



CONRAD LUTHERAN PARISH

LOGOS

WORSHIP TIMES

8:30 a.m. Golden West, fellowship at 8 a.m.

10 a.m. Pondera Valley, fellowship afterward

Therefore, as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude. Colossians 2:6-7



Pastor Jeff Driscoll
Kim Wiest, Admin. Assistant
Office # 271-3934
P.O. Box 883
Office Hours:
Pastor: Mon. - Weds., 9 -12
Kim: Mon. - Thurs., 9-4
In an emergency call:
Pastor Jeff, 360-631-4707 or
Kim Wiest, 406-450-5821.
conradlutheran@gmail.com

Pastor Jeff will be on vacation
September 2nd—8th



- Opportunities to be involved in a Bible Study are beginning again...*see page 4* for information on Bible Studies.
- Confirmation for grades 7th - and up will begin on **Wednesday, September 16th, 7-8 p.m.** Pastor Jeff will lead this in the Fellowship Hall.
- Youth Education, Preschool—6th grade, begins **Wednesday, September 23rd** in the Youth Room at **3:45-5 p.m.** More information is on *page 4*.



Thank you to the radio broadcast sponsors of September 6th at 11 a.m. on KZIN, 96.7 FM: Donna & Matt Fowler in loving memory of *Lucas Fowler, Oscar & Edna Totdahl, Kathleen & Tom Fowler, Luann McLain, Terry Bakken, and Dave Kovatch.*

God bless the hearing of His word!

From the Pastor

Normally this month's column would be devoted to sentiment about returning to school, blessing our harvests, or otherwise entering the routine of Fall. However, weddings are in view in my life, so I will address that here. My daughter Elise is getting married in October and I will be gone for that wedding from October 8-24th. By the time this newsletter reaches you, I'm sure you will have heard that I was married August 11 to Nikki. Hopefully by the time you read this, she will be moved into the parsonage.

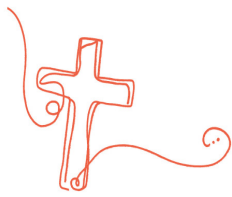
Nikki is the only woman I've met in this life who feels like I've known her for a lifetime. She and I have the same goals in life, in relationships, and we finish each-other's sentences and nearly read each other's minds. We have shared our past sins and traumas and future dreams. In short, as one person from the church said it, "So, you are in love?" Yes.

Nikki is 45, divorced, no kids. She earned her Bachelor's degree from California Lutheran and earned her Master's Degree in International Education. Professionally, she has lived and taught all over the world. From China, Sudan, Guatemala, England, and Turkey just to name a few places. That accomplishment is remarkable as she was born in Tupelo Mississippi in extreme poverty and had to accomplish that without support of her family. Nicki is also, like me, a late-in-life diagnosed neurodivergent. I am ADHD and she is both ADHD and Autistic. We both came to grips with our diagnoses in the past three years, late in life and after our conditions burned us out.

Recently someone who meant well said, "But she is high functioning," as if being autistic is something you can overcome or stop being. You may say high functioning, we would say masked. When people say high-functioning with alcohol (as in a high-functioning alcoholic) they don't mean that the person isn't suffering from alcohol abuse, they just mean that they hide the symptoms of their condition from the rest of us. When people like Nikki and I hide our conditions well, you call us high functioning. In fact, we are often non-functioning and exhausted from having to appear "typical," but, the challenges of the ADHD and autism are still there with us always. I am "on" and mostly present with you on Sunday mornings. But when I finish on Sundays, I am exhausted from playing neurotypical. I spend the rest of the day sleeping or recovering. It truly takes Herculean efforts for me to do this job well, and I do think I do it well.

This is to say that who Nikki wants to be is the perfect wife, as she sees the role. She wants to be my sanctuary, my soft place to fall where I can take off the mask and stop being pastor for a while. She wants to be the place where I can fully unmask and have someone who sees all my challenges and understands. She wants to feed me (healthier food), care for me, play with me, and share what God blesses me with for the rest of our days. She wants to fulfill her vocation as my wife by returning to you daily your pastor as the best possible version of himself. We each feel we have been looking for each other our whole lives.

CONTINUED on page 5



But far be it from me to boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. **Galatians 6:14**

If You're a Thrivent Member, You Can Direct Dollars to the church....Here's How!

Online:

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Visit Thrivent.com/thriventchoice 2. Click on "log in" at the top right of your screen and enter your MyThrivent user ID and password. (If you haven't registered, click on "register now" to register for full access.) 3. Look for your designated Choice Dollars amount on the right side of the screen. 4. Click on "Direct Choice Dollars" in the Thrivent Choice box on your MyThrivent page. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Search the catalog of organizations to find your choice, ex. "Pondera Valley Lutheran Church". 6. Click on "Direct Choice Dollars Now" to direct your designated Choice Dollars to benefit that organization. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Say or enter your Social Security number. 4. Press 1 to direct Choice Dollars or press 2 to hear the Thrivent Choice program terms and conditions. 5. A representative will then work with you to direct Choice Dollars. |
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By phone:

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Call 1-800-847-4836 and when prompted, say, "Thrivent Choice". 2. When prompted, say, "Choice Dollars." | <p><i>Help choose where Thrivent Financial for Lutherans gives back! If you don't, Thrivent Financial chooses.</i></p> |
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♥ Thank you volunteers delivering Meals on Wheels July & August: Linda Carlson, Ryan & Elodie Rauscher and Dale, Page Russett, Jordan Johnson, Carol Wood & Kim Wiest, Shauna Ellefsen, and Betty Olson. If any one would like to volunteer for Meals on Wheels, please call the office, 406-271-3934.



♥ Thank you to all those who helped with Day Camp & VBS: Donna Fowler, Julene Peters, Shauna Ellefsen, Lisa Judisch, Trinity Mulvaney, Kendra Pearson, Lori Pearson, Kylie Judisch, Solveig & Lucia Mielke, those who donated for motel rooms for the counselors: Linda Van Tongeren, Page & Tom Russett, Bonnie & Bill Poser; those who did dinners or lunches for counselors and cookies for the "campers": Donna Fowler, Julene Peters, Linda Carlson, Kim Wiest, Lisa Judisch, Cassie Peters, Wanda Bollinger, Lori Pearson, Shauna Ellefsen, and Kylie Judisch. Our helpers were wonderful, our 2 counselors—superb, and the kids were awesome! Pastor had a great 5 days with his confirmation students too. **Three will be confirmed on Reformation Sunday, Oct. 25th: Charlie Mulvaney, Keltey Fowler, and Leiko Judisch.**

♥ **THANK YOU to all who give! Your offerings are much appreciated. You can use the enclosed blue envelope or mail them to: PO Box 883, Conrad MT 59425**

JULY & AUGUST Pastoral Acts: Baptisms @ PV
 for Julian Campbell 7/12; Tessa Costales 7/12;
 Pondera Valley Offering: July-August **\$18,689**
 July-August PV Average Sunday Attendance: **57**
 July-August GW Average Sunday Attendance: **13**



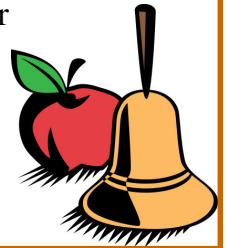
Youth Education **Preschool - 6th grade**

Wednesdays, 3:45 - 5 p.m., in Youth Room ~ Begins Sept. 23rd
TEACHERS NEEDED! Contact Julene Peters, 406-788-5562.

Confirmation **7th grade - and up**

Wednesdays, 7—8 p.m., FH — Begins Sept. 16th

Thank God for Teachers offer steady support to children Many educators also serve It is sometimes said that public facing difficult circumstances at faithfully in churches and school teachers do not teach home. communities, living out their values. Yet every day, Teachers also work with faith through daily acts of love countless teachers quietly model students from many different and service. Their influence compassion, patience, integrity backgrounds and abilities. Some often reaches far beyond what and kindness through the way patiently help children learn grades or test scores can they care for their students. English, while others devote measure. Many teachers go far beyond extra time and care to students As a church family, let us lesson plans and classrooms. with learning, emotional or remember to pray for teachers, They spend their own money on social challenges. In a world encourage them in their calling school supplies, workbooks, where many children face and thank God for clothing, snacks and special poverty, abuse, loneliness, the important needs for children who may neglect or uncertainty, a caring difference they otherwise go without. They teacher can become a source of make in the encourage struggling students, hope, stability and encourage- lives of children celebrate small victories and ment. every day.



JOIN US FOR

BIBLE STUDIES

FOR MEN — Tuesdays at 6:30 a.m. for breakfast and Study

FOR WOMEN —

One Sunday a month at 9 a.m. in church library. They will be studying John MacArthur's book and study: *Twelve Extraordinary Women*. Their first day will be 9 a.m. Sunday, **September 20th.**

Contact Linda O'Brien if you are interested, 406-403-9546.

Mondays at Noon in church library starting Sept. 14th. They will be studying the Gospel of John with a study guide. Contact Linda Carlson if interested, 406-271-3507.

Tuesdays at 9 a.m. in Fellowship Hall starting Sept. 15th studying Elijah by Priscilla Shirer. Contact Julene Peters if interested, 406-788-5562.

2nd Tuesday of each month at 9:30 a.m. @ Golden West Church starting Sept. 8th



No council meetings were held in July or August. PV Council will meet on Monday, Sept. 14th at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

What the congregation can do to support this new marriage is to throw out the “typical” expectations laid on the “typical” pastor’s wife. Nikki is the neurodivergent pastor’s wife not the neurotypical pastor’s wife. Autism and crowds and socializing rarely go together. Autism seeks routine, finds comfort in familiarity, and only tolerates change. Autism can come across as cold and unfeeling when the opposite is the case--oversensitivity is frequently felt and often overwhelming. ADHD has its own issues which I am happy to educate the congregation about, but this letter is a plea to please give us a lot of space and grace to integrate our lives. Here are just a few of the adjustments Nikki has to make to come to Conrad:

- Raised Southern Baptist marrying a Lutheran
- Humid and hot climate of Mississippi moving to arid, cold Montana
- Living among African Americans moving to a mostly white community
- Southern Culture verses learning about the Old/New West
- Heavy accent among those who sound like we belong here
- Cultural and social cues that we all take for

granted but that she doesn’t know how to read yet

- A life of survival and subsistence living to marrying into the middle class
- Living her life privately to being on display publically as my wife

On top of all this, we have to go through what all newlyweds no matter their age and neurology have to negotiate. We need to establish a new life with new routines in this new place. If you could afford us the grace and space to tackle this transition in our own way, we promise to bring you along and seek ways to connect with the congregation that don’t dysregulate either of our nervous systems nor the congregational system.

Of course your blessings and prayers are always welcome. You have made me feel nothing but appreciated and welcome as your pastor. I am certain I can count on the same for my wife.

God’s Peace,
Pastor Jeff

**Pastor Jeff will be on vacation
September 2—8.**



When the Road Gets Rough

It had been a long trip home, and the weary traveler still had miles to go. So when a sign appeared reading, "Rough Road Ahead — 4 miles," he braced himself.

Rough was an understatement. The lanes narrowed, the shoulder disappeared, and traffic slowed to a crawl. Drivers carefully weaved around potholes and construction equipment, inching forward one stretch at a time. But just as the sign promised, after four difficult miles, the road opened up and smoothed out again.

Jesus offers a similar kind of clarity about life. In John 16:33 (NIV), He says, "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." Notice He doesn't say we might face trouble. It is part of the journey. There will be stretches that feel slow, uncertain and hard.

Notice that Jesus didn't say we "might" have trouble. Sooner or later, problems will come. The road will get rough. But Jesus has already defeated everything the world can throw our way. We just have to keep moving, fueled by hope.

The promise is just as certain as the warning sign. The rough road does not last forever, and it does not have the final say. Christ has already gone before us, and smoother ground is ahead.



Our Mind's Storehouse

Benjamin Weir, a missionary in the Middle East, was taken captive by terrorists and held in solitary confinement. Blindfolded and cut off from the outside world, he endured deep isolation with no one to speak to and no sense of where he was.

What could he do? In many ways, all he had was a beating heart and a mind still free to think. To endure the long days, he began drawing from what was stored within him. After his release, he reflected, "I called up my memory bank, things that were stored in my mind."

He recalled Scripture passages he had learned years before. He remembered lines from William Shakespeare, the words of hymns and songs, and the faces of those he loved. He reflected on his work, his family and the steady grace of God throughout his life.



Looking back, he said, "Whatever is in your mind is what you have to draw on."

That truth lingers. What we place in our minds today shapes what we will lean on tomorrow. It invites a simple but important question: What are we storing away? May we fill our thoughts with what is true, pure and

life-giving, with the story of Christ and the hope of His saving grace.

Special Dates for September 2026

- Labor Day, *September 7*
- Patriot Day, *September 11*
- National Grandparents *Sept. 13*
- Hispanic Heritage Month, *Sept. 15-Oct. 15*
- First Day of Autumn, *Sept. 22*

Pondera Valley Women are selling RADA (Made in the USA kitchen tools) to raise money for benevolent projects! Check out the

RADA catalog online:

<https://radafundraising.com?rfsn=1818332.f1ff6>



A sweet reminder that God is always growing something new, no matter the season. As summer winds down and a new school year begins, remember He is at work in your life, helping you grow in faith, kindness and courage. With His help, you can grow in wisdom, build friendships and shine His love wherever you go.

What you need:

- 2 cups milk
- 1 (4-serving) box chocolate instant pudding mix
- 1 (8 oz.) tub whipped topping, thawed
- 1 (16 oz.) package Oreo cookies, crushed
- 8 (9 oz.) clear plastic cups
- Gummy worms or frogs (optional)



What you do:

1. In a large bowl, whisk together milk and pudding mix for 2 minutes. Let stand for 5 minutes until thickened.
2. Gently fold in the whipped topping.
3. Add a layer of crushed cookies to the bottom of each cup.
4. Spoon pudding mixture on top, filling the cups about 3/4 full.
5. Sprinkle more crushed cookies on top to look like "dirt."
6. Add gummy worms or frogs for fun.
7. Chill until ready to serve, or enjoy right away.

See, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up; do you not
perceive it? — Isaiah 43:19 (NIV)



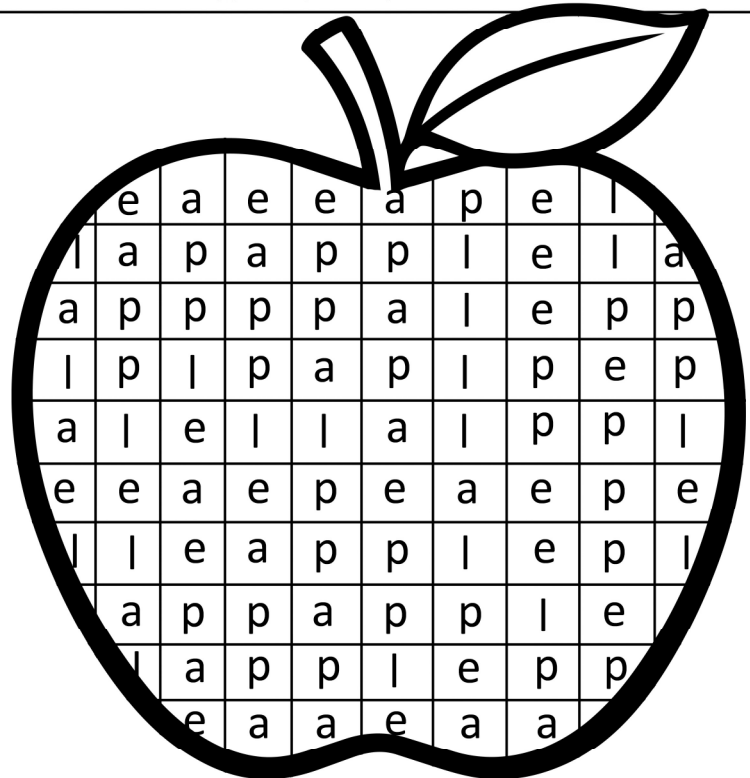
www.holyfamilytime.com A great resource!



Apple of Your Eye

"Apple of your eye" means something very special that you protect. As school starts again, remember what God says in Proverbs 7:2 (NIV): "Keep my commands and you will live; guard my teachings as the apple of your eye."

Can you find the word "apple" 12 times in the puzzle?
Look up, down, across, and even backward!





PLEASE UPLIFT IN PRAYER... Illnesses or other concerns:

(denotes relation to) Marshall Bishop, Roger Schlosser, John Gray, Cindy Fuson, Kelly Johns Leisinger, Gail Rossmiller, Molly Donath Kavanagh, Lori Wetendorf, Ruth Fladstol, Amber Miller (*Sharon Parks*), Linda VanTongeren, Bob & Sue Kovatch, Dave Bliss, Christopher Burns, Chris Ketterling, (*Karla Breeding*), Jim Skipper, Kathy (*Linda O'Brien*), Art & Lori Pearson, Rolene, Dave Kluver, Casey Kluver, (*Rona Matheson*), the

Alicia Wood Family, Ruth Erickson, Mary, Cheryl, (*Carol Wood*), Sara McLean, Ann Glimm, Tristan West, David Larson, Rebekah Thaut, Kariann Thaut (*Pinky Thaut*), Butch Johns, Kailey Judisch, Brenda Rhone, Loretta (*Louise Glimm*), Carol Bowen (*Carolyn Widhalm*), Kaitlyn and John Russett (*Tom Russett*), Roger Brastrup, Teagan Bartoo, Faith Birnel Crouch (*Ruth Fladstol*), Poppy Dahl, all Logan Health Ext. Care, Bee Hive, and Horizon Lodge Residents, Missionaries and Christians all around the world who are being persecuted and their persecutors, All in crisis due to weather conditions, war and other issues, CASA-the kids and all who work with them

All those who mourn: Helen Bjelland, Ray Grager (*brother of Louise Glimm*), Diana Hoy, and others...grief has no time table; please keep all who come to mind in your prayers...

Those deployed in the service abroad: Ben Rauscher, Chance Rauscher (*Japan*), Brett Christensen (*Central Republic of Africa*)

For an updated prayer list, or to update the list, call the church office, 406-271-3934.

Prayers to Prepare for Worship

- ♥ O Lord, may my heart not be hardened, my ears not deaf, my mind not wandering as I strive to worship you in spirit and in truth. Amen.
- ♥ With eagerness we approach you, O God. We join with all who love and serve you. We offer ourselves to be your people, ready to let your light shine upon us and through us. In Jesus' name. Amen.
- ♥ Enable us, O Lord, to approach you with pure hearts and proper praise. In Christ's name. Amen.
- ♥ Lord, quiet the distractions within us and around us as we gather in Your presence. Open our hearts to Your Word, fill our minds with Your truth and lead us to worship You with sincerity and joy. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.



The Quiet Power of Faithfulness

The greatest forces in the universe are rarely spectacular. Gentle summer showers often do more lasting good than hurricanes, though they draw little attention. The world depends on the faithfulness, loyalty and dedication of countless people whose names are never known.



Every life, no matter how humble, has a role in shaping a better world and a more beautiful tomorrow. It is easy to overvalue what seems impressive and underestimate what appears ordinary. Yet lasting change is most often built through quiet commitment, patient service and faithful hearts doing what matters most, day after day.

SEPTEMBER GOLDEN WEST SUNDAY WORSHIP 8:30 a.m.**Ushers: Ruth Fladstol; Reader: Ruth;****Communion Assistant: Jim Bjelland; Communion Preparer: Jenny Flesch**

Pondera Valley: VOLUNTEER! to help with ushering, greeting, reading the scripture lessons, serving or helping with communion set-up, call the church office, 271-3934. Instructions would be made available.

SEPTEMBER PONDERA VALLEY SUNDAY WORSHIP 10 a.m.	September 6th	September 13th	September 20th	September 29th
Reader	Jim Adamson	Dick Kinyon	Dick Kinyon	Dick Kinyon
Communion Assistants		June Hovde & Linda Welch		Wanda Badow & Kim Wiest
Usher & Greet	Ray & Kim Hofstad			
Communion Preparer	Patty Larson			
Sound Tech.	Linda & Mike O'Brien			
Offering Custodian	Kim Hofstad			

**READ IN PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP**

Sept. 6 - Ezekiel 33:7-9; Psalm 32:1-7; Romans 13:1-10; Matthew 18:1-20

Sept. 13 - Genesis 50:15-21; Psalm 103:1-12; Rom. 14:1-12; Matthew 18:21-35

Sept. 20 - Isaiah 55:6-9; Psm. 27:1-9; Philippians 1:12-14,19-30; Matt. 20:1-16

Sept. 27 - Ezekiel 18:1-4,25-32; Psalm 25:1-10; Philippians 2:1-18; Matt.21:23-32

