CONRAD LUTHERAN PARISH

LOGOS

WORSHIP TIMES
8:30 a.m. Golden West, fellowship at 8 a.m.
10 a.m. Pondera Valley, fellowship afterward

COMING in JANUARY, Worship Times will both advance by 1/2 hour to:
9 a.m. at Golden West and 10:30 at Pondera Valley

"For I know their works and their thoughts; the time is coming to gather all the nations and tongues. And they shall come and see My glory." Isaiah 66:18

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



DECEMBER ACTIVITIES

December 13th Women's Christmas Party 1 p.m.
All Women are invited!

December 20th Children's Christmas Program during 10 a.m. Worship
Christmas break for vacation begins and classes resume on January 13th

Christmas Eve Worship *(Dec. 24th)*
Golden West 3 p.m.
Pondera Valley 5 p.m.

Thank you to the radio broadcast sponsors of December 6th at 11 a.m. on KZIN, 96.7 FM: Tom & Page Russett *in loving memory of parents:* **Tom & Viola MacKrell** and **Harvey & Jeanette Russett** AND by Jim & Joann Adamson *in loving memory of their parents:* **Bud & Carma Adamson** *and* **Marvin & Leona Petersen.**
God bless the hearing of His word!

CHRISTMAS EVE RADIO BROADCAST SPONSORS are listed on p. 5.

The parable of the talents from Matthew 25:14 -30. You remember the parable of the talents from Matthew 25:14-30 A man gives impossible sums of money to his three servants. Two of them go hog wild with their money and the third buries his in the ground. The text, which is about judgment day before God, has somehow gotten warped into a stewardship lesson, something it decidedly is not. It is not your money that is in view in this parable, but your faith. You either experience God's grace as the giver of ridiculous abundance, which you are free to do with as you please, or else you experience God as a task master waiting to condemn you for your failures.

This is actually a parable for churches who think their problems lie in resources. These guys have been given sums that equate to tens of millions of dollars in today's currency. They have so much that no one could argue they lack the resources to accomplish their mission. Today we would say they are too big to fail. The first two obedient slaves, faithful slaves, go out and use the money. They trust that the master truly handed over the goods to them, and they live like it. The one feared that the master would be unfair. He didn't trust him and in his lack of faith he did the bare minimum of what was expected of him under the law.

I've been a pastor at St. Michael's, Wilson and Immanuel Lutheran Churches, Peace Lutheran, Messiah Lutheran, two Our Saviors Lutherans and now here in Conrad Lutheran Parish. I have been through years where we were tens of thousands of dollars behind budget. I've waited weeks for paychecks. I've put up the thermometer. I've been in churches that post the bills in the social hall begging members to adopt a bill, others that post the weekly budget verses expenses in the bulletin. I've written personal letters of thanks for those who give, mistitled stewardship sermons that were really about meeting budgets rather than being stewards of what God has given us. And what I have learned is that problems of resources are resolved in mission, not budgeting.

When a church focuses on external mission, its internal resource problems are often naturally resolved. Shifting the primary focus from internal survival to external impact changes how a congregation views, manages, and attracts resources. When a church tries to preserve its resources, it often loses them to stagnation. When a church "wastes" its resources on loving and serving its community, it discovers a self-sustaining cycle of new people, fresh energy, and increased funding. Resources follow vision; they never precede it.

In the end, a budget is a statement of faith because it is a statement about our future and our belief about who God is. We either state our purpose in fear or in faith. If the budget is a true extension of our faith, then we will write it believing that what we need is provided for by the one who gave us our mission. It will be written not with what the church has or even wants, but with what it needs in order to complete its mission.

Right now the mission of our churches is to foremost to bring the gospel to our community. Right now we have chosen to do so with our current programs, staffing, and facilities. Those come with price tags. If those price tags have become too high or our current mission is no longer fulfilling what God has called us to, then perhaps we need to rethink the mission. Right now, the general fund at Pondera Valley is alarmingly low. Golden West is being supported financially, but sometimes feel they lack other resources. I ask you all to pray for the mission of our churches and for your councils who need to make some wise and tough decisions as they seek to make our 2027 budget and mission align.

God's Peace,
Pastor Jeff

PONDERA VALLEY MEMORIALS Received for:
Tech Updates *in memory of* ***Kathy Hager*** - Karla & Everett Breding
General Fund *in memory of* ***Mary Simonson*** - Ryan & Elodie Rauscher
in memory of ***all we've lost in our community*** - Robert Skorupa
THANK YOU!

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

Online:
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.
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.

By phone:
1. Call 1-800-847-4836 and when prompted, say, "Thrivent Choice".
2. When prompted, say, "Choice Dollars."
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.

Help choose where Thrivent Financial for Lutherans gives back! If you don't, Thrivent Financial chooses.



Overflowing With Thanks

THANK YOU....

- **For all who brought fruit cocktail for the Food Pantry!**
- **The Golden West ladies would like to thank everyone who came to our annual Praise and Thanks Celebration. We are always overwhelmed, honored and very grateful for the continued support of so many with their generous offerings. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts!!!**
- **Thank you to Elaine McLean for making the beautiful quilt to raffle for the Art Pearson Benefit. And thank you to all who bought tickets! It was won by Laurie Campbell of Brady.**

♥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

NOVEMBER Pastoral Acts:
Pondera Valley Offering**: $ 30,235.00**
PV Average Sunday Attendance**: 52**
GW Average Sunday Attendance: **15; P & T: 82**



<u>Youth Education</u> Preschool - 6th grade
Wednesdays, 3:45 - 5 p.m., in Youth Room
<u>Christmas Program</u> during 10 a.m. Worship Dec. 20th
Christmas break Dec. 23, 30 and Jan. 6 - back on Jan. 13th
<u>Confirmation</u> 7th grade - and up, Wednesdays, 7—8 p.m., FH



Contacts listed...but all are welcome to just show up!

FOR MEN — Tuesdays, 6:30 a.m. for breakfast and Study, contact Tom Russett:406-576-7123

FOR WOMEN — One Sunday a month at 9 a.m. in church library. Contact Stacy Eneboe: 406-271-9156.

Mondays at Noon in church library. Contact Linda Carlson: 406-271-3507.

Tuesdays at 9 a.m. in Fellowship Hall Contact Julene Peters: 406-788-5562.

2nd Wednesday of each month at 1 p.m. @ Golden West Church Contact Ruth Fladstol: 406-627-2113.



Joint Council met on Nov. 10th after a soup supper prepared by Golden West. Pastor will be shifting his Wednesday office hours to be Noon - 4 p.m. It was decided that GW would have Christmas Eve Services at 3 p.m. and PV at 5 p.m. The Annual Meeting dates were set: GW on January 24th and Pondera Valley on January 31st. Pastor will have someone read his sermon and lead worship on the 24th at PV so he can be with GW during their annual meeting. After much discussion, it was decided to change worship times beginning January 2027. GW will worship at 9 a.m. and PV at 10:30 a.m. It will be re-visited in a year. The Joint council adjourned and the individual councils met separately.

GW Council: The quilt raffle from the Art Pearson Benefit was won by Laurie Campbell. A contractor has been hired to paint the church. Christmas Eve Services will be at 3 p.m. The annual meeting will be January 24th.

PV Council: Wednesday Education has 22 children attending Little Lutherans. Teachers are Cassie Andrews, Julene Peters, and Kim Hofstad. Lisa Judisch helps. The Christmas Program will be during 10 a.m. Worship on Dec. 20th. The Stewardship Committee sent a letter to all members to encourage giving to the General Fund. Repairs for the church building were discussed. The parsonage committee is looking into options for renting. Pastor is providing 4 names for PV's pastoral relations committee. The council will vote to obtain two members from PV. **The next council meeting will be the Dec. 10th at 6:30 p.m.**

Nov. 15th a special council meeting was called for the purpose of electing 2 members for the pastoral relations committee. Ruth Erickson and Gary Boe were elected.



Christmas Eve Radio Broadcast will be on KSEN 1150 AM at 7 p.m.

Sponsors are:

Jim & Shauna Ellefsen and family in loving memory of *Bob, Eleanor, and Scott Salois;*

Pat Lee & Family in loving memory of *Jack Lee*;

Larry & Rosemarie Banka in loving memory of *John, Pat and Mike Banka*

Linda Welch in loving memory of her parents *George & Madelyn Erickson, their parents and siblings.*

Jack & Barb Judisch in loving memory of *Clark, Maureen, and other family & friends.*

Thank You!



Gifts need to be returned by Wednesday, December 16th! Thanks to Shauna Ellefsen and Donna Fowler for heading it up!

Isaiah 11 prophesies hope for the world: wisdom, understanding, righteousness, justice, faithfulness, peace. In the words "a little child will lead them" (v.6), Christians hear a foretelling of God's coming t earth as the child Jesus. Today, children - Jesus' examples of fitness for God's kingdom (Mark 10:14) - often lead in showing love.

At age 11 avid baker Michael Platt opened a pastry shop in Maryland to benefit homeless people; for desserts sold, he gives and equal number to shelter residents. Erick Schubert, 18 of New Jersey, uses his genealogy research skills to help stranger - more than 1,00 so far - find long-lost family. In PA, Neijae Graham-Henries became a certified barber at age 7 to give free haircuts to kids who couldn't afford them. (Resource: GoodNewsNetwork.org)

May these children inspire us...in the name of the Christ-child, who taught us to serve others in love!

The National Bible Association was reading scripture over the NBC radio network on Sunday morning, December 7, 1941, when Pearl Harbor was attacked. Because of the traumatic events, the network asked that the Bible-reading continue all day, in between news updates. Radio stations throughout America picked up the programming, allowing countless listeners to receive words from God - "Who comforts you" (Isaiah 51:12) - when they needed it most.



Go to our website for videos, updates, materials to use for worship!



PLUS, the newsletter is in COLOR!!
www.conradlutheran.com

Ephesians 6: 11-18 tells us to put on the full Armor of God. One of the pieces is the Shoes of Peace which we are to use to spread God's good news, Jesus love. Visiting with the 3rd and 4th grade Little Lutherans about this, I asked them ways they could share God's love. They came up with many great ideas.

If you see someone alone, go sit with them. Ask if they'd like to join you to play. Being kind to others. Sharing a smile. Visiting nursing home, Bee Hive, Horizon Lodge.. go there to sing, play games or visit. If someone falls, help them up and ask if they're ok. Call someone to check in on them, let them know you're thinking of them. Send a card. Invite someone to join you in church. The children's suggestions and more can help us reach out into our community and let our light shine.

There are lots of ways to share God's love. It's living your life, growing in God's love and God's love shining through you, treating others kindly, respectfully, participating in community activities, so others want to know Him because they see Him in you.

Our church needs to be a welcoming, safe space for all to enter. Let your light shine.

God bless you all, Kim Hofstad

A Christmas Prayer of Love and Peace



Gracious Father, as we celebrate the birth of Your Son, draw our hearts toward the quiet wonder of Bethlehem. Help us receive Jesus with the joy of the shepherds, the reverence of the wise men, and the faithful love of Mary and Joseph.

Let Your peace settle over our homes and reach those who feel lonely, weary, or forgotten. Open our eyes to the needs around us, and make our hands willing to serve. May every gift carry kindness, every greeting offer warmth, and every gathering leave room for someone who needs to belong.

Forgive our impatience and selfishness. Teach us to forgive one another freely and to treasure people more than possessions.

When Christmas Day is done, may our gratitude remain. Help us carry the love of Christ into ordinary days, sharing His hope wherever You lead us.

In the name of Jesus, our Savior and newborn King, we pray. Amen.

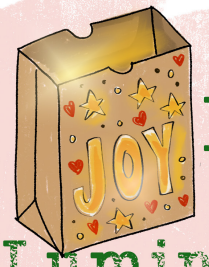
Special Dates for December 2026

- 2nd Sunday of Advent, December 6th
- 3rd Sunday of Advent, December 13th
- PV Women's Christmas Party Dec. 13th, 1 p.m.
- Kids Christmas Program, Dec. 19th 10 a.m.
- 4th Sunday of Advent, December 20th
- First Day of Winter, December 21st
- Christmas Eve, December 24th

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

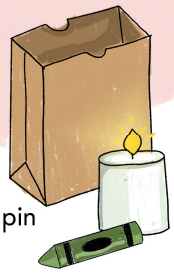
www.holyfamilytime.com A great resource!



Paper Bag Luminarias

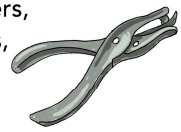
Light the way for family and friends while celebrating the birth of Jesus.





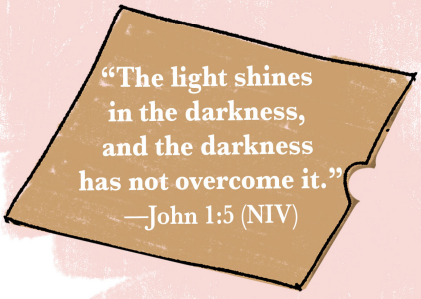
What you need:

- Pencil
- Brown or white paper lunch bags
- Hole punch or pushpin
- Cardboard
- Sand
- Battery-operated LED tea lights
- Optional: markers, crayons, stickers, or stencils



What you do:

1. Draw a Christmas design or word on each bag, such as a star, manger, heart, or "JOY."
2. Place cardboard inside the bag. With adult supervision, punch holes along your design.
3. Add about two inches of sand and place an LED tea light inside.
4. Set the bags along your walkway, porch, or patio. Turn on the lights at dusk and enjoy!





Christmas Riddles

Read the riddles below. Do you know the answers?

1) In a stable I was filled with hay
And became a bed where a baby lay.
What am I?
Luke 2:7

2) Our voices loud were heard on high!
The shepherds were frightened when we filled the sky!
Who are we?
Luke 2:9-13

3) I was shining in the Bethlehem sky that night.
The Magi followed my light so bright!
What am I?
Matthew 2:2

4) We watched our sheep in the night so still;
Then angels praised God and woke up our hill!
Who are we?
Luke 2:8

5) I was at Mary's side for the special birth
And raised the child as his "father on Earth."
Who am I?
Luke 2:16

6) "My heart in song to God I lift"
Said the young mother of God's special gift.
Who am I?
Luke 1:46-55

7) A baby boy, the Promised One!
A gift from God, His Beloved Son!
Who am I?
Matthew 1:18

8) The city of David, the little town,
Where the Baby was born and the star shone down.
What am I?
Luke 2:4

9) From the East we traveled far.
We found the child by the light of the star.
Who are we?
Matthew 2:1

Answers: manger, angels, star, shepherds, Joseph, Mary, Jesus, Bethlehem, wise men





PLEASE UPLIFT IN PRAYER… Illnesses or other concerns: *(denotes relation to)* John Gray, Elaine Gray and family, Kelly Johns Leisinger, Molly Donath Kavanagh, Lori Wetendorf, Amber Miller *(Sharon Parks),* Bob & Sue Kovatch, Dave Bliss, Kelly Syvertson, Christopher Burns, Chris Ketterling, *(Karla Breding)*, Jim Skipper, Kathy*(2Linda O'Brien),* Art & Lori Pearson, Cindy Fuson, Dave Kluver, *(Rona Matheson)*, the Alicia Wood Family, Mary, Cheryl, *(2Carol Wood)*, Sara McLean, Ann Glimm, Tristan West, David Larson, Rebekah Thaut, Kariann Thaut *(2Pinky Thaut),* Kailey Judisch, Brenda Rhone, Loretta *(2Louise Glimm),* Kaitlyn and John Russett *(Tom Russett),* Roger Brastrup, Teagan Bartoo, Faith Birnel Crouch *(3Ruth 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: grief has no time table - please keep all who come to mind in your prayers...

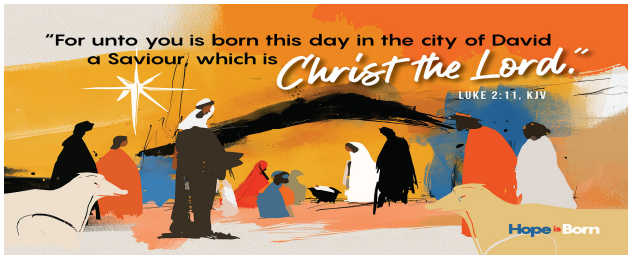
Those deployed in the service abroad: Brett Christensen *(Central Republic of Africa)*

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

Prayers to Prepare for Worship



- Keep our minds from thinking about extraneous matters, O Lord. Help us to remember that we will find perfect peace when our thoughts are centered upon you.
- We dare to present ourselves just as we are, O God. Please receive us and guide us into paths of righteousness.
- As Christmas draws near, quiet our hearts, O Lord, and prepare us to receive Christ anew. May Your love guide our thoughts and actions as we gather to worship You. Amen.
- **Christmas Eve** On this holy night, O God, fill our hearts with wonder at the birth of our Savior. Draw us close to Christ, the Light of the World, and help us receive His peace with grateful hearts. Amen.
- **Christmas Day** On this glorious Christmas Day, enable us to see your revelation of love and salvation in Christ, your Son and our Lord.
- You gave us the greatest gift possible in the person of Christ, O Lord. Help each of us to personally relate to the Savior and thus enjoy all the benefits of his presence. In his name. Amen.
- **New Year's Eve** As this year draws to a close, O Lord, quiet our hearts to remember Your faithfulness. Help us entrust the past to Your mercy and the coming year to Your care. Guide us to walk in faith, hope, and love. Amen.



DECEMBER GOLDEN WEST SUNDAY WORSHIP 8:30 a.m.
& Christmas Eve Service at 3 p.m.
Ushers: Ken & Cyndi Johnson; Reader: Cyndi;
Communion Assistant: Jim Bjelland; Communion Preparer: Ken

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.

DECEMBER PONDERA VALLEY SUNDAY WORSHIP 10 a.m.	Dec. 6th	Dec. 13th	Dec. 20th	Dec. 24th 5 p.m.	Dec. 27th
Reader	Dick Kinyon	David Berg	Dick Kinyon	Pastor	David Berg
Communion Assistants		Erik & Stacy Eneboe		Erik & Stacy Eneboe	Wanda Bandow & Ruth Erickson
Usher & Greet	6th-Kim Wiest; 13th-Kim Wiest & Page Russett; 20th-Kim & Page; 24th-Dave & Carolyn Widhalm; 27th-Dave & Carolyn Widhalm				
Communion Preparer	Donna Fowler				
Sound Tech.	Tom Russett				
Offering Custodian	Tom Russett				

READ IN PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP



Dec. 6-ADVENT 2 - Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85; 2Peter 3:8-14; Mark 1:1-8
Dec. 13-ADVENT 3 -Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Psalm 126; 1Thess. 5:16-24; John 1:6-8, 19-28
Dec. 20-ADVENT 4 -2Sam. 7:1-11, 16; Psalm 89:1-5,19-29; Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38
Dec. 24-Isaiah 7:10-14; Psalm 110:1-4; 1John 4:7-16; Luke 2:1-20
Dec. 25-Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalm 2; Hebrews 1:1-12; John 1:1-18
Dec. 27-Isaiah 61:1--62:3; Psalm 111; Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:22-40