

# The Church of the Damascus Road

# Flash!

Volume 5  
Issue No. 6  
December 2002  
Fort Dodge & Rockwell City, IA

## Crop Walk 2002

### Walking for others

On October 5th and 6th the inmates of Rockwell City and Fort Dodge walked in the annual CROP Walk, sponsored by Church World Service. They walked because the hungry of the world walk as far as ten miles just to get water for their families. By walking, the inmates show their solidarity with those who walk and build community with each other as well.

Inmates also donated to help alleviate hunger. A total of \$409.08 was donated; \$149.08 was donated by inmates in Fort Dodge and Rockwell City, and some of the inmates wrote home and several families also helped out by sending a total of \$250 in contributions to the Church of the Damascus Road.

The generosity of inmates and their families and friends is awesome! Thank you to all who contributed to the CROP Walk.

— Editor



The inmates in Rockwell City who walked for the hungry.



Cold or tired yet they still walk.



FDCF inmates stayed together in groups.



NCCF Walkers left Pastor Lang behind.

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The Fort Dodge inmates who walked.



## The Right Solution

Our natural bent, as humans, is to turn in every direction except God when we need help. We call our friends. We talk to our associates at work. We spend hundreds of dollars on psychiatrists. We do everything we can, by human means, to solve our problems. Rare is the individual who will drop to his knees the moment a problem occurs. That's usually where we go when all else fails. God is normally our last resort. The next time you have a problem, or need to make a decision, or need comforting, or anything else in your life, turn to God first. Let Him be your solution, your comforter, your rescuer, your deliverer. Let Him be your salvation- not only for all eternity, but for every moment of your life.

—Bonnie Ricks

## Prisoners Prayer

'Tis night time, dear Lord.  
I bow down my head  
humbly kneeling  
beside my bed.

Praise be to Jesus!  
Thanks to your love  
abundantly given  
from heaven above.

Watch over my family  
for I am not there.  
Tell them I love them,  
tell them I care.

I miss them so much  
it breaks my heart  
every minute  
that we are apart.

I beseech you, Jesus,  
take care of my wife  
and my sweet children  
through every day strife.

When it is your will  
and my time is through,  
as always before,  
I will praise you!  
Amen

—Robert L. Johnson II

## For the Brethren

May the music of the heavens,  
dance around us in the air;  
May the peace of God the father,  
keep our heart and soul for care.  
May each step that we are taking  
Be paved with great success;  
And behind each door we open,  
There be love and happiness,

May the gift of true contentment,  
Glow like sunlight on our face;  
May the angels sing into our life,  
a song of God's own grace.  
And everywhere we travel,  
each path that we walk on;  
May the father's love shine forth from us,  
In each note of every song.

May angels keep guard over us,  
As we walk along life's way,  
and may our lives be truly blessed,  
as we start each brand new day.

—Joseph P. Stuart



## Holy Baptism

FDCF November 20, 2002  
Larry Gillam  
Roberto Menjivar  
Theodore Scott

## Glorifying God

Each and every thing that Jesus Christ did, he did so that the Father would be glorified. As with everything else he did, he was giving us a living illustration of how we are to live. Through his every action and word, he showed us what our entire purpose and our entire motivation must be here on earth: to glorify the Father. When we shift our motives, he shifts into high gear. Not only will he answer our prayers, but he will usually send us answers that are much better than what we thought we wanted. Pray that you will have the right motive for your prayers.

— Bonnie Ricks

## Ponder This:

The universe is one of God's thoughts.

— Johann Schiller



## Bless You!

Your poems were all so *awesome!* Continue with your "blessings" and keep up the good work.

— Linn Essing, Sac City, IA

The Church of the  
**Damascus Road**  
*Flash!*

Volume 5.6

December 2002

The 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.

Richard G. Shiner, Editor.

If you are reading a copy of this letter that is not yours, you can subscribe and receive your own copy by writing to:

The Church of the Damascus Road  
PO Box 834  
Fort Dodge, IA 50501-0834  
Office at St. Olaf Lutheran Church  
239 North 11th Street, Fort Dodge  
515-955-3579



## Christmas Day Worship

**B**ecause the Christmas Day holiday is on Wednesday, the Fort Dodge Correctional Facility allows visits in the Visiting Room, which means we can't have our regular Wednesday evening worship there.

Therefore, our Christmas Day worship service will be at **8:30AM** (yes, that's morning) in the Visiting Room. Please note the time and join us for worship. People willing to visit our worship service may contact our office secretary, Cynthia Hanks, to arrange to worship with us.

## Dial Him Up



Do you pick up your Bible daily?  
Do you know what's in store?  
It's all about sacrifice for Jesus  
and reading your Bible more.

The Bible is full of power  
every word lasting and true.  
Are you picking it up daily?  
Is the Lord inside of you?

The Bible is a wonderful story  
all of it we should know.  
It's all about God's glory  
It's better than any movie show.

We need to know what's in that old book,  
It tells of all the blood that's been shed.  
It tells of the shame that Jesus took  
that should have been ours instead.

Are you picking up your Bible?  
Are you getting your daily bread?  
Are you getting your "meat and potatoes"?  
Is your spirit getting fed?

If you're clinging to the things of this world  
and you're getting more out of touch,  
it's no wonder you're falling into temptation,  
because you're not reading your Bible much.

So read your Bible everyday  
make it your first desire.  
It's your connection to Jesus  
it's your telephone wire!

-Clark E. Ford-

## Brothers in Blue Weekend

**O**ctober 17th thru the 20th was an eventful weekend for all the inmates of the Fort Dodge Correctional Facility, or at least the ones that attended the Brothers in Blue. This was a non-denominational event, and everyone was welcome to attend. It was a chance for some to learn for the first time about God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit and for others it was a perfect way to renew their faith.

One thing I can say is that every inmate that attended this weekend learned the true value of the Christian Community. People came from all over Iowa, and even some neighboring states, just to share their knowledge, support, and time in this event. Words can't express what I've experienced on this weekend, but I can say "I wish it never would have ended."

Brother in Christ  
—Richard G. Shiner

## An Awesome God

**I**t all started when I walked into the gym on October 17th and saw all the new faces. I haven't been to anything like this before, and at the time I was very unsure about what would be going on, but I prayed to God and said "Lord, if it is your will for me to be here, please help open my heart and mind so I can get something out of this special weekend." The first day went on and I thought it was really slow and I was like, I know God has something he wants me to get out of this. Well, before I knew it the night was over and the sun was shining the next day. Sad to say, but the whole weekend went by before I knew it.

I do feel that the Lord blessed me during that special weekend, it allowed me to renew my faith with the good Lord we all have. I remember the last day, after I received my cross, I was sitting at a special service before we all wished each other farewell. We were given the opportunity to stand and say how this weekend helped us, without saying thank you, and I stood up and said, "We sure have an awesome God don't we? I feel this weekend was the best weekend I've ever had and just because I'm here at the Fort Dodge Correctional Facility going through the RIVERS program I feel I am free from the inside. I am on fire for you, O Lord, and as hard as it is to say, it's hard to see all you special people go, you all have made a great impact on my life. You all are my family and there is a time and place we will meet again."

I do thank you for reading this, and if you're able to attend a Brothers in Blue weekend I recommend it totally, and if you don't know God personally I ask that you would ask him into your life today. Thank God and bless you

—Cody Bingham



Enter to win!

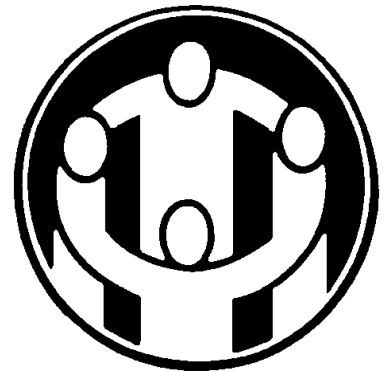
## PCoA Art Contest

**E**very fall, the existing prison congregations are contacted to solicit entries for next year's Donor-Partner Print. These entries need to be submitted to the Prison Congregations of America office by January 1, 2003. Their board will choose one to use and make arrangements with the winning artist to purchase the artwork for \$50 (unused artwork will be returned).

*Artists should develop their artwork around the theme in Hebrews 13:3—"Remember those who are in prison as though you were in prison with them."*

The winning artwork will adorn the cover of the Lenten Devotion book and be distributed as prints to donors who give \$100 or more to PCoA.

PCoA hopes to have entries from one or more artists from each prison congregation. It's a wonderful way for an inmate to have an impact on how the American church views prison ministry.



## Mission Partners!

Dear Pastor Lang and members of The Church of the Damascus Road:

I received a copy of the Mission Partners Agreement between Zion St. John Lutheran in Sheffield, Iowa, and The Church of the Damascus Road. I know that Christ will bless the ministry of both congregations as you share your gifts with one another. Thanks for your promise of prayers, encouragement and ministry updates.

Pastor Danette Johns,  
Assistant to the Bishop,  
Western Iowa Synod of the ELCA

The Church of the Damascus Road  
PO Box 834  
Fort Dodge, IA 50501-0834

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December 2002

### Artists' Corner

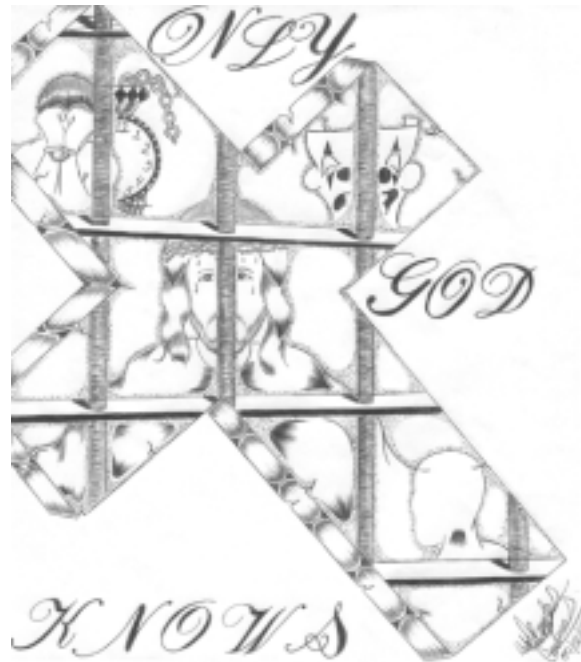


<http://www.dodgenet.com/~cjlant/index.html>

### Invite the Pastor to Worship

The worship services at The Church of the Damascus Road are scheduled on week-nights for two reasons. One is to enable people on the outside to worship with the inmates and not miss worship in their own congregations. The second is to make the pastor of Damascus Road available to visit area congregations on Sunday mornings. The pastor can give a brief update on the ministry, sermon, children's sermon, adult forum, children's Sunday school opening or cross-generational class session, any or all of the above, and/or is open to suggestions. All that is asked is that there be time to prepare.

Call 515-955-3579 or write to: The Church of the Damascus Road, PO Box 834, Fort Dodge, IA 50501-0834, or by e-mail at <DamascusCh@aol.com> to arrange for a visit to your congregation. The pastor speaks Episcopalian, Methodist, Baptist, United Church of Christ, Covenant, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Catholic, Evangelical, Reformed, Assembly of God, Nazarene, and a host of other denominations, independent, and non-denominational as well.



Rafael Cardenas

*A note to secretaries and pastors—*

### Copy Me, Please!

We send our newsletter primarily to congregations. It's printed on white paper so it can be copied to include all or portions of it in your newsletter or bulletin, or simply made available to members of your congregation.

Anyone wishing to be on our mailing list may send name, address, and phone numbers to The Church of the Damascus Road, PO Box 834, Fort Dodge, IA 50501-0834, or by e-mail at: [DamascusCh@aol.com](mailto:DamascusCh@aol.com). The Flash will be sent directly to your home.

-- Pastor Carroll Lang

### Worship & Bible Study

#### FDCF Fort Dodge

7:00pm Wednesdays ..... Holy Communion  
7:00pm Fridays ..... Bible Study

#### NCCF Rockwell City

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

### All Readers: Send Contributions

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