

CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE

Conrad Lutheran Parish

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Visit us at www.conradlutheran.org

Our two-point Lutheran Parish consists of:

Pondera Valley Lutheran Church located on the corner of 6th Ave SW and Delaware in Conrad

Golden West Lutheran Church located 23 miles east of Conrad in a country setting

Part I – Congregational Information

Congregational Council Chairs:

Pondera Valley: Susan Gustafson
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Call Committee Chair:

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Important events from our histories – Pondera Valley and Golden West

- Churches began sharing pastors in 1924
- Joined LCMC in 2010
- Celebrated our 100th Anniversary in 2014 (PV) – 2010 (GW)
- Ecumenical Participation in Community Events

Construction date of church building:

Pondera Valley - 1947
Fellowship hall - 1985
Youth room - 2007

Date of last renovation:

Golden West - 1937 (Present location)
Golden West - 1999

Significant trends in congregational demographics.

Pondera Valley Lutheran Church - average 65 attendees per service

Golden West Lutheran Church - average 14 attendees per service

**Both churches are handicap accessible and in good condition*

Part II – Ministry Practices, Structure, and Future

Present worship and educational program/practices:

Pondera Valley

Worship:

- Services from Reclaimed Hymnal
- Holy Communion service on the 2nd & 4th Sundays and holidays
- Radio broadcast services once a month
- Hymn books are the Reclaimed Hymnal, WOV (With One Voice), and the Other Song Book

Education:

- Education hour for PreK-6th graders on Wednesday
- Confirmation on Wednesday night
- Several different men and women's Bible studies throughout the week
- Vacation Bible School in summer
- Worship and communion services at local retirement and nursing

Golden West

Present programs and practices include worship service every Sunday morning at 9:00 or 11:00 alternating with Pondera Valley every 4 months. We have a Sunday school department and teacher when there are enough children to attend. We have a choir that sings on special occasions to praise our God who always hears in perfect pitch. Usually on Sundays, we have a Bible study conducted by lay members, before or after the regular service. This way we only have to make one trip. Many husbands attend with their wives as well, which is very encouraging. We've had as many as four couples with regular attendance. We celebrate Holy Communion twice a month and usually on those Sundays a children's sermon is given.

Ministries of the congregations and their community involvement and partnerships.

Pondera Valley

Some of the budgeted benevolences for 2024 –

- Visions Beyond Borders
- Hi-Line Help for Abused Spouses
- Lutheran World Relief
- Echoz
- L C M C
- Rescue Mission
- Lutheran Asian Ministries
- C A S A
- Beyond the River
- Pondera Food Pantry
- Good Shepherd Fund
- Conrad Christian School
- Military Bible Sticks
- Turkey Quake Response
- Heart for Mission
- Shepherd's Canyon Retreat

Golden West

Programs and practices include worship service every Sunday morning at 8:30 (beginning April 2024). We have a Sunday school department and teacher when there are enough children to attend. We have a choir that sings on special occasions to praise our God, who always hears in perfect pitch. Usually on Sundays, we have a Bible study conducted by lay members, before or after the regular service. This way we only have to make one trip. Many husbands attend with their wives as well, which is very encouraging. We've had as many as four couples with regular attendance. We celebrate Holy Communion twice a month and usually on those Sundays, a children's sermon is given.

Present staffing (other than the pastor)

PV - Paid staff: (membership not required)

Administrative Assistant
2 Organists on rotation
Custodians for both buildings
Fellowship hall decorators

Non-paid volunteers:

Treasurer
Choir Director
Sunday School superintendent

Altar/vestment sanctuary team
Nursery Attendant

GW - Paid Staff:

Administrative Assistant (shared with PV)
1 Organist
1 Custodian

Non-paid volunteers:

Treasurer

Visions of the church

With meaningful worship, we hope to grow in faith, have a more contemporary worship style, retain current members, and expand our outreach. More upbeat music was mentioned, including more songs from the Other Song Book. All believed the most important components of sermons were Biblical references, application to everyday life, and spiritual nourishment. Most worship here because of the fellowship and members feel we are welcoming to new people who visit.

Both churches are handicapped accessible, and in good condition, so no building projects are planned.

Current spending plan for the congregations are attached. (2024 proposed budgets to follow later)

Savings, endowments and investments and how these funds are to be used are attached.

Congregation's strengths and needs

Pondera Valley

Strengths:

- Theologically sound and honoring tradition
- Welcoming and empathetic to people's needs
- Strong feeling of family and great fellowship
- Significant number of community/outreach ministries
- Financially stable and have a nice, spacious facility with a large youth room and enticing nursery
- Continuing the development of ecumenical relationships in the community

Needs:

- Jr. and Sr. High ministry could be expanded, improved.
- Spiritual growth among members
- Outreach to young single/married members
- Retention of current members

Golden West

Strengths:

- Small in number but have a BIG heart, gracious in serving others
- Beautiful facility
- Good attitude for ongoing ministry needs
- Mission-minded

Needs

- Outreach/growth

What pastoral skills will best serve the Lord in this particular setting?

At Conrad Lutheran Parish, we need an evangelical leader who is earnest in their own devotional time with the Lord, so as to encourage us to nurture our relationship with God. We believe our Pastor should be honest, trustworthy, people-oriented, thoughtful, faithful, steadfast and have a gift for pastoring with care. We want someone able to communicate, an inspiring preacher/teacher of the Word of God and theology, and administer the sacraments. He/she must be a rostered pastor in LCMC. He/she should have a passion for reaching young people and young families. We hope they will have experience growing a church, but potential is more important to us than degrees or actual experience.

We recognize, as a two-point parish, a pastor will need to be able to delegate and train lay people as necessary to help in the responsibilities of our ministry in order to keep it healthy and strong. Our Pastor should be visible in the community so they can reach out to non-members and be a witness of God's love. Our hope is the Pastor and his/her family will successfully assimilate into the church and community. We are hoping this Pastor will want to stay for the long haul, and we plan to uplift and welcome them to life in Conrad.

Congregational Histories

Pondera Valley Lutheran Church

Three individual congregations joined together to form Pondera Valley

- 1931 - Parish consisted of Saint Olaf, Golden West and Pondera Valley.
- 1947 – Current church building was re-built after a fire
- 1958 - Education building was built
- 1959 - A full-time assistant pastor was called, added a second Sunday morning worship service.
- 1985 - Fellowship Hall addition completed – making the facility handicapped accessible
- 1988 - Voted to align with the newly formed ELCA.
- 1989 – Established the Pondera Valley Lutheran Church Foundation with 5 board members, which manages and invests undesignated gifts and estates willed to the church.
- 2003 - Attendance declined slowly, and we switched to one service at Pondera Valley. When our husband/wife pastoral team left, we changed to one pastor. (note: school enrollments and local population had also declined during that time)
- 2010 - Voted to leave the ELCA and join LCMC.
- 2014 - Celebrated our centennial anniversary.

Golden West Lutheran Church

The organizational meeting of what was to become the Golden West Lutheran Church was held on March 6, 1910, in the home of one of the fourteen charter members, all who were Norwegian homesteaders and single. The church was built by those who were trying to better their lives by farming the land, and at the same time felt a special need to have a place of worship.

In 1937 the church was moved 2.5 miles east to its present location. The structure has been added on to and is now completely handicap accessible with the addition of an elevator. The church members have also added onto the narthex, remodeled the basement and the kitchen.

The celebration of the church's 100th anniversary in 2010 was indeed a special occasion. Golden West is known for being a welcoming, friendly and giving congregation.