

The Church of the Damascus Road

Echo!

Volume 9
Issue No. 10.2b
April 2007
Fort Dodge & Rockwell City, IA



The Mousetrap

The mouse looked through the crack in the wall to see the farmer and his wife open a package. What food might this contain?" The mouse wondered - he was devastated to discover it was a mousetrap. Retreating to the farmyard, the mouse proclaimed the warning: There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!"

The chicken clucked and scratched, raised her head and said, "Mr. Mouse, I can tell this is a grave concern to you, but it is of no consequence to me. I cannot be bothered by it."

The mouse turned to the pig and told him, "There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!"

The pig sympathized, but said, "I am so very sorry, Mr. Mouse, but there is nothing I can do about it but pray. Be assured you are in my prayers."

The mouse turned to the cow and said, "There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!"

The cow said, "Wow, Mr. Mouse, I'm sorry for you, but it's no skin off my nose."

So, the mouse returned to the house, head down and dejected, to face the farmer's mousetrap alone. That very night a sound was heard throughout the house — like the sound of a mousetrap catching its prey. The farmer's wife rushed to see what was caught. In the darkness, she did not see it was a venomous snake whose tail the trap had caught. The snake bit the farmer's wife.

The farmer rushed her to the hospital, and she returned home with a fever.

Everyone knows you treat a fever with fresh chicken soup, so the farmer took his hatchet to the farmyard for the soup's main ingredient.

But his wife's sickness continued, so friends and neighbors came to sit with her around the clock. To feed them, the farmer butchered the pig. The farmer's wife did not get well; she died.

So many people came for her funeral, the farmer had the cow slaughtered to provide enough meat for all of them.

The mouse looked upon it all from his crack in the wall with great sadness.

So, the next time you hear someone is facing a problem and think it doesn't concern you, remember: *when one of us is threatened, we are all at risk.* We are all involved in this journey called life. We must keep an eye out for one another and make an extra effort to encourage one another. Also remember: each of us is a vital thread in another person's tapestry; our lives are woven together for a reason. One of the best things to hold onto in this world is a friend.

— Author Unknown



Cell Phone

On a Saturday night several weeks ago, this pastor was working late, and decided to call his wife before he left for home. It was about 10:00 PM, but his wife didn't answer the phone. The pastor let the phone ring many times. He thought it was odd that she didn't answer, but decided to wrap up a few things and try again in a few minutes.

When he tried again she answered right away. He asked her why she hadn't answered before, and she said that it hadn't rung at their house. They brushed it off as a fluke and went on their merry ways. The following Monday, the pastor received a call at the church office, which was the phone that he'd used that Saturday night. The man that he spoke with wanted to know why he'd called on Saturday night. The pastor couldn't figure out what the man was talking about. Then the man said, "It rang and rang, but I didn't answer."

The pastor remembered the mishap and apologized for disturbing him, explaining that he'd intended to call his wife. The man said, "That's, OK. Let me tell you my story. You see, I was planning to commit suicide on Saturday night, but before I did, I prayed, 'God if you're there, and you don't want me to do this, give me a sign now.' At that point my phone started to ring. I looked at the caller ID, and it said, 'Almighty God'. I was afraid to answer!"

The reason why it showed on the man's caller ID that the call came from "Almighty God" is because the church that the pastor attends is called Almighty God Tabernacle!!

—Anonymous



Friendship Cake

- 1 Cup Greetings
- 1/2 Cup Smiles
- 1 Large Handshake
- 1 Teaspoon Sympathy
- 2/3 Cup Love
- 2 Cups Hospitality

Cream the greetings and smiles thoroughly. Add handshake separately. Slowly stir in love. Sift sympathy and hospitality and fold in carefully. Bake in a warm heart and serve often.

Inside the Echo!

- Page 2 -Special Brownies
- Page 2 -Lessons from Noah's Ark
- Page 2 -A Note of Thanks
- Page 2 -April Memory Verses
- Page 3 -Pastor Search Committee
- Page 3 -Puzzle
- Page 4 -The 7-Ups
- Page 4 -Alphabet Wisdom



Special Brownies

A father of some teenage children had the family rule that they could not attend “R” rated movies. His three teens wanted to see a particular popular movie that was playing at local theaters and it was rated “R.” The teens interviewed friends and even some members of their family’s church to find out what was so offensive in the movie. The teens made a list of pros and cons about the movie to use to convince their dad that they should be allowed to see it.

The con’s were that it contained ONLY 3 swear words, the ONLY violence was a building exploding (and you can see that on TV all the time, they said), and you actually did not “see” the couple in the movie having sex – it was just implied sex, off camera.

The pro’s were that it was a popular movie – a blockbuster. Everyone was seeing it. If the teens saw the movie then they would not feel left out when their friends were discussing it! The movie contained a good story plot. It had some great adventure and suspense in it. There were some fantastic special effects in this movie. The movie’s stars were some of the most talented actors in Hollywood. It probably would be nominated for several awards. Many of the members of their Christian church had even seen the movie and said it wasn’t “very bad.” Therefore, since there were more pros than cons, the teens said they were asking their father to reconsider his position on just this ONE movie and let them have permission to go see it.

The father looked at the list and thought for a few minutes. He said that he could tell his children had spent some time and thought on this request. He asked if he could have a day to think about it before making his decision.

The teens were thrilled, thinking, “now we’ve got him! Our argument is too good! Dad can’t turn us down!” So, they happily agreed to let him have a day to think about their request.

The next evening, the father called in his teenagers, who were smiling smugly, in the living room. There on the coffee table he had a plate of brownies. The teens were puzzled. The father told his children he had thought about their request and decided that if they would eat a brownie then he would let them go to the movie. But just like the movie, the brownies had pros and cons.

The pros were that they were made with the finest chocolate and other good ingredients. The added special effect of yummy walnuts in them. The brownies were moist and fresh with wonderful chocolate frosting on top. He had made these fantastic brownies using an award-winning recipe. And best of all, the brownies had been made lovingly by the hand of their own father.

The brownies had only one con. He had included a little bit of a special ingredient. The brownies also contained just a little bit of dog poop. But he had mixed the dough well – they probably would not even be able to taste the dog poop, and he had baked it at 350 degrees, so any bacteria or germs from the dog poop had probably been destroyed.

Therefore, if any of his children could stand to eat the brownies which included just a “little bit of crap” and not be affected by it, then he knew they would also be able to see the movie with “just a little bit of smut” and not be effected.

Of course, none of the teens would eat the brownies, and the smug smiles had left their faces. Only dad was smiling smugly as they left the room.

Now when his teenagers ask permission to do something he is opposed to, the father just asks, “would you like me to whip up a batch of my special brownies?”

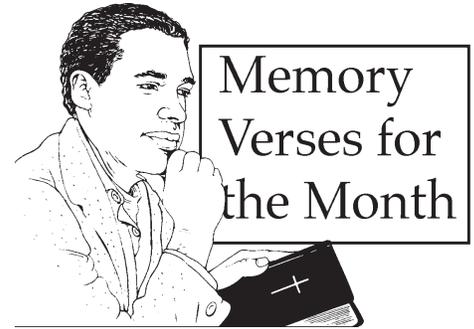
—Anonymous



Lessons learned from Noah’s Ark

1. Don’t miss the boat.
2. Remember that we are all in the same boat.
3. Plan ahead. It wasn’t raining when Noah built the Ark.
4. Stay fit. When you are 600 years old someone may ask you to do something really big.
5. Don’t listen to critics; just get on with that job that needs to be done.
6. Build your future on higher ground.
7. For safety’s sake, travel in pairs.
8. Speed isn’t always an advantage. The snails were on board with the Cheetahs.
9. When you’re stressed, float awhile.
10. Remember the ark was built by amateurs; the Titanic by professionals.
11. No matter the storm, God always has a rainbow waiting.

—Anonymous



Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.

(Hebrews 11:1)

Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong.

(1 Corinthians 16:13)

We live by faith, not by sight.

(2 Corinthians 5:7)

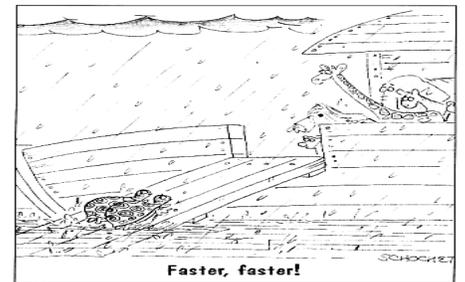
All the words are true; all your righteous laws are eternal.

(Psalm 119:160)



The editor of this newsletter would like to thank all of the inmates at FDCF and NCCF for their contributions of written work and artwork. It is very much appreciated. Please keep them coming in. This is your paper and we would like to have more of your works to include.

Thank you,
Kyle McMenamin, Editor



The Church of the Damascus Road Echo!

Issue 10.2b

April 2007

An official publication of The Church of the Damascus Road, a Christian Community of Reconciliation, serving the inmate population of the correctional facilities at Rockwell City and Fort Dodge, Iowa.
Rev. Carroll Lang, Pastor
Kyle W. McMenamin, Editor

Pastor Search Committee

In our search for a suitable pastor the following scratch sheet was developed for your perusal. Of the candidates investigated by the committee, only one was found to have the necessary qualities. The list contains the names of the candidates and comments on each, should you be interested in investigating them further for future pastoral placements.

- Noah: He has 120 years of preaching experience, but no converts.
- Moses: He stutters; and his former congregation says he loses his temper over trivial things.
- Abraham: He took off to Egypt during hard times. We heard that he got into trouble with the authorities and then tried to lie his way out.
- David: He is an unacceptable moral character. He might have been considered for minister of music had he not 'fallen'.
- Solomon: He has a reputation for wisdom but fails to practice what he preaches.
- Elijah: He proved to be inconsistent; and is known to fold under pressure.
- Hosea: His family life is in a shambles. Divorced, and remarried to a prostitute.
- Jeremiah: He is too emotional, alarmist; some say a real 'pain in the neck'.
- Amos: Comes from a farming background. Better off picking figs.
- John: He says he is a Baptist but lacks tact and dresses like a hippie. Would not feel comfortable at a church potluck supper.
- Peter: Has a bad temper, and was heard to have even denied Christ publicly.
- Paul: We found him to lack tact. He is too harsh. His appearance is contemptible, and he preaches far too long.
- Timothy: He has potential, but is much too young for the position.
- Jesus: He tends to offend church members with his preaching, especially Bible scholars. He is also too controversial. He even offended the search committee with his pointed questions.
- Judas: He seemed to be very practical, co-operative, good with money, cares for the poor, and dresses well. We all agreed that he is just the man we are looking for to fill the vacancy as our Senior Pastor.



The Angel's Message

When Mary and Mary Magdalene went to Jesus' tomb, an angel suddenly appeared before them! He told them not to be afraid and gave them a message for Jesus' disciples.

Use the code to read the message from Matthew 28:7 (NIV).

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|----|---|----|---|----|---|----|---|----|---|
| K1 | G | S2 | P | H3 | F | R4 | I | C5 | E | Y6 | L |
| W | N | M | D | O | U | Z | A | Q | T | B | J |

“ 6

1 3 5 3 4 5 1 6 6 4 1 2

5 5 6 6 3 4 2

2 4 2 5 4 2 6 5 2 : 3 5

3 4 2 4 4 2 5 1 3 4 3 2

6 3 6 2 6 4 2 4 1 2

4 2 1 3 4 1 1 4 3 6 4 2

3 3 6 3 3 4 1 5 3

1 4 6 4 6 5 5 5 3 6 4 6

6 3 3 1 4 6 6 2 6 5 3 4 2 ”

Thank you for all you have done in assisting us with our pastoral search.

The Pastoral Search Committee.
 — Mike Harnois

Answer: "Go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.'"



The 7-Ups

1. Wake Up!

Decide to have a good day. "This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it." Psalms 118:24

2. Dress Up!

The best way to dress up is to put on a smile. A smile is an inexpensive way to improve your looks. "The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." 1 Samuel 16:7

3. Shut Up!

Say nice things and learn to listen. God gave us two ears and one mouth, so He must have meant for us to do twice as much listening as talking. "He who guards his lips guards his soul." Proverbs 13:3

4. Stand Up!

...for what you believe in. Stand for something or you will fall for anything. "Let us not be weary in doing good; for at the proper time, we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good..." Galatians 6:9-10

5. Look Up!

...to the Lord. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Philippians 4:13

6. Reach Up!

...for something higher. "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not unto your own understanding. In all your ways, acknowledge Him, and He will direct your path." Proverbs 3:5-6

7. Lift Up!

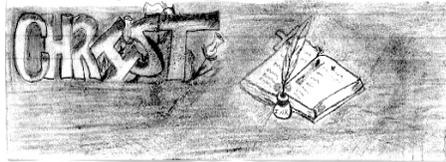
...your prayers. "Do not worry about anything; instead, PRAY ABOUT EVERYTHING." Philippians 4:6

—Via E-Mail



Articles invited

The editor of this newsletter is inviting ALL READERS to contribute articles, poetry, art work, and opinions for the newsletter. So don't be bashful.



There

I can't see you, but I know you're there
Laying in the tall grass like a hunting lion
I can't see you, but I know you're there

In this life of despair,
this is your game I play that is not fair.
I can't see you, but I know you're there
I am waiting for your help,
It seems you're never there.

I can't see you, but I know you're there
In my darkest hour, I cried for hours,
It seems you didn't care.

I can't see you, but I know you're there.
I was blind, but now I see you fine.
You were just waiting and waiting
For your time from right over there.

—Will Schultz 2005

Alphabet Wisdom

Although things are not perfect;
Because of trials or pain;
Continue in thanksgiving;
Do not begin to blame;
Even when the times are hard;
Fierce winds are bound to blow;
God is forever able;
Hold on to what you know;
Imagine life without His love;
Joy would cease to be;
Keep thanking Him for all the things;
Love imparts to thee;
Move out of "Camp Complaining":
No weapon that is known
On earth can yield the power
Praise can do alone;
Quit looking at the future;
Redeem the time at hand;
Start every day with worship
To "thank" is a command;
Until we see Him coming
Victorious in the sky;
We'll run the race with gratitude;
Xalting God most high;
Yes, there'll be good times & yes some will
be bad, but...
Zion waits in glory, where no one is ever sad!
—Unknown

Worship & Bible Study

FDCF Fort Dodge

7:00pm Wednesdays Holy Communion
6:30pm Fridays Prayer & Bible Study

FDCF Chapel Hours

2:30pm-4:00pm Wednesday
1:00pm-2:00pm Friday
2:30pm-4:00pm Friday

NCCF Rockwell City

6:30pm Tuesdays Prayer & Bible Study
6:30pm Thursdays..... Holy Communion

A Letter from Home

When most of us leave home, we usually call or send a letter to those we love the most. I believe that if our loved ones who've gone on to be with Jesus could write such a letter today, this is what it might say; I had a safe trip; the angels carried me safely to father Abraham's bosom. Oh, the thrill I felt when I met the One who died for me. And no matter what you've heard, no words could describe the Glory that surrounds Him. I am satisfied here, every need's been supplied. Just wait'll you see my brand new home. I'm satisfied because there is no sin here, no murders, no divorce, no abortions. No need to even have locks on the doors. Perfect peace reigns here. I'm satisfied because there's no sickness. Why, I've never felt better in my life. I have a new body just like Jesus.

I wish you could hear the singing. David played his harp and a great crowd gathered by the river of life and sang a new song. Of course, the angels couldn't sing that song, but they sure were all listening.

It's really wonderful here because there are no strangers, everyone knows me by name. Why, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego showed me around. Seems like I've been here forever.

The weather's great; there's a cool breeze blowin' all the time. And you know, one of the nicest things, night or darkness never come. It's light here all the time, for Jesus himself is the light of the city.

Please remember I'm safe, satisfied, and I'm not sick anymore. There'll be no need for me to write again, because I was told today that nothing here ever changes. In closing, the only thing that'd make this wonderful place more complete, is for all of my family and friends to join me in heaven.

—Author Unknown



Check Them Out!

The Church of the Damascus Road Librarians are inviting you to come to the chapel (MPR 23), and "check out" the books, tapes and compact discs in our library! There are many genres of books to choose from! We hope to see you there!