

"Can these bones live?" - God's question to Ezekiel as Ezekiel looked out at a vast valley of very dry bones, bones with no connections to any form. The reflections that follow come from my own curiosity spurred on by a little book by Robert Jensen, A Theology in Outline: Can These Bones Live?. Jensen explores whether or not the dry bones of Christian theology can live in these postmodern times. With Easter drawing close today we will explore the questions generated by the resurrection.

Since these are questions that finally resolve themselves in God we will talk a little about God first. This is what we call a theological question. What is "theology?" A simple definition of theology is "reasoned talk about God." This immediately poses another question – if you begin to think that theology is all about asking questions you are on the right track – "What do we mean by the word "God?" Even a quick look at other religions shows that there are many ways to think about "God" and the connections between religions are very thin. What a Muslim thinks when he or she says "Allah" is very different from the thought of a Hindu devotee's conception of Vishnu. And these are both different from "the LORD God" of the Hebrew Bible. In each case a particular community defines the idea of God.

Now we ask, "What separates one community from another?" From now on I am going to restrict myself to Christian communities. Once again a brief examination of the thousands of communities that call themselves "Christian" exposes any number of beliefs and practices. A community like the Roman Catholic Church is vastly different from the local independent Baptist communion. This Baptist church is different from the Pentecostals whose worship distinguishes them from the North American Reformed who differ from – well you get the picture. Instead of asking what separates us, let's ask, "What connects us?" Setting our differences aside we find one thing on which we can all agree. We have a message. We have a message that must be passed on to others, to the entire world we believe.

Every Christian community begins with this message. Jesus of Nazareth, the first century rabbi, healer, and miracle worker was crucified, dead, and buried. The LORD God of Israel raised him from the dead. So we have our message and our definition, or at least a partial definition, of "God" all in one place. The LORD God of Israel is the one who raised Jesus of Nazareth from the dead. (I believe this, or something like this, is a statement Robert Jensen wrote in an earlier work – I read it in a book by Stanley Hauerwas). Despite the utter impossibility of this message, we are called to pass it on, and we do. We have been doing so ever since the first disciples saw Jesus walking about after they knew very well that he had died and been buried, sealed behind a mega-ton rock. The message is passed on every day by those who believe it to be true, and while many do not, many believe and find their lives changed in remarkable ways.

Now, as we pass on the message we are challenged to tell it correctly. This requires hard thinking, very hard thinking. Resurrection is not an easy event to get a grip on. True resurrection happens seldom so we do not have a large database to go to. In fact, as we see it in Christ it is a unique event. It is not all that clear exactly what happened. I will only mention that the resurrection event is much argued and the views of the two greatest theologians of the last century end with very different conclusions. What are we mere mortals to do? But just to give you a glimpse of the difficulty try this thought experiment. If Jesus was raised from the dead, what does it mean to be dead? Try to imagine this. No one really knows what it is like to be dead. Anything we can imagine, deep sleep, wispy dreams, floating on clouds, playing harps, or nothingness builds on experiences we have while alive. They tell us nothing about death. To say the LORD God of Israel raised Jesus from the dead leads us into an immediate impasse in our thinking. We need then to know more of this LORD God of Israel, the God also of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who freed Israel from slavery in Egypt, who ... that is, history, Old Testament history is needed.

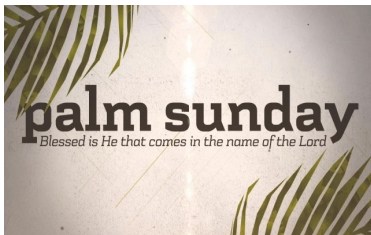
Finally, who is Jesus anyway, and why is this important? We claim that this is a life or death question.

Can these bones live? Can these bones, my skeleton, wrapped in sinews and flesh, live on with Jesus in eternity, raised from the dead as he was, by the LORD God of Israel? These are questions we will explore as we move on from the "YES" of the empty tomb at Easter. Yes, these bones, yours and mine, can live because Christ lives. He not only lives in eternity with and as the LORD God of Israel, if we believe the message, he lives in us.

from Pastor Pete

IN THIS ISSUE:

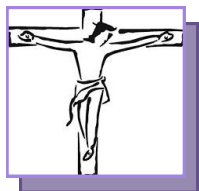
p. 2 Holy Week Worship	p. 5 Deacons	p. 9 Trustees/ Misc
p. 3 Thank You/ for our Prayers	p. 6 Presbyterian Women/ PW	p. 10 Happenings
p. 4 Session/ Office	p. 7-8 Christian Ed/VBS/ Mission	p. 11 Calendar



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. **Palm Sunday Worship, Sunday April 9th, and plan on attending a luncheon prepared by the Poke Run Deacons, immediately following the 11am worship.**



Maundy Thursday begins the Three Days 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. **April 13th Come and share a meal before Maundy Thursday worship. Dinner at 6pm, stay for Worship Service at 7:30pm.**



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.



Poke Run "TGIF" program— kids age 3 through 12th Grade – and YOU!

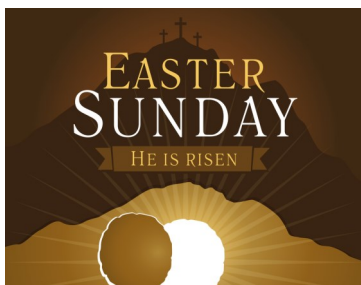
Friday, April 14th 8:30am to 1pm - "TGIF" Good Friday program!

"Jesus: King, God and Sacrifice"

Breakfast and lunch are provided. The day starts off with a prayer breakfast for all adult helpers at 7:45AM. Activities and classes will be held through sixth grade. Big kids, Junior High and High Schoolers, will have a Youth Group Day; assisting with activities, learning, doing a service project and having fun together.

We are still in need of volunteers to assist in the day's events and to help with clean-up. Just come and join us for lunch to hear the exciting news the children have to share. Please contact Laurie Martin 724-433-2404 or the church office 724-327-5563 with questions or offers of help.

Most importantly, pray that what we do as a church may be pleasing to God and then round up your friends, children, grandchildren, and neighbors to attend.



Easter Sunday, April 16th, 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***

Information provided above is from the website





Thank you to everyone who served during the Worship Services in March.

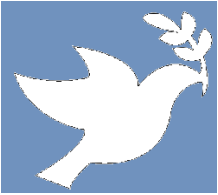
Our March Greeters: Larry & Debbie Seighman, Brian & Nancy Dombroske, Tom & Nancy Kimble, Tim and Connor Martin, Irma McDivitt, Ruth O'Connor and Cindy Brooks

Our March Lectors: Eleanor Zerbini, Barbi Findley, Laurie Martin and

Thank You! Bob Fitzgerald

For our prayers:

Alex, Ang, Ed Bahney, Renee Bates, Ronda Bertelle, Lil Bowman, Kim Boylestein, Sarah Brank, Max Brooks, Ralph Brown, Stephanie Bruce, Carolyn Buckley, Roxy Chickar, Irene Clark, Jim Dunmire, Shirley Elwood, Barbara Emmerling, Jean Fanelli, Elmer Foley, Laurel Frey, Lee & Linda Gardener, Marnee Gormley, Sylvan Gormley, Helen Grayem, Allison Grundy, Trevor Hawk, Janine Hayle, Joyce Hodges, Leland & Berenice Jones, Marjorie Kaiser, Iris Kiebler, Allison Lengauer Jordan, Pat Lengauer, Cliff Lightner, Norm Linhart, Irma McDivitt, Conrad McQuaide, Amy McQuaide, JoAnn Miller, June & Roy Moorhead, Steve Morcheid, Carol O'Malley, Sandy Nemetz, Thad Overly, Sarah Parrish, Winifred Powers, Reno, Rafael Rincon, Steve Roman, Joanne Smith, Callie Spaulding, Dinah Staymates, JD Stait, Steiner, Kenny Swank, Arlene Switzer, Bev & Mario Tagliati, Amy Teele, Craig Thompson, Jill Tocco, Robert Watt, Terry Wiester, Clay Wilabee, Wolford, Peter Yurtin, those gripped by addictions, and those who serve in the military.



Poke Run member *Leah Gill* passed away on March 30th. Leah joined the Poke Run congregation in 1970.

Please keep Leah's family in your thoughts and prayers.

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.

Our prayers may be awkward. Our attempts may be feeble. But since the power of prayer is in the One who hears it and not in the one who says it, our prayers do make a difference.

- Max Lucado



From the Poke Run Presbyterian Church Session Minutes of February 14, 2017:

The re-scheduled meeting of the Joint Boards met @ 7:00 pm. A quorum was present and, Rev. Peter Goetschius, Moderator opened the meeting with prayer and devotions.

Session Members present: Rev. Peter Goetschius -Moderator, Clerk – Connie Cauvel. Assistant Clerk – Chad McCutcheon, Ron Hileman, Tom Kimble, Nikki McQuaide, Logan Hileman,

Excused: Sandy Chappell, Linda Moorhead

Committee Reports:

Christian Ed - Sandy Chappell - TGIF on April 14. Laurie Martin will be contacting volunteers.

Mission and Stewardship: Meri Slaughaupt -Food Bank will be February 18, 2017.

Nominating - Pete will meet with the Committee after Easter.

Old Business: MSC: To Approve 2017 Calendar through January 31 of 2018

New Business: MSC: To Approve 2016 Annual Statistical Report for Presbytery

MSC: Tasks for 2017 volunteers needed

Review Church By-laws

Review Church Mission Statement

Year in review – updates and future plans (Session, Deacons & Trustees)

Deacons - Ruth O'Connor & Diane Scott

Trustees - Rick Slaughaupt (see attached report)

Office - Amy Wilkinson

Close with prayer: Ron Hileman

Respectfully Submitted:



Connie Cauvel (Clerk of Session)

Adjourn: 8:15 PM

Approved: March 14, 2017

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

From the Poke Run Office

The Poke Run Annual Report for 2016 is complete. Copies are available in the Narthex or you can request an electronic copy by email. Just call the office.

If you would like to receive a statement of your first quarter giving, contact the office.

In preparation for the 2017 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@graced.comcastbiz.net

Thank you.

Church Office



PALM SUNDAY LUNCHEON: The Poke Run Congregation is invited to a Palm Sunday luncheon immediately

following the 11am. worship service on Sunday, April 9th.

Come enjoy food and fellowship!

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.

**POKE RUN CHURCH
DEACON'S
ANNUAL STRAWBERRY
FESTIVAL
JUNE 3, 2017**

***Mark Your Calendars!!!
Watch for more details!***



FROM THE MARCH 2017 DEACON MINUTES:

Present: Pastor Pete, Debora Ross, Ruth O'Connor, Nancy Kimble, Nancy Dombroske, Barbie Findley, Diane Scott, Mario Tagliati, Bev Tagliati, Carol Thompson, Tammy Kelley, and Debbie Seighman

Absent: Cindy Brooks

Ruth opened with a devotional reading and a prayer.

The February minutes were MSC.

The February Treasures' report was MSC.

Old Business:

The date for Strawberry Festival was discussed, and will be changed to Saturday, June 3.

The plans were reviewed for shopping for the Easter Food Baskets. Pastor Pete informed the Deacons that several men from our congregation will be available to assist with the Thursday, April 6, food basket pick up.

Discussion also took place regarding the procedure for making sure that food baskets are picked up.

New Business:

Palm Sunday luncheon was planned, with each Deacon being responsible for certain items.

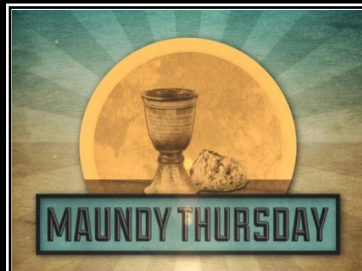
The Easter flower order form, and information, will be put in the Ranger and the Sunday bulletins. Small Easter flowers will also be ordered for the Poke Run Deacons Friends, and will be delivered to each individual by the Deacons.

There are no changes in the Poke Run Friends list.

The next meeting will be held on Monday, April 3. We will begin the setup for the Palm Sunday Luncheon.

Respectfully submitted,
Debbie Seighman, Secretary

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN NEWS



PLEASE JOIN US:

Circle 2 would like to invite everyone to dinner before the Maundy Thursday service on Thursday, April 13th at 6 pm. Join us for dinner and fellowship; We can worship together in commemoration of the Last Supper of Jesus and the Apostles at the Maundy Thursday service that begins at 7:30pm.

- Redstone PW Spring Retreat at Pine Springs Camp , **May 23, 2017.**
- PW Synod Gathering will be in Altoona - **June 15 -17, 2017.**
- Redstone PW Fall Gathering Saturday, **October 21, 2017** at Community Presbyterian Church, New Alexandria.

PW in the PCUSA

Stay Connected to PW

- PW on Facebook: www.facebook.com Search for "Presbyterian Women in the PC(USA)"
- PW on Twitter: www.twitter.com
- PW on Pinterest: www.pinterest.com Sign up then search for Presbyterian Women
- Direct calls to the PW office can be made by calling 844-797-2872



NEW WINDSOR-- MISSION WORK OPPORTUNITY



Redstone Presbytery PW is going to organize our annual work trip and invite you to participate. But **there will be changes to this trip** because there are changes happening at New Windsor. It will cost more but it will depend on your choices. We will not be staying at the Hospitality Center on the campus. We will be staying at the Best Western Hotel near Baughers Restaurant in Westminster. Continental breakfast is included in the hotel cost. Lunch will be provided for all workers. Dinners will be on your own. I have reserved 20 slots so we hope you will return and we always welcome new volunteers. We will be traveling to New Windsor, MD on Sunday, September 24th; leaving about 2PM and returning on Tuesday evening, September 26th. We will work two days.

We could be working in the Materials Resource Warehouse where volunteers assist with processing and quality control of the hygiene kits, school kits and clean-up buckets. Some volunteers will be assigned to SERRV pricing and quality control. Volunteers package or price handcrafted articles from artisans in 150 cooperatives and nonprofit organizations in 35 developing countries and regions of the U.S. Most of the work is done while seated at tables.

The cost of lodging which includes breakfast at the hotel will be \$100. There will be additional costs for travel and dinners. We plan to carpool so the travel cost will be divided by the number of participants in each vehicle. You will also have an opportunity to shop in the SERRV outlet which is also located at the New Windsor site.

If this sounds like something you would be interested in doing or if you have more questions; please call Judy at 724.668.7418 or e-mail her at judykoontz@windstream.net. A \$25 non-refundable deposit is required by May 1, 2017. The balance will be due September 1st. Please make checks payable to Mission Trip Fund. Please complete the registration form and send it with your deposit.



Sunday School at Poke Run Church

Classes meet each Sunday at 10am.

FOR THE KIDS Children's Class! – Check the bulletin board in the hall as the kids map the life of Jesus to the Cross!

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

There are currently two active Adult Sunday School classes each Sunday morning.

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 Loves Us”**

The class meeting in the Session room (on the right at the end of the hall) is using the study series, **“God's At War – Defeating the Idols that Battle for Your Heart”** by Kyle Idelman.

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



Poke Run's TGIF COME ONE AND ALL
Friday, April; 14th 8:30AM – 1:00 PM

TGIF, Thank God It's Friday. No Friday of the entire year can begin to compare with the meaning of Good Friday, the day Jesus, our Lord and Savior, bore the sins of the entire world on the cross. This Good Friday, April 14th,

Poke Run will be learning that during the final week of Jesus' earthly life he completely revealed that he is our King and our God and our Sacrifice.

The day begins with a prayer breakfast at 7:45 for all leaders (and anyone else that wants to attend). Breakfast and registration for age level classes for ages 3 (or potty trained) through high school at 8:30. Junior High and High Schoolers will have a Youth Group Day; assisting, learning and playing together.

Please help by:

Praying that what we do as a church may be pleasing to God. That our TGIF day may reach out to young and old alike, sharing the Good News of Christ.

Rounding up your friends, children, grandchildren, neighbors to attend TGIF

Volunteering to help on April 14th- We have a place for everyone.

Donating food for breakfast or lunch

Donating items: a roll of dimes, whole cloves, tiny crosses that will fit inside a plastic egg, dice...

Volunteering to help with preparation: baking tiny loaves of bread, spray painting egg cartons, cutting tiny animals out of felt

Volunteering to help with clean up

Joining in for lunch and hearing the beautiful news the children have to share.

Please contact Laurie Martin 724-433-2404 or the church office to volunteer.

Pine Springs Camp

a place to...
EXPLORE
GROW
BELONG
LEARN
God's Word
HAVE FUN



2017

SUMMER CAMPS • DAY CAMPS • RETREATS



Pine Springs 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. We have 3 campers signed up already.

Graduate Sunday:

May 14, 2017

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 15th.



Mark your calendar for Vacation Bible School (VBS) and watch for details!

JULY 23-27, 2017

There will be a planning meeting at the church on April 20th, 7pm.

VOLUNTEER WITH POKE RUN CHURCH AT THE WESTMORELAND COUNTY FOODBANK!

Volunteers must be at least 14 years old.

Saturday April 22nd, 9am-noon—Foodbank warehouse in Delmont, PA

Contact the office for more information.



"Soup for the Soul" will be Wednesday, April 12th.

Cheese Broccoli 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!

NEEDED: If you are able to contribute a dessert—please call Amy in the office.



Poke Run Mission Team Returns to Marion, Virginia in 2017 June 25-30th

Poke Run will once again be heading to Marion, Virginia to join with Project Crossroads for a week of mission work this summer. Applications are now available. See or call Linda Chicka at 724-422-3688 or the Church office. **The first Trip meeting will be Monday, May 8th at 7:30pm.** Please remember that you must have current Youth Protection clearances on file in the office to participate in this and many of our outreaches. Call the office if you ever have any questions.



THE POKE RUN TRUSTEES Would like to thank all who came out on the March "Work Day." There is always plenty to do . If you were unable to come out in March—watch for the next opportunity. **"Volunteers are not paid; not because they are worthless, but because they are PRICELESS!"**

The Trustees have many projects going on: The carpets, pews and other upholstered items were cleaned last week (with the financial help of the Presbyterian Women). You will notice plaster work being done over the next month. The manse is scheduled for air conditioning this spring. The church has purchased an AED (Automated External Defibrillator).—contact the Trustees if this is something you know something about as "training" will be next.

Our congregation is blessed with knowledge and a desire for service – the dedication of so many certainly helps Poke Run to be prepared and focused on opportunities to call people "...of surrounding communities to respond to the Good News of God's saving love in Jesus Christ." (Poke Run Mission, October 5, 1993.)

**LOST &
FOUND**

If this is your
pin, contact the
church office!



Recently shared with "Circle 2" by Cindy McQuaide
(author unknown):

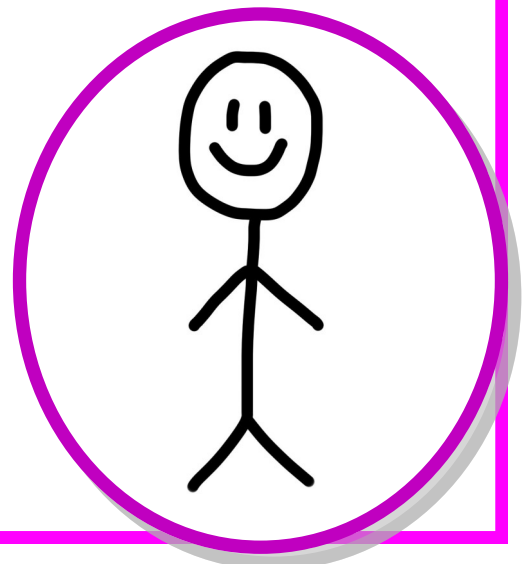
There once was a woman who woke up one morning, looked in the mirror, and noticed she had only three hairs on her head. "Well," she said, "I think I'll braid my hair today." So she did and she had a wonderful day.

The next day she woke up, looked in the mirror and saw that she had only two hairs on her head. "H-M-M, " she said, "I think I'll part my hair down the middle today." So she did and she had a grand day.

The next day she woke up, looked in the mirror and noticed that she had only one hair on her head. "Well," she said, "Today I'm going to wear my hair in a pony tail." So she did and she had a fun, fun day.

The next day she woke up, looked in the mirror and noticed that there wasn't a single hair on her head....

"YEAH!" she exclaimed, "I don't have to fix my hair today!"



HAPPENING IN OUR PRESBYTERY

April 8—Spaghetti Dinner—Congruity Presbyterian, New Alexandria

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

COMING IN MAY

May 16—Presbytery Meeting—6-9pm, Irwin

HAPPENING IN OUR COMMUNITY

April 22—Earth Day 5K—Roaring Run

COMING IN MAY

May 6—Washington Township Dumpster Days 7am-5pm some restrictions

NOTE: Amy will be out of the office on April 24-26th

TRAVEL OPPORTUNITY

Have you ever wanted to tiptoe through the tulips! Here is a great opportunity to feel like you have crossed the pond to Europe! Redstone Presbyterian SeniorCare is sponsoring a trip to Holland, Michigan for the amazing annual tulip festival. We will depart Redstone North Huntingdon Clubhouse at 8 am on Monday, May 8th traveling by deluxe motorcoach. Upon arrival in Holland, we will check in at the Quality Inn and Suites in Holland. You will have time to freshen up before we enjoy our first activity, a dinner cruise on the Holland Princess. On Tuesday morning, a step-on guide will join us on the bus for a tour of the area, followed by a stop at the Dutch Marketplace where you can shop and enjoy lunch on your own. Then, it is on to Windmill Island Gardens to see tulip fields and the only authentic working Dutch windmill in the USA. We will then go back to the hotel for a quick rest and to freshen up, before enjoying dinner at the Beechwood Inn. Wednesday will be a busy day starting with a visit to Veldheer's Tulip Farm including the Delft and Wooden Shoe Factories. From there, we will enjoy a lunch buffet at the Methodist Church in Holland, followed by reserved bleacher seat viewing for the famous Volkspareade. Enjoy amazing floats, marching bands, and the traditional sweeping of the street. Following the parade, we will return to the hotel to freshen up before enjoying a traditional barbecue chicken feast with the Holland Lion's Club. We will finish the evening enjoying Walt Matzke's Four Pianos, four master pianists who will delight the audience with their show. On Thursday morning, we will make one last stop before we depart for home: Enjoy a visit to Nelis' Dutch Village to experience life as it was in Holland 100 years ago. On the way home, we will make rest stops where you will have lunch/dinner on your own. We anticipate arriving back at Redstone at 9:00 pm.

Price: \$850 single, \$600 per person in a double, \$525 per person in a triple. Proceeds benefit residents in need of benevolent care at Redstone. For more information or to register call Erin at 724-832-8400 X 370.

Lisa Dormire
VP Mission Support
Redstone Highlands











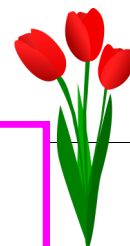
PHOTOS WANTED!!!! The Office can use emailed photos from cameras or cell phones. We'd love to include more pics from church functions. Share your good news—contact the church office!



April

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

						1
2 LENT 8:30 & 11am Worship 10am SunSch 7pm Bible	3 7pm Deacons	4 7pm Budget & Finance	5 6:30pm Bells 7pm Choir 7pm Mission & Stewardship	6  Deacon Basket Pick-up		8
9  8:30 & 11am Worship 10am SunSch 7pm Bible Study	10 	11 7pm Session	12  <u>11:30am</u> <u>"Soup</u> <u>for the Soul"</u> 6:30pm Bells 7pm Choir	13  Maundy Thursday Worship 7:30pm	14 OFFICE CLOSED 	15
16 EASTER 8:30 & 11am Worship 10am SunSch 	17 	18	19	20 7pm VBS mtg	21	22 8:30am FOODBANK
23 8:30 & 11am Worship 10am SunSch 7pm Bible Study	24 OFFICE CLOSED	25 OFFICE CLOSED	26 OFFICE CLOSED 6:30pm Bells 7pm Choir	27 7pm Trustees	28	29
30 8:30 & 11am Worship 10am SunSch 7pm Bible Study				<div> If you have appropriate News to share in the Poke Run Ranger—please submit it to the office. The next Ranger deadline is April 17, 2017. </div>		

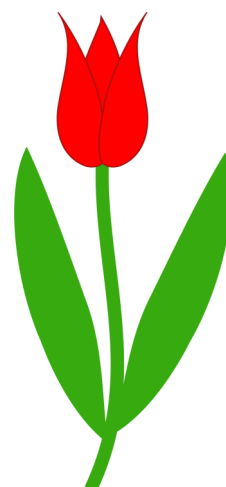


Poke Run Presbyterian Church
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Apollo, PA 15613
724-327-5563
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April 9th Palm Sunday, Luncheon following 11am Service
April 13th, Maundy Thursday Service at 7:30pm, dinner at 6pm

Easter Sunday Services, April 16th

Worship at 8:30am and 11am
Sunday School at 10am



Worship Together! Easter Services