

The Church of the Damascus Road Echo!

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Fort Dodge & Rockwell City, IA

Foundation

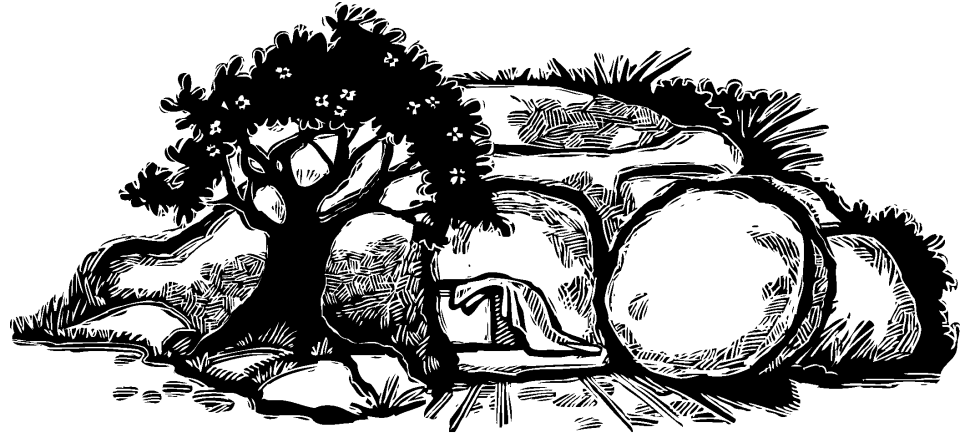
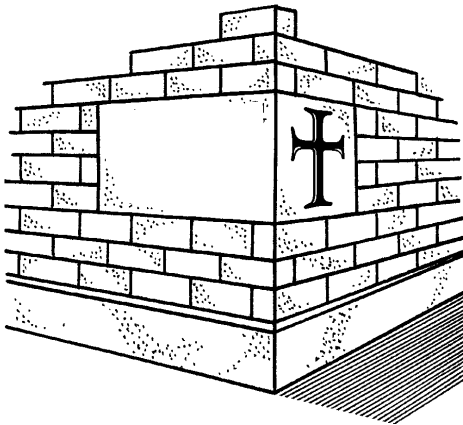
Think about this for a moment: you are going to build a house for yourself and your family. Say you build something fantastic, something costly, sparing no expense, meticulous in every detail. But you put it up on a sandy foundation. Sooner or later that house is going to give way when a little rain accumulates, right?

Well, when we think our lives are just right and fine and we pay so much attention to things that don't really matter, whether it be belongings, money, or even friends, but we leave out the sturdy foundation, then when a little misfortune or trouble comes our way, we collapse and crumble to the earth.

We must lay a foundation on God. Then when trouble finds its way into our lives we may hurt and we may stumble. But we will stand and prevail.

One of my favorite passages is Psalm 18:1-3, "I love you, O LORD, my strength. ²The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge. He is my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. ³I call to the LORD, who is worthy of praise, and I am saved from my enemies."

—Paul Abbott



The Lord is Risen!

What Is Easter, Really?

In the dictionary we read: *Easter* *lĕstər* | *noun* — the most important and oldest festival of the Christian Church, celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ and held (in the Western Church) between March 21 and April 25, on the first Sunday after the first full moon following the northern spring equinox. • the period in which this occurs, esp. the weekend from Good Friday to Easter Monday.

ORIGIN Old English *ĕastre*; of Germanic origin and related to German *Ostern* and *east*. According to Bede the word is derived from *Ēastre*, the name of a goddess associated with spring.

In the early days of the Christian Church following the awesome news that Jesus had been raised from the dead, **that exciting news** became the main reason for people to believe that Jesus is God's begotten, the savior of humankind from the judgement of death because of our sins. It was the major thrust of the early gospels. In fact, the narrative of the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus occupies almost half of each of the gospel accounts, two of which gospels don't even mention the details of his birth, which wasn't observed until sometime later in the church's history.

The time of Easter is determined by the moon and the start of Spring. The lengthening of the day and warming of the weather combine to accent the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. The actual time of his trial and crucifixion was at the time of the Jewish Passover on the tenth day of the month of Nisan, the first month of the Jewish year. Exodus 12 gives the details.

The sadness of their Lord's death is replaced by great, inexpressible joy, and all the things that Jesus told them before he died, came flooding back to them, taking on new meaning. Jesus did not lead them out of Roman rule, but he did lead them out of sin's and death's rule.

Easter's message of our deliverance from sin and death is central to our Christian faith and the center of our message to the world around us. It's something worth celebrating!

Inside the Echo!

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Hallelujah

Divine Intervention

On Sunday afternoon September 25, 2005, I had awakened from a nap not feeling totally like me at all. I was in pain and this pain was in my chest, on the right side. This pain was on a scale from 1-10, with 10 being the most intense, a 12. Yes, that severe. I got up and began to dress for a visit to Health Services. I began to wonder what could have brought this pain and why. I remember I began to thank God for being alive (not necessarily well though), but I was in the land of the living. After completing a kite for Health Services, it was not long before an escort team arrived to take me to Health Services. Upon being examined by the nurse, it was decided that I was having a heart attack. This brought great joy to my ears, for the previous week was filled with heart tests and blood samples for my abnormalities. Friday, September 23, 2005, I had received a form from Health Services stating that my lab results were abnormal. Rather than wait for an explanation from the doctor, at pill line the next morning, armed with my lab results, anger and a bad attitude, I stormed over to Health services. During my emotional fog, I asked a nurse about my results, I also asked, am I going to die? She replied, yes! Whether she heard my question clearly, or correctly, I did not know. She then informed me if I sought more information, I could kite them. I decided my anger should be directed toward the doctor, not understanding there was a procedure to follow, to stop the medication. I went to pill line that evening armed with a kite, a letter, and the medication I decided was no longer needed, since I was going to die anyway. I laid these items on the counter in pill line, and the nurse informed me that she could not accept them. I left them there and kept walking, all the while ignoring the voices that called my name in hopes of me returning to retrieve the medication. That episode landed me in the hole for 15 days.

On Monday, September 26, 2005, after eating lunch, I began to prepare myself for another trip to Health Services. On this afternoon, the pain was on my entire right side of the body, as if I had a stroke. I could not fill out a kite this time for the pain was too great. I informed an officer of my intense pain who in turn notified Health Services. I knew right away this was a major problem as far as my health was concerned. After dressing, as best as I could, without much delay, the escorts arrived for me. I dared not take the chance in walking this time, I was escorted in a wheel chair for safety reasons. Upon arriving at Health services, the doctor began examining me. After much examination, he admitted to being concerned about my pain, which seemed to have nothing to do with my medication. There was more examining and conversation. I hammered the doctor about my lab results from the previous week. I told him the blood pressure pills don't work and that I'm returning them. I did not inform him that a nurse had spoken with me and assured me that the medication prescribed to me is a medicine that lowers blood pressure by going through the heart. The doctor simply picked up the pill and asked, "What is this?" I said, "You gave it to me, don't you know?" He stated, "What did I tell you it was for?" I answered, "For blood pressure." He stated, "It's bad for blood pressure, but works through the heart when elevated triglycerides and cholesterol are present." The answer to my abnormal lab results. I could have a stroke and die. The fat and cholesterol around the heart prevent proper blood flow to the heart and the brain. Having learned that, it was also time to meet adversity. Three facts control me now. These facts

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Your Artwork Could be Here

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

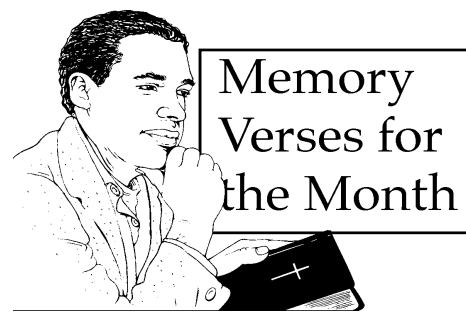
Inmate Artwork



J.H., FDCF 2002



**MY
LORD
AND
MY
GOD!**



Memory Verses for the Month

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).



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.

The Three Rs

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

The Church of the
Damascus Road
Echo!

Issue 13.2b

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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

Autobiography

In Five Short Chapters

Chapter 1

I walk down the street.
 There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
 I fall in.
 I am lost...I am hopeless.
 It isn't my fault.
 It takes forever to find a way out.

Chapter 2

I walk down the same street.
 There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
 I pretend that I don't see it.
 I fall in again.
 I can't believe I am in this same place.
 But it isn't my fault.
 It still takes a long time to get out.

Chapter 3

I walk down the same street.
 There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
 I see it there.
 I still fall in...It's a habit...but,
 My eyes are open.
 I know where I am.
 It is my fault.
 I get out immediately.

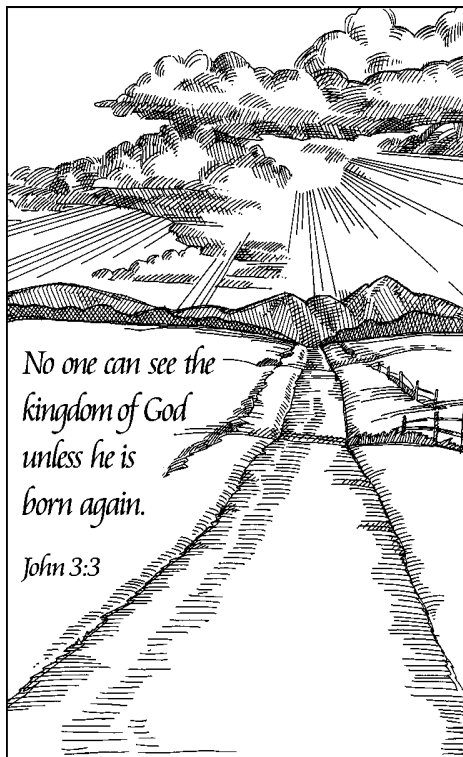
Chapter 4

I walk down the same street.
 There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
 I walk around it.

Chapter 5

I walk down another street.
 By Portia Nelson

Are you on the right road?



SYMBOL OF SACRIFICE

At this time of the year, we see many crosses draped in purple, black or white cloth. They remind us of the loving sacrifice Jesus made for us – and that he rose again.

Use the code in the big cross to complete 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, NIV.

“

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Answer: Christ died for our sins ... he was buried ... he was raised on the third day.

Continued from page two

are: 1. I am a black man, 2. I have high blood pressure, and 3. I am over forty and not only require medication, but quite possibly am going to need medication for the rest of my life. It doesn't matter that I don't like the facts, the only thing now is to try and gain an advantage so I can live. After more examination and consultation it was decided that my gall bladder was the source of my numbing pain to the right side of my body. Calls were made to the hospital and an ambulance was dispatched. Shortly after 6:00pm on Monday, September 26, 2005, I began the 180 miles journey by ambulance with an IV in my arm. Flying down the highway at 85mph with the lights on, heading to emergency and surgery to remove my gall bladder. The two young men responsible for my safe arrival were Kevin and James. Kevin was the driver, and James was the Emergency Medical Technician who made me as comfortable as possible the entire trip. Of course, there was an officer on board and one behind in a separate vehicle. This is prison and procedure must be followed. Upon arriving in Iowa City at the University Hospital, I thanked Kevin and James for their professionalism and an enjoyable ride (if one can consider a 180 mile journey by ambulance enjoyable). It speaks more to Kevin and James' professionalism.

Once inside the hospital, and securely in the Emergency Room Triage, tests for blood, urine, and the heart were done. I spoke with at least three doctors. My rectum was also probed to check for blood in the feces. There was none. I was more grateful than the doctor because it meant he did not have to recheck. The nurse was very kind and professional, but also clever, for about the time I felt the pain subside, it was then that I discovered the doctor had ordered morphine for my pain. It was somehow injected into the IV and into me. I felt pain, nausea, warmth, and then comfort. I had never felt all these before and to have it all end in comfort, that was some awesome feeling.

It was about this time that I began to worry. Having never had surgery before, being so far from home, and no one knew or even had a clue as to what happened and what was about to happen. The idea of having any part of my body removed terrified me. The later it got in the night, the more terrified I became. After a moment of terror, I felt a complete calmness in me. No, this was not the morphine, but a calmness that said, "You have overcome." This feeling was confident, strong and victorious. It was no longer the spirit of fear that tormented and viciously tortured me, but the spirit of peace (a peace I've never known). I began to thank my God for life, and pain. I thanked him for my daughter. Maybe I don't have a son, but at least I am not childless. I began to be thankful for the way things are in my life, knowing that they could always be worse. But God has a divine plan for my life. Maybe all the pieces don't form the puzzle now, but all the pieces do fit into the Divine design for my life. After much examination and study it was decided that emergency gall bladder surgery was in fact pancreatitis. It was decided however to allow the condition to heal without performing major surgery. The real truth is that God healed me. For if he had not, and an emergency constituted major surgery, my gall bladder and pancreas would have been removed. Remember it was decided that emergency surgery was needed to remove the gall bladder. It shifted from the gall bladder to the pancreas, but still no surgery. Only God can perform surgery and use no anesthesia or leave any scars. You may not believe my report, but proof exists at Iowa City University Hospitals Emergency Triage, proof exists in the medical documents within this facility. Also, Kevin and James with Fraser Ambulance know they drove me to Iowa City and in what condition. The officers who were at all times professional and yet compassionate know the story. I need not mention their names, I will only say CO. The entire trip back, which took three hours, I just kept thanking the Lord for all of His benefits towards me.

Upon arrival back to the institution, I had to go to Health Services. It was at this time that I saw the nurse with whom the misunderstanding took place. I did talk to her and apologized for any miscommunication or misunderstanding. For the first time I looked into her eyes and felt her deep sincerity and genuine concern for people who suffer. It was at that moment that I realized and knew with absolute certainty that she had not understood my question that morning. How could she when my voice was not clear but sounded muffled and I was angry that morning. I am fully persuaded that if I were going to die, and she knew it, I do not believe she would have beset me with such a heavy burden. I felt better after I apologized. I believe God healed me not only to tell others, but to also right a wrong. She has forgiven me and has since come and taken my vitals. I always give her eye contact and speak clearly with her. She does the same for me. I don't know how many souls I can win for Christ, but I must tell others about the Divine Intervention in my life. I am proof that all goodbyes don't necessarily mean gone. In my weakness, God's strength was made perfect. I am on a specific diet to help regulate my blood pressure. I believe God works through doctors and doctor Miller is an instrument of God, distributing much needed medical attention to me that I would not otherwise seek. The nursing staff has treated me quite wonderfully. They are professional. I am grateful for my Divine Intervention. You may not require surgery or even medication, but you must recognize and acknowledge the power of a supreme being that can only be described as Divine.

Kenneth Crawford #6370765, Fort Dodge Correctional Facility
P.S. The sun must shine. To see it, you must make it through the night.



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

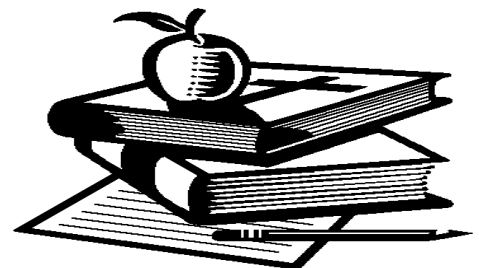
I don't know why some people change churches; what difference does it make which one you stay home from?

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!