

The Church of the Damascus Road *Flash!*

Volume 8
Issue No. 2
April 2005
Fort Dodge & Rockwell City, IA

CoDR's Third Annual Meeting



The Church of the Damascus Road Volunteers were honored with the Governor's Volunteer Service Award in September 2004 and the regular, faithful volunteers who were at the CoDR Annual Meeting in January received their own pin. Volunteers serve at worship, Story Tellers, and Outside Council.

Third Time Around

Supporting congregations and individuals, volunteers and former members of CoDR came together on January 22 to hear about how the congregation is doing, to look to the future, and to mutually upbuild one another in the faith.

Glenn Wooten and Kim Schleiger braved the weather to drive up from Ottumwa to attend. Glenn was President of the Fort Dodge CoDR for several years before his release. In his address to the attendees he told how he got involved in CoDR in 1998. Glenn helped adapt the model constitution provided by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to fit our unique circumstances. While he was working on the constitution and bylaws, he



read portions of the Book of Concord and concluded that "Those Lutheran really have it together!" Believe it or not, Glenn and Kim headed into the storm when they left the meeting to drive to Michigan.

Jeff Roberts was part of CoDR in both Fort Dodge and Rockwell City. He served as editor of the Flash and Echo and as secretary of the Inside Church Council. He lives in Poca-hontas.

Beside giving reports on what happened in 2004, we took time to give the Governor's Volunteer Service Award pins to Outside Church Council members, Story Teller Volunteers, and regular volunteers at worship. Pastor Carroll and Judy Lang attended the award ceremony in Storm Lake last September to receive the ward on behalf of all of CoDR's volunteers.

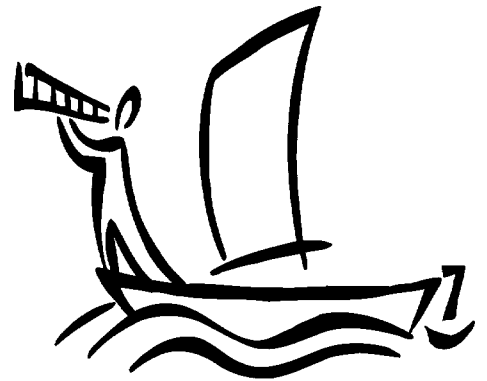
Gratitude was expressed for all the donors who came through in our time of need. We still need more congregations and individuals to support us for the long haul, or we will have the same problem in 2005. If your congregation has not yet put CoDR on its budget, please talk to your leadership and encourage it to happen.



Our Broken Vessels

In this world, we discard are broken things or repair them, leaving them with a much smaller valve. Once broken they can never have their original valve again. In scripture, we see a totally different picture. God uses broken things to change lives, meet needs and win wars. Gideons 300 soldiers defeated their enemy buy breaking theirs pitchers to reveal the light from their lamps within.

So it is in our broken nature letting the light of his love be revealed. A widow



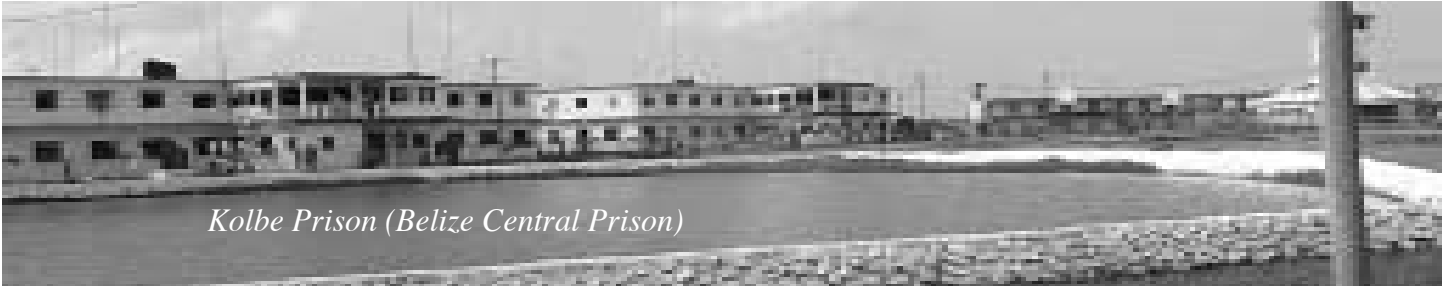
broke the seals of her pot of oil and poured it out until all were filled and her debt was paid. As we break the seal that guards our heart and let his love and compassion flow to empty vessels around us, we are giving back to him for our debt that has already been paid. Mary broke her alabaster box rendering it useless so that she could spend it's contents (a years salary) to anoint the head of Jesus. If we allow our most precious gift (not a year's salary but our entire life) to be broken, our life will also be poured out for him!

When Mosses smote the rock and broke it open, water flowed for the children of Israel in their desert. When we allow our life to be smitten or broken, there is living water waiting to flow out to others living in their desert. Jesus' body was broken by thorns, a whip and nails. So that his life could flow as a river that never runs dry let this be our example. The brokenness in our life is not rendering us useless and leaving us of lesser value. By reason of our breaking, we are being purified. Our Valve is much greater broken.

Inside the Flash!

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Brothers in Blue #2 in Belize



Kolbe Prison (Belize Central Prison)

Twenty persons went to Belize last February to conduct two Via de Cristo events, one for Kolbe Prison and the other for Christians in Belize, around Ladyville. The prison Via de Cristo is like a prison Brothers in Blue here in Iowa, but instead of starting on Thursday afternoon through Sunday evening, it begins at 9am each day Monday through Friday, ending at 3pm each day.

Since a team had already been there in



The team arrives.

February of 2004, five of the inmates who had attended the first Via de Cristo week gave talks for the second. Also 8 of the inmates who had attended the first week served on the Palanca team for the second (we didn't have any inmates for Palanca the first time).

Kolbe Prison, also known as Belize Central Prison, is privately owned and the country pays the owner, John Wood, to incarcerate those whom the courts sentence to time in prison.

Jean Goemaat, a retired teacher from Iowa, is directing a program similar to the InnerChange Freedom Initiative in the Newton, Iowa, correctional facility. Part of the IFI program is to hold Brothers in Blue experiences, so Jean asked to introduce Brothers in Blue into her program in Belize. They call her "IFI" program "InnerChange For Freedom Belize," since they are not as yet affiliated with Prison Fellowship's InnerChange network.

The inmates are incarcerated in Belize for pretty much the same crimes as here in Iowa. The official language in Belize (which used to be called British Honduras until the 80s) is English, but you can tell by their accents that they normally speak either Spanish, or Creole, or Mayan or a mixture, so sometimes it is hard to understand their English. However, there is no uniform prison issue for clothing, so most of them were not

dressed in blue. In fact, some of them had their own clothes, while others were issued clothes that had apparently been donated to the institution.

There is a large fresh water pond in the center of the prison and we were told that some men wash their clothes in the pond, some go swimming, we saw one in the pond, and we saw ducks swimming in it, too. No, we did not even wade in it! The temperatures were mostly in the 80's, sometimes as low as 70 (they "froze") and as high as 90 degrees. It's a bit of a shock to leave in 20 degree weath-



The InnerChange for Freedom Belize Unit

er in the morning and deplane in Belize in the 80's.

When we were having our closing ceremony on Friday, four of Belize's top Magistrates (Judges) visited the IFF-B unit to see what this faith-based InnerChange For Freedom Belize program is doing. One of them took copious notes and they seemed impressed with the effectiveness of the



Jim Newton, John Wood, Jean Goemaat



Candidates (33), Team (11), Palanca (8)

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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.

Rev. Carroll Lang, Pastor
Albert Cooper, Editor

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. The Flash will be sent directly to your home.

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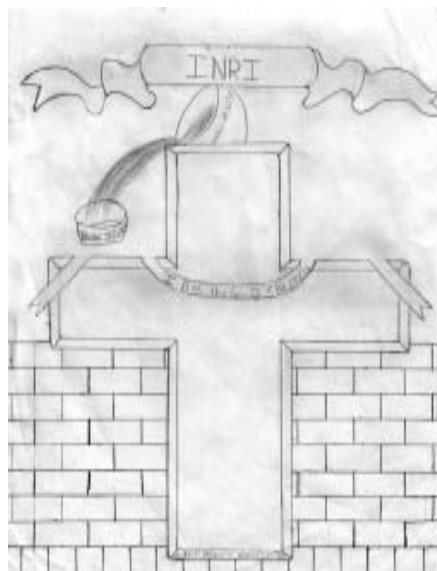
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Invite the Pastor to Worship

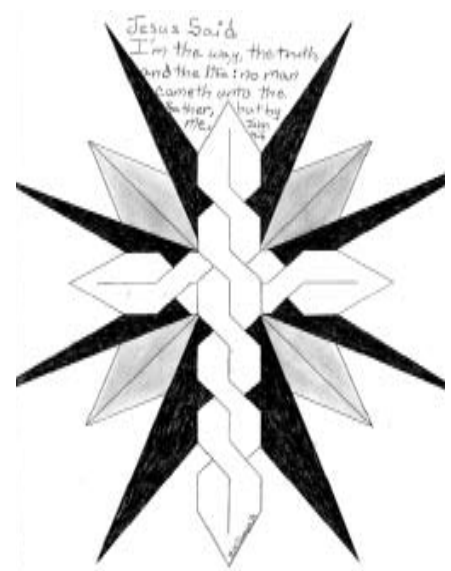
The worship services at The Church of the Damascus Road are scheduled on week-nights for two reasons. One is to enable people on the outside to worship with the inmates and not miss worship in their own congregations. The second is to make the pastor of Damascus Road available to visit area congregations on Sunday mornings. The pastor can give a brief update on the ministry, a sermon, a children's sermon, an adult forum, a children's Sunday school opening, a cross-generational class session, or any or all of the above, and 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, Mennonite, Nazarene, and a host of other denominations, independent, and non-denominational, too.

Artists' Corner



Albert Cooper FDCF '05



Damon Brady FDCF '05



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

All Readers: Send Contributions

The editor of this newsletter is inviting ALL READERS, inside and outside

NCCF's Church Council

Marc Leonard..... President
 Vacant..... Vice President
 Jasper Young..... Secretary
 David Porter..... John Bothwell
 Anthony Bone..... Craig Nietfeld
 Todd Yaw..... Lyle Harris

FDCF's Church Council

Albert Cooper..... President
 Randy Elliott..... Vice President
 Tony Halsrud..... Secretary
 Fred Chapman..... Librarian
 Derek Griffith..... Craig Flataker

Worship & Bible Study

FDCF Fort Dodge
 7:00pm Wednesdays Holy Communion
 6:30pm Fridays Prayer Team
 7:00pm Fridays Bible Study

NCCF Rockwell City
 6:30pm Tuesdays Bible Study
 6:30pm Thursdays..... Holy Communion

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.

-- Pastor Carroll Lang