



CONRAD LUTHERAN PARISH

LOGOS

WORSHIP TIMES

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

10 a.m. Pondera Valley, fellowship afterward

Pastor Jeff Driscoll
Kim Wiest, Admin. Assistant
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Monday - Thursday, 9-4
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Pastor Jeff, 360-631-4707 or
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Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world; the one who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life." John 8:12



Thank you to the radio broadcast sponsors on January 4th at 11 a.m. on KZIN, 96.7 FM: Lynn Ostrom & family in loving memory of her parents: *Harvey & Betty Dahl*. God bless the hearing of His word!

From the Pastor

January is upon us once again. 2026 has that new car smell. The days get gradually longer. What is that feeling? Hope. To one extent or another we begin the calendar year hopeful. After all unto us is born a savior. The hopeful Christmas message and hymns are still ringing in our ears. We start to believe that we can manufacture for ourselves a new beginning. We will eat healthy. We will exercise. We will lose weight. We will be more patient with our neighbors. We will call our loved ones more frequently. We will go to church every Sunday. Some of us even formalize these with a title: New Year's Resolution. Some statistics show that 40% of us will make a New Year's resolution. Statistics also show that by the second week in February 90% of us will have failed. Only 8-9% will go on to keep our resolution for the entire year.

Psychologists offer explanations for why our resolutions fail. We give up too easily. Get back in the saddle, psychology says. We think too big. Our resolution is wildly ambitious when it should be focused on smaller achievable, incremental goals. We're too vague. We settle for resolutions without a plan. The key is to set specific and achievable goals that you can measure your progress against," the psychologist says, "Then, stick to them."

Psychology comes from the word *psyche*, which itself means the human mind, soul, or spirit. Since I am in the human soul and spirit business, I would offer a different explanation: Our resolutions sow to our flesh (Gal 6). Most people think of sowing to the flesh as "bad habits" like drinking, smoking, gluttony, sexual excess. But, aren't these the very things we are trying to give up? How can you say, Pastor, that my resolution to give up sowing to the flesh

is sowing to the flesh? I can because the whole nasty resolution business is about placing confidence in yourself. If you can just make the goal achievable, the diet palatable you will succeed. If you can just forgive yourself of your slip ups and give yourself positive affirmations you will progress in the transformation you seek. This is all supreme confidence in self and the law. The problem with the diet isn't that it is law, it just that we haven't found the right law, the one we can follow. We put our flesh up against the law and 90% of us fail and end up wallowing in shame at our weakness.

In the same chapter where discussion of sowing to the flesh occurs Paul discusses where we should and should not place our hope. He talks of circumcision, but I have rewritten it with a different law, New Year's resolutions. *"Those who want to impress people by means of the flesh are trying to compel you to make resolutions.. The only reason they do this is to avoid being persecuted for the cross of Christ. Not even those who make resolutions keep them, yet they want you to make resolutions that they may boast about your achievements in the flesh. May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. Neither keeping New Year's resolutions nor breaking them means anything; what counts is the new creation.* In Second Corinthians he said it this way, "if anyone is in Christ that person is a new creation." Hope for a new you does not rest on the scales, but is found in Christ Alone.

— Pastor Jeff



Priceless little memories
Are treasures without price,
And through the gateway of
the heart
They lead to paradise.

—HELEN STEINER RICE

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

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3. Look for your designated By phone:

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.

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.
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1. Call 1-800-847-4836 and when prompted, say, "Thrivent Help choose where Thrivent Financial for Lutherans gives back! If you don't, Thrivent Financial chooses."

♥ A big thank you to Shauna Ellefsen for taking care of the kitchen the last several years and her replacement Stacy Eneboe for being willing to take it on!

♥ Another big thank you to Shauna Ellefsen and Donna Fowler for the beautiful decorating of the Fellowship Hall that they've been doing for last couple of years. It's a big job and you did it well. Thank you! And thank you to Ruth Erickson, Linda Welch, Denise Elings, Eddy Erickson and Roger Erickson for agreeing to decorate!

♥ Thank you to all who contributed gifts to the Giving Tree this year and to Shauna & Donna for being in charge of it. Many hearts were warmed and felt the love when they opened their packages!



♥ **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

DECEMBER Pastoral Acts: none

Pondera Valley Offering: **\$16,250**

PV Average Sunday Attendance: **51**

PV 12/21 Xmas Program & Worship **128**

PV Christmas Eve: **106**

NO GW Attendance Count

WEDNESDAY EDUCATION Classes resume January 14th, Wednesday, at 3:45 p.m.—5 p.m. for 3 year olds - 5th grade in the Youth Room



**CONFIRMATION Class for 7th & 8th grades
6-7:30 p.m. Sundays (resuming Jan. 11th)
with Pastor Driscoll in the Fellowship Hall**



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

FOR WOMEN — Mondays at Noon in church library

— Tuesdays at 9 a.m. in Fellowship Hall

— 2nd Tuesday of each month at 9:30 a.m. @ Golden West Church



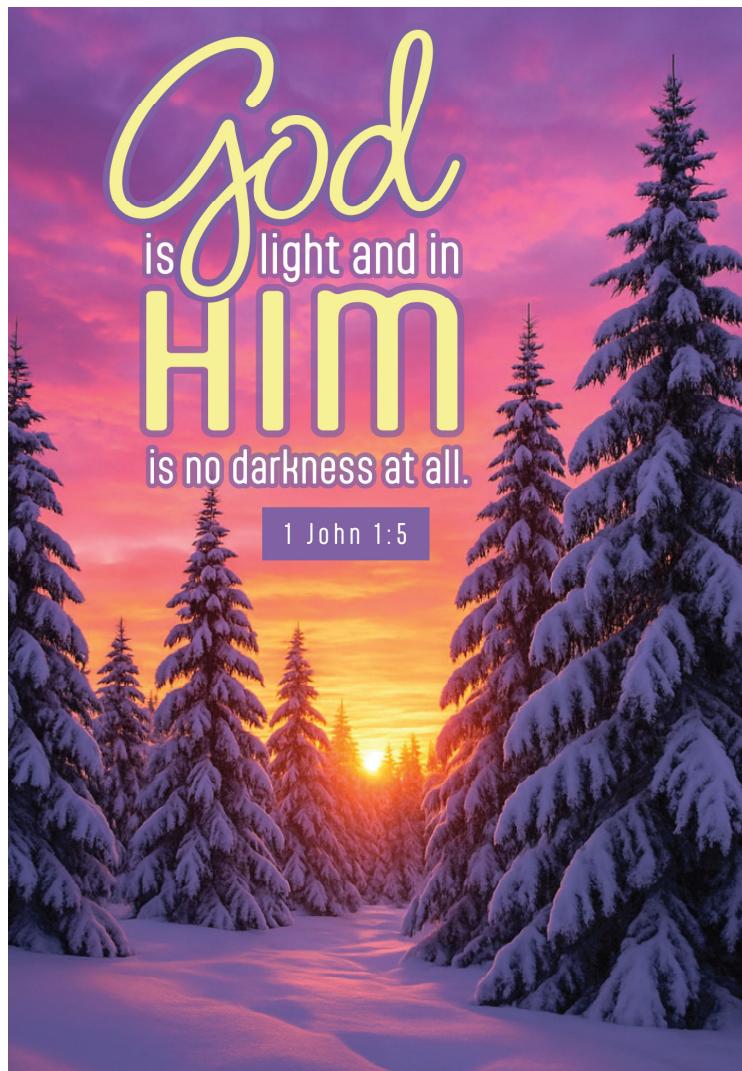
PV Council met on Dec. 8th.

Pastor is staying busy connecting with different groups within the church and community as well as making visitations to individuals too. 2026 offering envelopes will be out at the church for pick up soon. We are still waiting to get the back light of the church fixed. Thank you to Lyn Carlson, Erik and Stacy Eneboe for replacing and fixing lights around the church grounds. Benevolence committee recommendations will be emailed out to all the council members for approval to go forward for a vote at the annual meeting. The annual meeting will be following 10 a.m. Worship on Sunday, January 25th and then the PV Council will meet following the annual meeting. There will be no potluck this year. There will be a Valentine's Day Dinner at the church on Saturday, Feb. 14th. Tickets will be sold in advance. Volunteers are needed to help put this fabulous event together — see

Susan Gustafson! It was mentioned that Shauna Ellefsen and Donna Fowler have decided to resign from decorating and Shauna from the kitchen as well. We thank these ladies for their work. They did a phenomenal job! And thank you to Ruth Erickson, Linda Welch, Denise Elings, Eddy and Roger Erickson for agreeing to do the decorating and Stacy Eneboe to manage the kitchen. Volunteers run the church! THANKS!

The next meeting for Pondera Valley will be following the Jan. 25, 2026 Annual Meeting which will begin following 10 a.m. Worship that day.

GW's Annual Meeting will be February 1, 2026 following 8:30 a.m. Worship and Waffle Dinner. Pastor Jeff will attend this meeting and a special pulpit supply Sunday is in the process of being planned for Pondera Valley on that day. Stay tuned!



When All Else Fails—God Reigns

When we deliberate, God reigns;
When we decide wisely, God reigns;
When we decide foolishly, God reigns;
When we serve God in humble loyalty,
 God reigns;
When we serve God self-assertively,
 God reigns;
When we rebel and seek to withhold
 our service, God reigns —
The Alpha and the Omega, which is,
 and which was and which is to
come, the Almighty.

— William Temple at the
Lamberth Conference, 1930



Scripture Keys to a Joyful New Year

Hold fast to your faith (Hebrews 4:14)
Assemble with the saints (Hebrews 10:25)
Pray earnestly every day (1 Thessalonians 5:17, 18)
Pray for great blessings (Malachi 3:10)
Yield not to temptation (1 Thessalonians 5:22)

Neglect not your talents and opportunities (Galatians 6:10)
Examine yourself daily (2 Corinthians 13:5)
Work diligently for the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58)

Yield your members to righteousness (Romans 6:11, 16)
Exercise yourself in godliness (1 Timothy 4:7)
Aim at sinless perfection (Hebrews 6:1)
Redeem the time (Ephesians 5:15, 16)

— Gus Nichols



HORIZONS REMIND ME:
**GOD'S STORY
IS BIGGER**

Precious Lord, Take My Hand

Thomas Dorsey, a jazz musician from Atlanta, made a bold decision in 1926 to leave behind secular music and devote his talent to writing songs for the Lord. But following that call wasn't easy. During the Great Depression, many church leaders criticized his soulful gospel style, calling it "the devil's music." Dorsey later joked, "I got kicked out of some of the best churches in the land."

Then, in 1932, tragedy struck. While in St. Louis for a revival, he received a telegram that his wife had died suddenly during childbirth. His faith was shaken to the core,

and grief nearly silenced him. Yet in his deepest sorrow, Dorsey turned back to what he knew best — music. Out of that heartbreak came one of the most beloved hymns of all time:

*"Precious Lord, take my hand,
Lead me on, let me stand.
I am tired, I am weak, I am worn..."*

Dorsey's song reminds us that even in our valleys, God is near — guiding us, strengthening us, and using our pain to comfort others who walk the same road.

Special Dates for January 2026

- **New Year's Day, January 1, 2026**
- **Epiphany, January 6, 2026**
- **Baptism of the Lord, January 11, 2026**
- **Martin Luther King Jr. Day, January 19, 2026**

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!

Snowflake SNACK CAKES

Celebrate the beauty of winter with these fun snowflake-inspired treats!

What you need:

- Graham cracker squares or sugar cookies
- White frosting or marshmallow fluff
- Pretzel sticks (snowflake arms)
- Shredded coconut or white sprinkles
- Mini marshmallows or candy pearls

What you do:

1. Frost each cracker or cookie.
2. Arrange pretzel sticks in a crisscross for the snowflake base.
3. Sprinkle with coconut or sprinkles for snow.
4. Add marshmallows or candy pearls to the ends for detail.

Lesson tie-in:
Remind kids that God made each of us unique—just like no two snowflakes are alike!
(Psalm 139:14, KJV)



In the New Testament, followers of Christ are called by many names. Use the hints to fill in the blanks. Need help? Check an NIV Bible for the missing letters.

D _____ s
(Acts 6:7)



C _____ n P _____ e
(1 Peter 2:9)



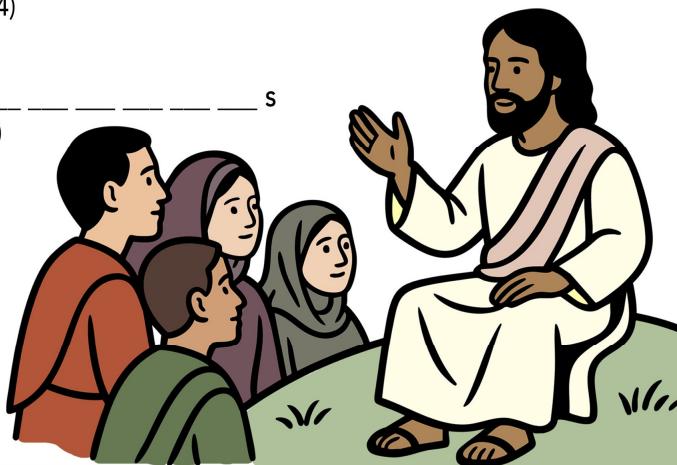
S _____ s of C _____ t
(1 Corinthians 4:1)

C _____ s
(Acts 11: 26)

B _____ s and S _____ s
(1 Thessalonians 4:9-10)

B _____ s
(Acts 5:14)

W _____ s
(Acts 1:8)





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

(denotes relation to) Karen Sutton (*Ruth Erickson*), John Gray, Cindy Fuson, Kelly Johns Leisinger, Molly Donath Kavanagh, Carol Kaldor, Tiller Judisch, Paxton Flesch, George Wood, Bob & Sue Kovatch, Christopher Burns, Chris Ketterling, (*Karla Breding*), Lauren Davis, Don Dezelsky, Jim Skipper (*Linda O'Brien*), Art & Lori Pearson, Dave Kluver, Casey Kluver, (*Rona Matheson*), the Alicia Wood Family, Mary, (*Carol Wood*), Sara McLean, Ann Glimm, Kaitlyn and John Russett (*Tom Russett*), Tristan West, David Larson, Rebekah Thaut, Kariann Thaut (*Pinky Thaut*), Butch Johns, Kailey Judisch, Brenda Rhone, Loretta (*Louise Glimm*), 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 and other issues, CASA-the kids and all who work with them

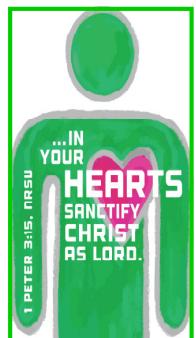
All those who mourn: Clifton Gustafson.. Also grief has no time table, please keep all who come to mind in your prayers...

Those deployed in the service abroad: Brett Christensen (*Tunisia*), Tyler Rauscher (*Ben's wife, in the Middle East*) **For an updated prayer list, inquire at the church office.**

Prayers to Prepare for Worship

Quiet us LORD...

- † Renewing God, as we step into a new year, quiet our hearts and help us listen for your voice. May this time of worship set our direction and renew our hope in you.
- † Light of the world, shine in our hearts today. As the Magi once followed your star, lead us closer to you and guide our steps in the year ahead.
- † Faithful God, you have been our help in the past and our strength for today. Teach us to trust your goodness and follow your ways in every season of life.
- † Creator of all life, each day is a gift from you. Open our eyes to your presence and open our hands to serve others with joy and love.
- † Lord, remind us that every new beginning starts with your grace. Renew our faith, restore our peace, and help us live as your people of light and hope.



For you were once darkness,

**BUT NOW
YOU ARE LIGHT**

in the Lord.

Live as children of light.

EPHESIANS 5:8, NIV

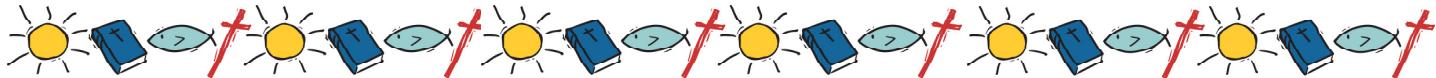


GOLDEN WEST JANUARY SUNDAY WORSHIP 8:30 a.m.

**Usher: Elaine Gray; Reader: Ruth Fladstol;
Communion Assistant: Jim Bjelland; Communion Preparer: Ruth Fladstol**

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.

MONDAY PONDERA VALLEY SUNDAY WORSHIP 10 a.m.	January 4th	January 11th	January 18th	January 25th Annual Meeting Day
Reader	Faith Weber	Faith Weber	Faith Weber	Faith Weber
Communion Assistants		June Hovde & Ruth Erickson		Linda & Mike O'Brien
Usher & Greet			Terry & Julene Peters	
Communion Preparer				Kim Hofstad
Sound Tech.				Lynn Utterback
Offering Custodian				Terry Peters

**READ IN PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP**

January 4 - 1 Kings 3:4-15; Psalm 119:97-104; Ephesians 1:3-14; Luke 2:40-52

January 11 - Isaiah 42:1-9; Psalm 29; Romans 6:1-11; Matthew 3:13-17

January 18 - Isaiah 49:1-7; Psalm 40:1-11; 1 Corinthians 1:1-9; John 1:29-42a

January 25 - Isaiah 9:1-4; Psalm 27; 1 Corinthians 1:10-18; Matthew 4:12-25