeting) and October 15, 2017 (Congregational meeting)
October 10 -**

The stated meeting of the Session met in the Sunday school rooms. A quorum was present and, Rev. Peter Goetschius, Moderator opened the meeting with prayer and devotions.

Session Members present: Rev. Peter Goetschius, Connie Cauvel -Moderator, Assistant Clerk – Chad McCutcheon, Tim Martin, Sandy Chappell, , Ron Hileman, Tom Kimble, Logan Hileman

Excused: Meri Slaughaupt, Linda Moorhead, Nikki McQuaide,

MSC: To approve the Session Minutes of September 12, 2017

MSC: To accept Treasurer's Report – September 30, 2017

Committee Reports:

Budget & Finance: Tim Martin Discussion and review of the 2018 Budget

Christian Ed - Sandy Chappell

Mission and Stewardship: Meri Slaughaupt

Personnel: Linda Moorhead - Did not meet

Congregational Life: Connie Cauvel Met on September 26 to plan lunch after Congregational meeting

Technology: Chad McCutcheon –

Nominating: Meri Slaughaupt and Tom Kimble Discussion and review of the 2018 Slate of Officers

New Business:

MSC: To accept the 2018 budget as presented by Budget & Finance Committee

MSC: To accept the 2018 Slate of officers presented by the Nominating Committee

Respectfully Submitted:

Approved: November 7, 2017

Chad A. McCutcheon

Chad A. McCutcheon (Asst. Clerk of Session)

October 15 -

Quorum present. opened with prayer by the Moderator Rev. Peter M. Goetschius.

MSC: To accept the docket presented

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

Ecclesiastical business: Chairperson of the nominating committee presented the slate.

Election of Elders: (3 Year Term): Laurie Martin (new), Brett Stevenson, Bob Wilson, Caileigh Chappell (youth) Nominations from the floor were opened with no additional nominations: MSC:

Election of Deacons: (3 year term) Nancy Kimble, Diane Scott, Sandy Ballas, Shelly Vaia-Chappell, Shyrl Stange. Nominations from the floor were opened with no additional nominations. MSC:

Nominations for Nominating Committee for the year 2018 : Heidi Hileman, Jan Fitzgerald,

Rick Slaughaupt, Cal McCutcheon, Ken George MSC:

Corporate business:

Election of Board of Trustees: (3 year term) Andy Bantroch, Linda Chicka, Bob Thompson, Evan Hileman (Youth) MSC:

Nominations for Auditor: 1 person for a four-year term. Rick Slaughaupt MSC:

The 2018 Budget was presented by Tim Martin, Chairman of the Budget and Finance Committee:

Tim thanked his committee with special thanks to Amy Wilkinson as treasurer. 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 11:33 pm. Rev. Goetschius closed with prayer.

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



Connie Cauvel Clerk of Session

Approved 11/14/2017

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 December 12, 2017. The December meeting will be the JOINT meeting including all Poke Run Boards.





Sunday, December 10th will be "Ordination Sunday,"

Please plan on attending the 11am service as those who have been called to serve on the Poke Run Boards for 2018 will be ordained and commissioned.

Please continue to keep all of Poke Run's volunteers in your prayers.

ATTENTION ALL BOARDS AND COMMITTEES!

Please mark your calendar for Tuesday, December 12 at 7pm. We would like to have all the Committee and Board members gather together at this joint meeting to connect with the Session and each other to provide a brief review of your past year and look to the future.

Everyone present will have an opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas. It is our hope that those who have been elected to serve for 2018 will attend this meeting as well.

(Light refreshments will be served.)



A Poke Run "FISHING TEAM" has been meeting to discuss the best ways to spread the word that Poke Run is HERE, worshipping as a community of believers, a place where "the Word of God is truly preached and heard," serving where and when we can, and ever striving to "live the Christian Life." Keep this group in your prayers and prayerfully consider how YOU can be a part of it all.



Sunday Worship: 8:30am and 11am

Sundays 7pm Bible Study

Sunday School: 10am adults & kids

Tuesdays 10am Women's Bible Study



PHONE: 724-327-5563 EMAIL: pokerun@graced.comcastbiz.net

Like us on Facebook featuring the Daily Verse

Check out our website at www.pokerunchurch.com



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 **December 19th-21st and 25th and January 1st.** 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: December 26th .

"GIVING ENVELOPES" for 2018 will soon be available in the Narthex. Using the "Giving Envelopes" greatly helps Shyrl and Amy process the weekly offering; thank you for using them. 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.

THIS YEAR—find a short survey with your box - please consider completing this and placing it in the offering plate or leave it in the office. The FISHING TEAM THANKS YOU!

The "FIRST FRUITS" offering is Poke Run's commitment to the larger church. Please consider an offering of \$35 per member.





The Deacon's Giving Tree can be found in the Narthex, the gifts are due back to the church by Sunday, December 10th. Please stop by and pick up a name or a couple of name tags to help needy families have a wonderful Christmas.

(Watch for boy tags—blue and girl tags—pink.)

All loose offerings on Christmas Eve will go to the work of the Poke Run Deacons.



From the **BOARD OF DEACONS MINUTES 10/2/17**

Present: Barbi Findley, Nancy Dombroske, Carol Thompson, Ruth O'Connor, Deb Ross, Diane Scott, Bev Tagliati, Mario Tagliati and Debbie Seighman

Absent: Tammy Kelley, Nancy Kimble, and Cindy Brooks

Pastor Pete opened with prayer.

The minutes for Sept were MSC.

The treasure's report for Sept was MSC.

Old Business

Pastor Pete reviewed the scriptures and prayers that are used during the time when we serve communion to our Poke Run Friends. Communion should be provided three times a year. Pastor Pete needs to be present for one of those times. Deacons typically provide communion to the Poke Run Friends on Palm Sunday and World Wide Communion Sunday.

New Business

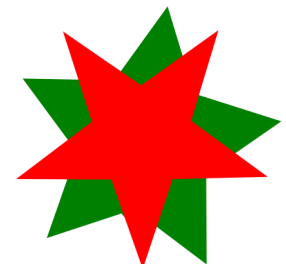
College student care/study packages will be packed and mailed by Carol Thompson and Nancy Kimble. Names and addresses will be reviewed at the next meeting.

Tammy Kelley will continue to coordinate the shopping for the Thanksgiving Food Baskets. Shopping for the baskets will be done on Nov 16, so requests for a basket will be due no later than Nov 14. Those requesting the baskets will be asked to pick them up at the church on the evening of Nov. 16. Information will be put in the bulletins and the Ranger.

The next meeting will be on November 6, 2017.

Respectfully Submitted,

Debbie Seighman, Secretary





Sunday, Dec. 17—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. You will need to provide the name and phone number of the person who will be picking up the basket.

Thursday, Dec. 21—Thanksgiving Basket pick-up. 7:30pm

Christmas Poinsettias The Poke Run Deacons are taking orders for Christmas poinsettias and Foodbank Donations— Forms can be found in the bulletin, in the Narthex and in the office.



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 **"Faith in Action"**

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

Santa's Coming For Breakfast

The Christian Education Committee is sponsoring their annual "**Breakfast With Santa**" on **Saturday, December 2, from 8:30 to 11:30am.**

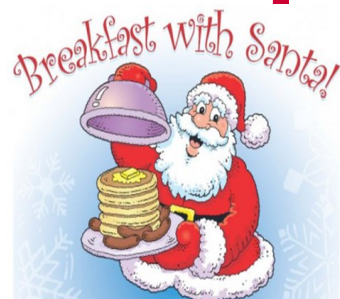
A great breakfast at a great price with a special picture on Santa's knee. \$2

Tickets are available at the door. Adults and children ages 11 and over: \$5, children ages 3 to 10: \$3, and children ages 2 and under eat free!

Proceeds benefit the Christian Education Programs and Mission Work.

Set up/Decorating Night, Friday, December 1, beginning at 6:00pm.

We start with a meal so bring a covered dish or dessert!



FREE—in the Narthex: copies of the two publications,

The Upper Room - daily devotional, and **Today's Christian Living** - magazine



THE UPPER ROOM
DAILY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

TODAY'S
Christian
LIVING

Circle 2 will meet on Thursday, December 14 at 7pm at the home of **Nancy Dombroske**, all are welcome—call the office for directions. **Linda Chicka** will be the leader.



Thank Offering

Thank you to everyone who participated in the "Thank Offering" in November.

The generosity of our congregation is most appreciated.



Thank you too, for the many donated shoeboxes for "Operation Christmas Child." Poke Run bested our number for last year and contributed 26 boxes this year!



Thank You to everyone who prayed for, contributed to or ATE at Circle 2's Annual Spaghetti Dinner. Over 240 people were served in only 2 hours. This event continues to provide a wonderful opportunity to gather in Christ centered community.

DON'T MISS IT NEXT YEAR!!!!



Thank you to everyone who helped prepare the sanctuary for the Christmas season. Mark your calendars for Monday, January 8th when we'll gather to take everything down.

ALL help is ALWAYS appreciated.

The Great Coat Giveaway

Murrysville and Plaza Cleaners are having their
FIRST ANNUAL COAT COLLECTION AND GIVEAWAY
In co-operation with the First Presbyterian Church and Murrysville Export Rotary

Poke Run participated in the first annual "Great Coat Giveaway" sponsored by Murrysville and Plaza Cleaners. **Ruth O'Connor** reported that they collected 1500 coats, gave away 1100 that day, then was able to pass along the rest. We'll look forward to participating again next year.



SCIENCE!

Conversations and Community Series
October 2017 - April 2018

Science and faith have something in common – the capacity to invoke a sense of wonder by engaging the world around us! Engage in this series of conversations led by scientists working in some of the fascinating areas that affect our daily lives. No science background necessary!

Each session will include content provided by the presenter and discussion. On most dates, participants are invited to chapel and to have lunch together as a group so the conversation can continue. Come to one, two, or all dates!



This series is free and open to the public. Pre-registration is strongly recommended for the series and required for the Feb. and March events.



This series is underwritten by a generous grant from the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

More information at
412-924-1345 or
ConEd@pts.edu

Astronomy, University of Pittsburgh

Dec. 6, 2017, 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

The Science of Language

Michael Dickey, Associate Professor of Communication Science and Disorders, University of Pittsburgh

Feb. 21, 2018, 9:30-1:00 p.m.

Teaching a Machine to Learn

Tim Howe, Google, Bakery Square

March 21, 2018, 9:30-1:30 p.m.

Creation, Intelligent Design, and the Evolutionary Process

Stephen J. Tonsor, Director of Science and Research, Carnegie Museum of Natural History, and Associate Professor of Biological Sciences, University of Pittsburgh

April 18, 2018, 9:30-1:30 p.m.

Genetic Engineering

Lisa Parker, Professor of Human Genetics and Director of Graduate Education, Center for Bioethics and Health Law, Graduate School of Public Health, University of Pittsburgh



\$76,000 scholarship per student at Westminster College.

Pastor Nominations due:

Feb. 1

Student Applications due:

Feb 5

CONTACT

THE OFFICE FOR
MORE
INFORMATION.



Advent Devotional

Again this year, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (PTS) will observe Advent with an online devotional. "We invite you to read and listen to daily messages written by members of the Seminary Community."

You can access them in these ways:

Read online or print & share via www.pts.edu/devotional

Receive Daily emails www.pts.edu/email

Follow on Facebook, Twitter or Google+

Download free Apple or Android app.

Request a printed copy: 412-362-5610 or email reception@pts.edu



Presbytery
of Redstone

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)

HAPPENING IN OUR PRESBYTERY

Dec. 2-3—Salem Crossroads, Christmas, Delmont PA—reservations required

Dec. 3—"Christmas Concert" Union Presbyterian, Rt. 380, 4:30pm

light refreshments—see flyer across from Church Office

Dec. 3—"One Voice, Christian Vocal Ensemble" Irwin

2nd Wednesdays of the month—"Friendship Dinner" FREE—United Presb, New Kensington

The Poke Run Office will be closed on Dec. 19-21, 25th and Jan. 1st.

The Redstone Presbytery Office will be closed on Dec. 21 through Jan. 1st.



HAPPENING IN OUR COMMUNITY

Overly's Country Christmas is OPEN NOW—at the Westmoreland County Fairgrounds

Dec. 1—"Hometown Christmas" at Vandergrift Casino Theater

“Soup for the Soul” will be Wednesday, December 13th. “Beef Barley”

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.

DESSERTS NEEDED: Please contact the Poke Run Office.



NEWS FROM THE PEWS



Boy Scout **Chris Hulick** (pictured far right and front) completed his Eagle Scout project. Chris built, installed and donated new garbage can enclosures for the Poke Run Cemetery. Chris and Poke Run member **Jeff Wilkinson** were part of the Troop that was chartered to Poke Run.

CHRISTMAS TREE SALE

**Support Boy Scout
Troop 551**



November 24—December 23

Or Until Trees Sellout

M—F 4—8pm; Sat. 8 am—6 pm;

Sun. 9 am—5 pm

Stanford Home Center—Leechburg

1173 PA-356, Leechburg, PA

Prices Start @ \$25.00 per Tree

Available:

Fraser Fir

Blue Spruce

Canaan Fir

Concolor Fir

Scotch Pine

White Pine



Poke Run's **Ethan Woodhall** (son of Amy and Chuck Blair) is a member of Troop #551



Jeff, Amy, Lizzy Wilkinson and a Thiel College group participated with over 600 others in the annual Kiski Valley Turkey Trot on Thanksgiving morning. The “Trot” is sponsored by the Kiski Area Youth Network (KAYN) Poke Run is an active supporter of —KAYN

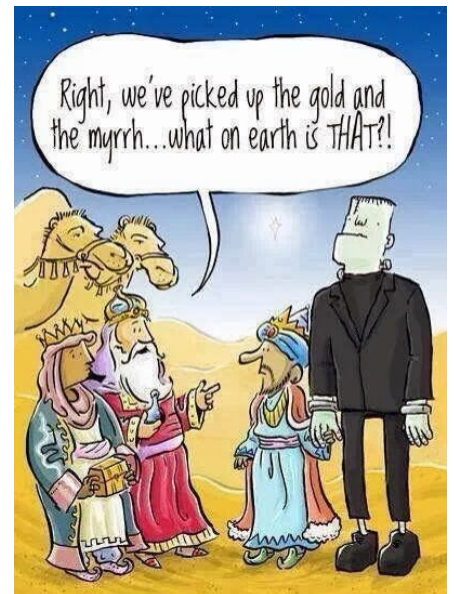
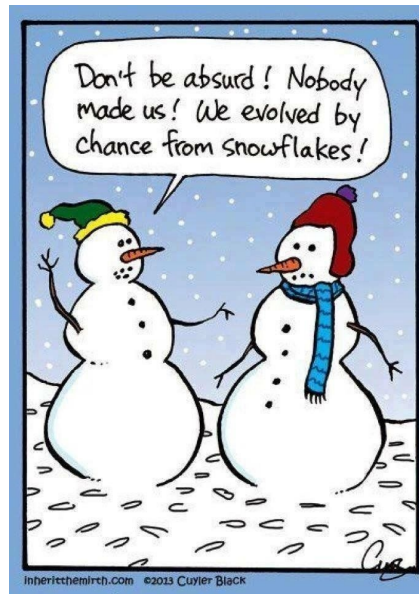
Jeff placed 1st in his age and 5th overall. **Dan Spaulding** (husband of Callie Martin Spaulding) finished 2nd overall!

Also participating from Poke Run were **Valerie Hansen, Cheyenne and Bill Fazi, Tim, Laurie and Connor Martin and Callie (Martin), Miles and Ellie Spaulding.**



If you have appropriate News to share in the Ranger—please submit it to the office.

The next Ranger deadline is December 26th. PHOTOS WANTED!!!! The Office can use emailed photos from cameras or cell phones. We'd love to include more pics from church functions.



REVERENDFUN.COM COPYRIGHT BIBLE GATEWAY



I THINK YOUR LIGHTS MIGHT BE TOO BRIGHT THIS YEAR

REVERENDFUN.COM COPYRIGHT BIBLE GATEWAY



Thanks to Mark Highum
SEASON'S GREETINGS

THE FAMILY CIRCUS®



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December

THE JOINT MEETING OF THE SESSION,
DEACONS AND TRUSTEES WILL BE ON
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12 AT 7PM.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 <u>Breakfast</u> <u>Set-Up</u> <u>6:30pm</u>	2 <u>Breakfast</u> <u>w Santa</u> <u>8:30-</u> <u>11:30am</u> 
3 Advent 8:30 & 11am Worship 10am SunSch 7pm Bible Study	4 7pm Deacons	5 10am Women's Bible Study	6 6:30pm Bells 7pm Choir 7pm Mission & Stewardship	7	8	9
10 Advent 8:30 & 11am Worship 10am SunSc 7pm Bible Study 	11	12 10am Women's Bible Study 7pm Session	13 11:30am "Soup for the Soul" 6:30pm Bells 7pm Choir 	14 Circle 2 	15	16
17 Advent 8:30 & 11am Worship 10am SunSch 7pm Bible Study	18	19 10am Women's Bible Study OFFICE CLOSED	20 6:30pm Bells 7pm Choir OFFICE CLOSED	21  7:30pm Deacon Basket Pick-up OFFICE CLOSED	22	23
24 Advent 8:30 & 11am Worship 10am SunSch Christmas Eve Worship 5pm & 7:30pm 	25 OFFICE CLOSED	26	27	28 7pm Trustees	29	30 
31 8:30 & 11am Worship 10am SunSch	1 OFFICE CLOSED 	<div> <p>NOTE THAT THE OFFICE OF REDSTONE PRESBYTERY will be closed from December 21—January 1. POKE RUN'S OFFICE will be closed December 19-21, 25 and January 1.—</p> <p>Call Pastor Pete in case of an emergency 724-454-2278</p> </div>				

Poke Run Presbyterian

1091 Poke Run Church Rd.
Apollo, PA 15613



www.pokerunchurch.com

In December:

December 2nd, 8:30am to 11:30am

Breakfast with Santa

Adults & Children ages 11 years and over \$5.00

Children 3 years to 10 years \$3.00

Children 2 years and under eat Free!



December 24th Christmas Eve Candle Light

Service 5:00pm Informal Worship

7:30pm Formal Worship

