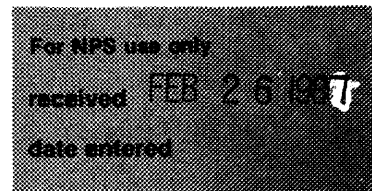


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**SITE**                      HN-12

**NAME**                      Golden Valley Norwegian Lutheran Church

**LOCATION**                      On a north-south section road, east of South Dakota State Highway 79, thirteen-and-one-half-miles northwest of Ralph, Harding County (063), South Dakota (046)

**OWNER**                      Floyd Howe  
RR 2 Box 54  
Hettinger, North Dakota 58639

**CLASSIFICATION**              Building, private, NA acquisition, unoccupied, restricted access, vacant

**DESCRIPTION**                      Excellent condition, unaltered, original site

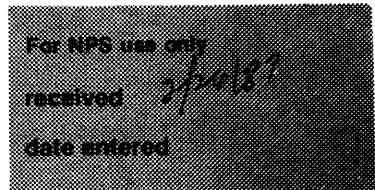
Situated on the treeless rolling prairie, the Golden Valley Norwegian Lutheran Church is located south of an east-west section road which intersects South Dakota State Highway 79 approximately twelve miles north of Ralph in Harding County.

Constructed ca. 1900, the church is stylistically rural Gothic. Although the church is higher style than other rural Gothic churches in the region, readily identifiable Gothic features such as hoodmolds, labels, buttresses and pinnacles are not present. The building is of frame construction and is covered in five inch clapboard which is painted white. The steeply pitched gable roof, steeple and bell tower roofs are covered with pale gray composition shingles. A Gothic nave plan, the church has a narthex, nave, choir and alter.

The church is entered through a pair of double doors in the bell tower. The tiered bell tower with steeple is centered on the front facade. A projection with a sloped roof on the north side of the bell tower leads to the full basement. Both the north and south axial side walls have three equilateral arched windows. The tracery in these windows is repeated in the arched transom over the doors. A red brick chimney rises from the ridgeline of the church.

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Few changes have been made on the interior of the church over the years. The original window surrounds, wainscoting, pews and alter remain intact. The hardwood floor is exposed and in excellent condition. The interior of the church is painted white, as is the pressed tin ceiling. Lights are suspended from the ceiling, although the fixtures have been removed. The original hardware is still on the doors and windows, including the patterned doorknobs.

A wood-frame outhouse (contributing) is located behind the church against the west facade. It is painted white and has a gable roof covered with wooden shingles.

The cemetery west of the church contains the graves of some of the early Norwegian settlers in the area. Approximately 45 stones are located in the burial ground.

**SIGNIFICANCE**      1900-present, religion, architecture

**DATE:** ca. 1900

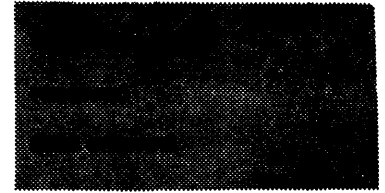
**BUILDER:** Not available

The Golden Valley Norwegian Lutheran Church is significant to Harding County and northwestern South Dakota because it represents a form of vernacular architecture associated with the early Norwegian settlement of this part of the state. The number of Scandinavians who emigrated to western South Dakota is large and the number of Norwegian emigrants was substantially larger than many other ethnic groups. Significantly, few Norwegian sites remain relatively intact in the area thus enhancing the importance of the Golden Valley Norwegian Lutheran Church which was formed when statistically, the organization of Norwegian Lutheran Churches in the United States began a decline.

Architecturally, the church has the only pressed tin ceiling recorded in the area and it retains all of its original wood work.

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The Golden Valley Norwegian Lutheran Church is an outstanding example of a rural Gothic church. The site is complete, with the outhouse and cemetery, as it was originally constructed.

QUADRANGLE NAME Cow Butte ND/SD UTM 13/659660/5083120

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000 ACREAGE About two acres

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The boundaries of the nominated property are considered to be a set of four imaginary lines. The eastern boundary is a line that lies 20 feet from the eastern exterior wall of the church. The northern and southern boundaries lie 45 feet in either direction from the north and south exterior walls and intersects the western boundary which lies 25 feet from the western exterior wall. The site is located in the NE quarter of the SE quarter of Section 12, Township 22 North, Range 9 East in Harding County, South Dakota.

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Golden Valley Norwegian

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