

The Church of the Damascus Road Echo!

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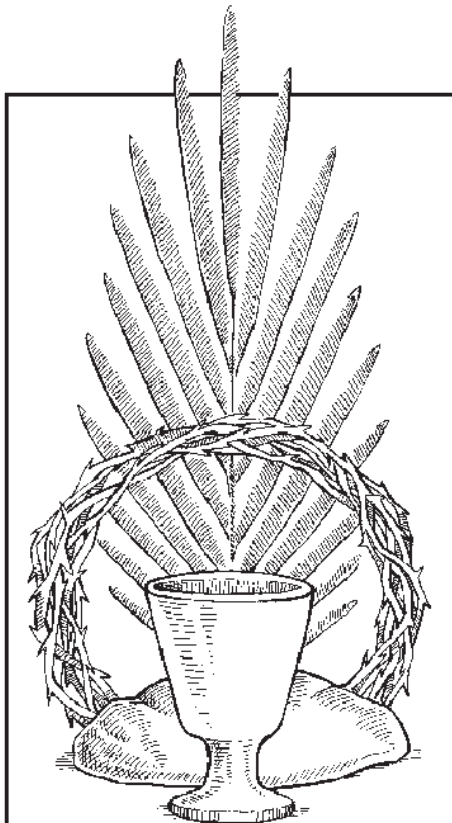
What Is Lent, Anyway?

The Dictionary defines it this way: Lent, noun. the period preceding Easter that in the Christian Church is devoted to fasting, abstinence, and penitence in commemoration of Christ's fasting in the wilderness. In the Western Church it runs from Ash Wednesday to Holy Saturday and so includes forty weekdays, but not Sundays. ORIGIN Old English lencten [spring, Lent,] of Germanic origin, related to long (perhaps with reference to the lengthening of the day in spring).

In worship during this time from February 17 through April 3, the songs and hymns that contain the word 'Alleluia' are not sung. Alabare is an Alleluia word, so another hymn will be substituted.

It is also a time to ponder the meaning of Christ's sacrifice for you and to meditate on your relationship with Christ and what his sacrifice means to you. Isaisah's words help:

Is. 53: ¹Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? ²He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. ³He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. ⁴Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. ⁵But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. ⁶We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. ⁷He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. ⁸By oppression and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken. ⁹He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. ¹⁰Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand. ¹¹After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light [of life] and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. ¹²Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.



Thoughts ON LENT

Death

Ithink one thing every human has in common is death. That's not meant to be a downhearted statement, but it's a fact that from the time we're born we are dying. Everyone has one's own separate clock, ticking away hour by hour, day after day and year after year. For some the end comes quicker than others.

Even modern medicine only prolongs the ultimate demise. We have all lost someone who we dearly loved, whether it be a parent, son or daughter, grandparent, or perhaps a close friend. We've all been in those shoes.

What will tomorrow bring? Will I be next, or will it be you? Why worry about such a thought? Are you scared of what lies next? Why? It says in Romans 6:8-11: "We died with Christ. So we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ was raised from the dead and will never die again. Death doesn't control him anymore. When he died, he died once and for all time as far as sin is concerned. Now that he lives, he lives as far as God is concerned. In the same way, consider yourselves to be dead as far as sin is concerned. Now that you believe in Christ Jesus, consider yourselves to be alive as far as God is concerned."

So, basically think of it like this: we are all dead because of sin, even though we still have a breath, we are dead because of the sin of the world. Now, taking that into consideration, through believing in Christ Jesus, God considers us alive.

If we do not give ourselves to God and submit 100% of our lives to Him, we will not only be dead now, but we will have eternal death and damnation. If that's not incentive alone, I don't know what is. Death is only scary if you know you're going to die without Christ.

—Paul Abbott

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North Carolina Farm Kid in the Army

Dear Ma and Pa,

I am well. Hope you are. Tell Brother Walt and Brother Elmer the Army beats working for old man Minch by a mile. Tell them to join up quick before all of the places are filled. I was restless at first because you got to stay in bed till nearly 6 a.m. But I am getting so I like to sleep late.

Tell Walt and Elmer all you do before breakfast is smooth your cot, and shine some things. No hogs to slop, feed to pitch, mash to mix, wood to split, fire to lay. Practically nothing. Men got to shave but it is not so bad, there's warm water. Breakfast is strong on trimmings like fruit juice, cereal, eggs, bacon, etc., but kind of weak on chops, potatoes, ham, steak, fried eggplant, pie and other regular food, but tell Walt and Elmer you can always sit by the two city boys that live on coffee. Their food, plus yours, holds you until noon when you get fed again. It's no wonder these city boys can't walk much.

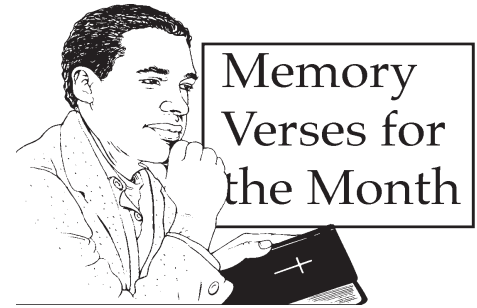
We go on 'route marches,' which the platoon sergeant says are long walks to harden us. If he thinks so, it's not my place to tell him different. A 'route march' is about as far as to our mailbox at home. Then the city guys get sore feet and we all ride back in trucks.

The sergeant is like a school teacher. He nags a lot. The Captain is like the school board. Majors and colonels just ride around and frown. They don't bother you none.

This next will kill Walt and Elmer with laughing. I keep getting medals for shooting. I don't know why. The bulls-eye is near as big as a chipmunk head and don't move, and it ain't shooting at you like the Higgett boys at home. All you got to do is lie there all comfortable and hit it. You don't even load your own cartridges. They come in boxes. Then we have what they call hand-to-hand combat training. You get to wrestle with them city boys. I have to be real careful though, they break real easy. It ain't like fighting with that ole bull at home. I'm about the best they got in this except for that Tug Jordan from over in Silver Lake. I only beat him once. He joined up the same time as me, but I'm only 5'6" and 130 pounds and he's 6'8" and near 300 pounds dry.

Be sure to tell Walt and Elmer to hurry and join before other fellers get onto this setup and come stampeding in.

Your loving daughter, Alice



Memory Verses for the Month

Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous fall (Psalm 55:22).

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest (Matthew 11:28).

The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble (Psalm 9:9). When we are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world (1 Corinthians 11:32).

The Three Rs

Follow the three Rs:
 Respect for self;
 Respect for others; and
 Responsibility for your actions.



Story Tellers

Story Tellers is the third Friday of every month at FDCF and the third Saturday at NCCF unless a scheduling problem arises. You can read a book to your child on tape, and then send the book and audio cassette tape home for your child to listen to you read to them, and read along with you. The tape, and book are free to you. You just pay regular mail home to your child, or, at FDCF, you can send them out on a visit like regular property through R&D. Sign up with Pastor Stone, or at our regular worship service, or with any Inside Church Council member.

Your Artwork Could be Here

We welcome art work, just turn it in to Pastor Stone. It will be returned after scanning.

Inmate Artwork



Artists Unknown



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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. Paul E. Stone, Pastor
 Rev. Carroll Lang, Editor

Major Recall Notice

The Maker of all human beings (GOD) is recalling all units manufactured, regardless of make or year, due to a serious defect in the primary and central component of the heart. This is due to a malfunction in the original prototype units code named Adam and Eve, resulting in the reproduction of the same defect in all subsequent units. This defect has been technically termed "Sub-sequential Internal Non-Morality," or more commonly known as S.I.N., as it is primarily expressed. Some of the symptoms include:

- Loss of direction
- Foul vocal emissions
- Amnesia of origin
- Lack of peace and joy
- Selfish or violent behavior
- Depression or confusion in the mental component
- Fearfulness
- Idolatry
- Rebellion

The Manufacturer, who is neither liable nor at fault for this defect, is providing factory-authorized repair and service free of charge to correct this defect. The Repair Technician, JESUS, has most generously offered to bear the entire burden of the staggering cost of these repairs. There is no additional fee required. The number to call for repair in all areas is: P-R-A-Y-E-R.

Once connected, please upload your burden of SIN through the REPENTANCE procedure. Next, download ATONEMENT from the Repair Technician, Jesus, into the heart component.

No matter how big or small the SIN defect is, Jesus will replace it with:

- Love
- Peace
- Kindness
- Faithfulness
- Self control
- Joy
- Patience
- Goodness
- Gentleness

Please see the operating manual, the B.I.B.L.E. (Believers' Instructions Before Leaving Earth) for further details on the use of these fixes.

WARNING: Continuing to operate the human being unit without correction voids any manufacturer warranties, exposing the unit to dangers and problems too numerous to list and will result in the human unit being permanently impounded. For free emergency service, call on Jesus.

DANGER: The human being units not responding to this recall action will have to be scrapped in the furnace. The SIN defect will not be permitted to enter Heaven so as to prevent contamination of that facility. Thank you for your attention!

- GOD

P.S. Please assist where possible by notifying others of this important recall notice, and you may contact the Father any time by 'Knee mail'.



Our first love

In Deuteronomy 10:12 (NIV), Israel is asked a question that's also for us to answer: "What does the LORD your God ask of you?"

To find the answer, write the words from the puzzle pieces on the matching shapes in the completed heart.

... your heart and with all your soul ..."

Answer:
"...fear the LORD ..., to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD
your God with all ..."



Big Wheel Angels

In September 1960, I woke up one morning with six hungry babies and just 75 cents in my pocket. Their father was gone. The boys ranged from three months to seven years; their sister was two. Their Dad had never been much more than a presence they feared. Whenever they heard his tires crunch on the gravel driveway they would scramble to hide under their beds. He did manage to leave \$15 a week to buy groceries. Now that he had decided to leave, there would be no more beatings, but no food either.

If there was a welfare system in effect in the south at that time, I certainly knew nothing about it. I scrubbed the kids until they looked brand new and then put on my best homemade dress, loaded them into the rusty old 51 Chevy and drove off to find a job. The seven of us went to every factory, store and restaurant in our small town. No luck.

The kids stayed crammed into the car and tried to be quiet while I tried to convince whoever would listen that I was willing to learn or do anything. I had to have a job. Still no luck.

The last place we went to, just a few miles out of town, was an old Root Beer Barrel drive-in that had been converted to a truck stop. It was called the Big Wheel.

An old lady named Granny owned the place and she peeked out of the window from time to time at all those kids. She needed someone on the graveyard shift, 11 at night until seven in the morning. She paid 65 cents an hour, and I could start that night.

I raced home and called the teenager down the street that baby-sat for people. I bargained with her to come and sleep on my sofa for a dollar a night. She could arrive with her pajamas on and the kids would already be asleep. This seemed like a good arrangement to her, so we made a deal.

That night when the little ones and I knelt to say our prayers, we all thanked God for finding Mommy a job. And so I started at the Big Wheel. When I got home in the mornings I woke the baby-sitter up and sent her home with one dollar of my tip money—fully half of what I averaged every night.

As the weeks went by, heating bills added a strain to my meager wage. The tires on the old Chevy had the consistency of penny balloons and began to leak. I had to fill them with air on the way to work and again every morning before I could go home. One bleak fall morning, I dragged myself to the car to go home and found four tires in the back seat. New tires! There was no note, no nothing, just those beautiful brand new tires. Had angels taken up residence here? I wondered. I made a deal with the local service station. In exchange for his mounting the new tires, I would clean up his office. I remember it took me a lot longer to scrub his floor than it did for him to do the tires.

I was now working six nights instead of five and it still wasn't enough. Christmas was coming and I knew there would be no money for toys for the kids. I found a can of red paint and started repairing and painting some old toys. Then I hid them in the basement so there would be something for Santa to deliver on Christmas morning. Clothes were a worry, too. I was sewing patches on top of patches on the boys pants and soon they would be too far gone to repair.

On Christmas Eve the usual customers were drinking coffee in the Big Wheel. There were the truckers, Les, Frank, and Jim, and a state trooper named Joe. A few musicians were hanging around after a gig at the Legion and were dropping nickels in the pinball machine. The regulars all just sat around and talked through the wee hours of the morning and then left to get home before the sun came up.

When it was time for me to go home at seven o'clock on Christmas morning, to my amazement, my old battered Chevy was filled full to the top with boxes of all shapes and sizes. I quickly opened the driver's side door, crawled inside and knelt in the front facing the back seat. Reaching back, I pulled off the lid of the top box. Inside was whole case of little blue jeans, sizes 2-10! I looked inside another box—it was full of shirts to go with the jeans. Then I peeked inside some of the other boxes. There was candy and nuts and bananas and bags of groceries. There was an enormous ham for baking, and canned vegetables and potatoes. There was pudding and Jell-O and cookies, pie filling and flour. There was a whole bag of laundry supplies and cleaning items. And there were five toy trucks and one beautiful little doll.

As I drove back through empty streets as the sun slowly rose on the most amazing Christmas Day of my life, I was sobbing with gratitude. And I will never forget the joy on the faces of my little ones that precious morning. Yes, there were angels in that long-ago December. And they all hung out at the Big Wheel truck stop.

—Author Unknown

Worship Opportunities

Worship & Bible Study

FDCF Fort Dodge

6:30pm WednesdaysHoly Communion
6:30pm Fridays Prayer & Bible Study

Pastor Contact Hours

2:00pm - Count Wednesday
2:00pm - Count Friday

NCCF Rockwell City

6:30pm Tuesdays Prayer & Bible Study
6:30pm ThursdaysHoly Communion

Pastor Contact Hours

2:00pm - Count Tuesday
2:00pm - Count Thursday

Just a Thought

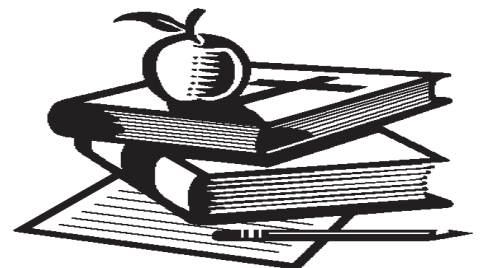
I don't know why some people change churches; what difference does it make which one you stay home from?

People are funny; they want the front of the bus, the middle of the road, and the back of the church.



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. Give all your newsletter submissions to Pastor Stone.



Check Them Out!

The Church of the Damascus Road Librarians are inviting you to come to the chapel (MPR 23 in FDCF H Building; Treatment Center Room A in NCCF), 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!