

# The Church of the Damascus Road

## Flash!

Volume 9  
Issue No. 4  
August, 2006  
Fort Dodge & Rockwell City, IA

## Letter of Praise

April 21, 2006  
Church of the Damascus Road  
239 North 11<sup>th</sup> Street, POBox 834  
Fort Dodge, IA 50501

Dear Friends at Church of the Damascus Road. Two recent events prompt me to write to you:

- 1) The "Transition Training" held in Cherokee which was attended by dozens of CoDR supporters. What a great testament to the impact your congregation has had on the broader church.
- 2) The April CoDR newsletter which shows events of your annual meeting, the closeness that 'graduates' obviously feel for this congregation and their trust in 'going public,' the inmate articles and art, and the sponsorship of Stephanie in Chile. WOW! You-all are doing some great work!

The Church of the Damascus Road clearly shows the strengths of the prison congregation model when it does good, solid, basic ministry and stays with it!! Well done, good and faithful servants! God's peace and blessings.

Rev. Ed Nesselhuf

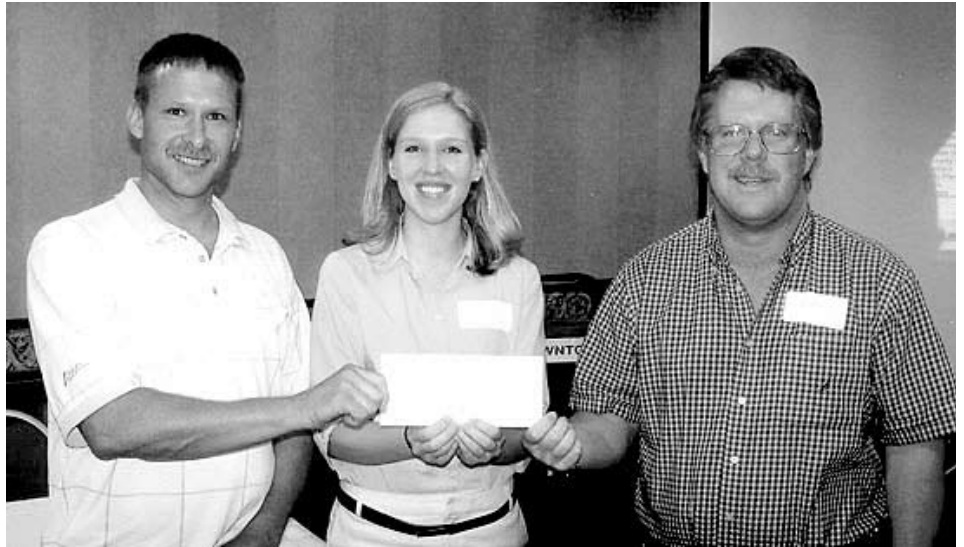


## Behind Walls

Our beds have been made, now on which we must lie. From a six by ten cell, we watch our freedom pass by. Every day it gets tougher, to hold your head up with pride. For they take away your dignity when they lock you inside. More often than not, there are those that deserve. But there's also those few who've been pitched a tough curve. Behind walls you're not a person, for rights they've taken away. To them you're just a number, in a system gone astray. Remember the person you were before you went in, and hope your stay's not long, so you can be that same person again! Mistakes are like teachers, from them you must learn. For once behind prison walls, there's no passing grade you can earn!

— Dennis D. Schiltz

## AfterCare Awarded Compassion Iowa Grant



Two former members of The Church of the Damascus Road at the North Central Correctional Facility in Rockwell City receive the check for the first installment of the Compassion Iowa Grant that was awarded to CoDR for our AfterCare program! Left is Mark Haase, Chair of the Outside Church Council, right is Paul Harrison, newest member of the Outside Church Council. Awarding the check is Stephanie Linsler for the Compassion Iowa Grant team.

## Open the Door to Your Heart

Once knew a man who was about ready to give up. He thought for sure that he was down and out for the count. On what he thought would be his last minutes on earth, the Holy Spirit came into his life and said to him, "Open the door to your heart." The man then opened up his heart and his Bible and found Jesus.

Then he wholeheartedly asked for the forgiveness of his sins that were holding him down so hard. He then felt a warm rush all through his body. It felt like he was being hugged by someone. He could not see him, but he could definitely feel him. He then felt all the burdens of his sins being lifted up off his shoulders and taken forever away from him.

Then he heard two words that forever changed his life: "Follow me." And follow him he did! Now the man's Bible is ragged and worn, but his faith is strong and growing.

How do I know all of this? Because I am that man. Jesus said that our faith can move mountains. My faith has removed my mountains of doubt and fear and has cleared the path so I can follow him. There is plenty of room on that path. I pray that you all can find the faith to move mountains and follow him with me.

—Nick Carlson, FDCF 5-17-06

Begin  
the  
Day  
with  
God

## Inside the Flash!

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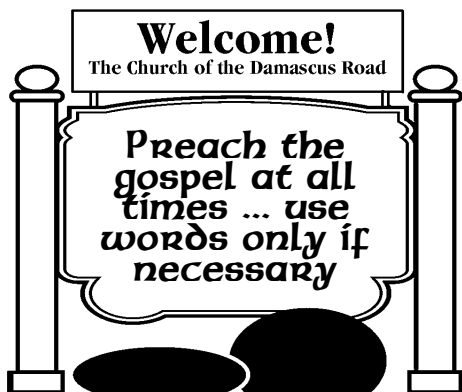
### \$100-a-Month Club

Donors of \$100 or More Per Month, both Churches & Individuals

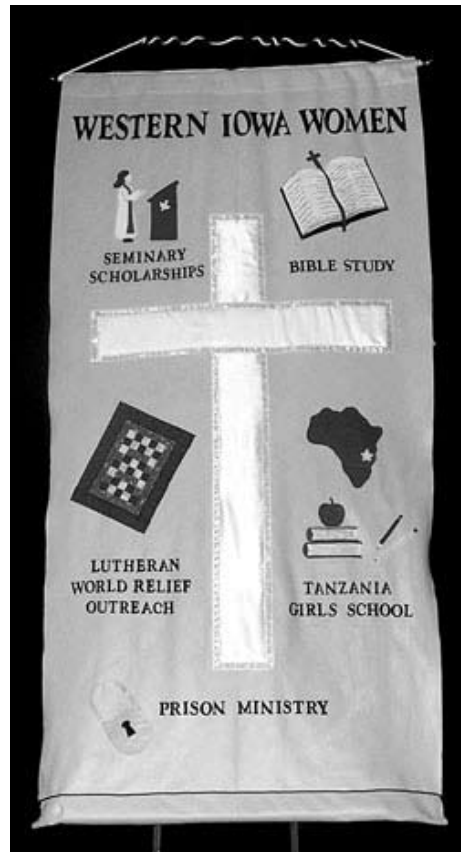
- Augustana Lutheran, Manson
- Emanuel-St. John Lutheran, Lytton
- First Lutheran, Algona
- First Lutheran, Clarion
- First Presbyterian, Fort Dodge
- Grace Lutheran, Fort Dodge
- Hardy Trinity Lutheran, Hardy
- Immanuel Lutheran, Forest City
- New Covenant Christian, Fort Dodge
- Our Saviour's Lutheran, Callender
- Our Saviour's Lutheran, Humboldt
- St. John Lutheran, Pomeroy
- St. John Lutheran, LeMars
- St. Mark's Episcopal, Fort Dodge
- St. Paul Lutheran, Palmer
- St. Paul Lutheran, Rockwell City
- St. Paul Lutheran, Treynor
- Trinity Lutheran, Spencer
- Trinity Lutheran, Webster City
- Zion St. John Lutheran, Sheffield
- Jim & Marilyn Fevold, Humboldt
- Patricia Gohman, Monrovia CA
- Rev. Carroll & Judy Lang, Fort Dodge
- Troy & Karyn Leininger, Spencer
- Noel & Linda Singer, Webster City
- Adam & Inga Sanford, Frisco TX
- Warren & Melba Shelby, Fort Dodge
- Rollin & Cleo Swanson, Fort Dodge

### Bumper Sticker

**The best mathematical equation ever given:  
1 cross + 3 nails = 4 given.**



### CoDR on Banner



On June 24, 2006, Pastor Lang and Paul Harrison (see photo, page 1) presented a workshop about CoDR and AfterCare at the Tri-Synodical Women's Organization Convention at Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa. On the main stage was a banner representing the Western Iowa Synod Women's Organization at the bottom of which it stated that part of their ministry included "Prison Ministry." Judy Lang is the President

## BAPTISMS



### FDCE

Corey Allen Courtney (7/13/06)  
Dustin LeRoy Lear (7/13/06)

### Affirmation of Baptism:

Kim Michael Mark (7/13/06)  
Jeffery Lee Verschuure (7/13/06)

### Recipe For Love

- 1 Cup upward eyes
- 1 Cup foldin' of hands
- 1 Cup kneeled knees
- 1 Cup patience/waiting

Mix these items together with hands that are folding, preferred on the ground, any time, anywhere, anybody, anyhow on one's knees. Allow it time to raise up and watch it become a blessing in someone's life and this includes yours. Continue this process over and over to see one's heart grow.

— Micheal J Smothers, FDCE

# Father

Father, Father, hear me please,  
Father, Father, thanks for setting me free,  
Father, Father, thank you for giving your son for me,  
Father, I know you didn't have to do it, but you did it for me,  
Father, Father, thank you for everything you've given to me!  
Jesus, in your name I pray, thank you for washing my sins away.  
If it wasn't for you, I'd still be satan's slave.  
Thank you for cleansing me.  
Jesus, in your name I pray,  
Father, Father, thank you for this wonderful day.  
Thank you for my joy, and peace,  
Thank you for the love you have put in me.  
Father, thank you for everything.  
Richard Strum 7/14/06 FDCE

## The Church of the Damascus Road Flash!

Issue 9.4 August, 2006

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  
Aaron Bury, 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.

# Reentry AfterCare

## So, What Is AfterCare?

It is a ministry of the Church of the Damascus Road helping inmates stay out when they are released. Teams of three to seven persons in a community form a covenant of friendship together with an ex-offender for up to a year to help the ex-offender adjust to life on the outside, be part of a Christian community, stay employed, and make a new life for him or herself. The Christian community is the best environment in which to help the ex-offender maintain a law-abiding lifestyle.

If you are interested in becoming involved in this ministry and you have enough love in your heart to include one more person, contact us at: The Church of the Damascus Road Aftercare Ministry Pastor Carroll Lang, P.O.Box 834, Fort Dodge, Iowa 50501 (515) 955-3579

## Doug Keltner

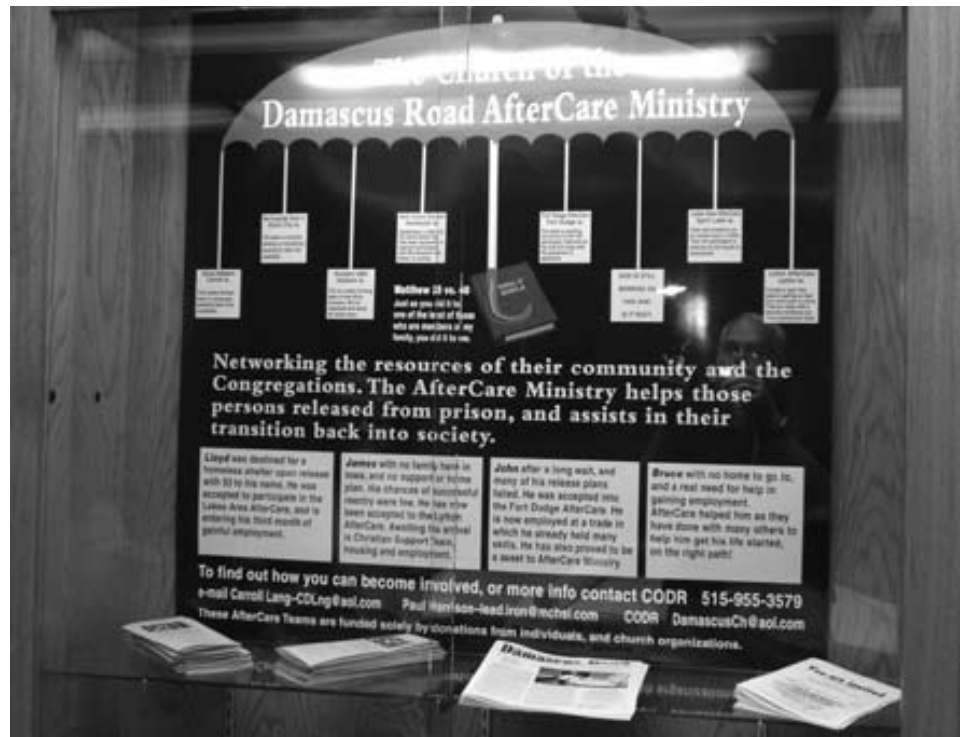
Doug, whom I had worked with for some time is leaving today. He had been in my treatment class where I worked as a mentor at the Fort Dodge Correctional Facility. I was also his roommate so we got to know each other some. It is hard to get to know someone in this environment. People put up walls and try to put up a front of being stronger than they really are. It's self-preservation in many cases, and in others just trying to be the tough guy and be accepted.

Today all fronts are down and Doug is scared. If you have never been in this situation you might think, "What does he have to be scared of? It's over, he's going home." To some degree you may be right. It should be a good day for Doug but I will try to explain the emotions he is going through.

When a person enters a prison for the first time it's a shock to his system. Something is very wrong with this place, and you can sense something very evil. Even a few correctional officers have told me they could sense something very bad their first few days on the job but slowly those feelings go away and it becomes normal. That's how it is with people sentenced to spend some time, warehoused with some of the most brutal people who are guilty of terrible things that I would rather not discuss, and subjected to constant humiliation. It is the worst experience anyone could imagine, but eventually it becomes normal. The routine becomes comfortable in this most unnatural environment. It's hard to explain to someone who hasn't experienced it, and you really can't put your finger on it, but something happens on the inside in what I would call a spiritual level. We become a product of our environment physically, emotionally, and most of all spiritually.

Those of us that spend time in the Word

## Eye-catching Display an Attention-Getter



CoDR AfterCare was on display in the Fort Dodge Chamber of Commerce meeting room. The display was designed by Paul Harrison and was seen by Cornell Smith, the new Warden at the Fort Dodge Correctional Facility.

and in Prayer drawing near to God benefit immensely from that time, growing spiritually in leaps and bounds, but if you don't spend that time, you drift away into a dark place.

Doug has someone coming to get him, a place to live with a pastor (father in law) who has faithfully brought Doug's daughter to see him while at the Fort Dodge Correctional Facility. He will be living there for a time till he can get his feet on the ground. But Doug is scared and I can see it on his face. He knows what he is capable of if he gets out and returns to his old ways. He doesn't want to hurt anybody, especially his daughter and his in-laws but he really doesn't know if he can make it. There is too much to think about. Too many decisions and potential problems, and these well-meaning, good Christian people are not prepared for the damaged person they are about to receive. He needs help and doesn't know where to turn. I myself am worried for Doug. It's starting already. The battle for his mind has begun.

With the new Church of the Damascus Road Reentry AfterCare Program we train people to be better equipped to receive a person like Doug. The next training seminars will be September 9 and 10 of this year and you could find more about it by contacting Pastor Carroll Lang at Email: CDLNg@aol.com or call (515)576-6810).

— William Bell, NCCF

## Team Member Testimonial

We had a man, of whom I previously wrote about, who had received a reconsideration of his sentence. He was not from Iowa and had been incarcerated just long enough to lose everything he had.(house, job, possessions, etc.). He would be returned to court and released.

Without the help of our aftercare members he would have been literally out on the street, without any resources to survive. But thanks be to GOD that was not the case.

Two dedicated Team Members of the Damascus Road Aftercare, and you know who you are, picked this man up and took him in until DRA could arrange housing. They put him to work so that he could have a few bucks in his pocket, and later brought him to his new home in Spirit Lake where he still lives and works today.

I have had the privilege of meeting all these people involved and would like to say this: They love the Lord. You can see it in their faces. The fruit of the Spirit are seen clearly, and the Bible says we will know them by their fruit. GOD bless you!

— Bill Bell NCCF April 1, 2006



The Church of the Damascus Road  
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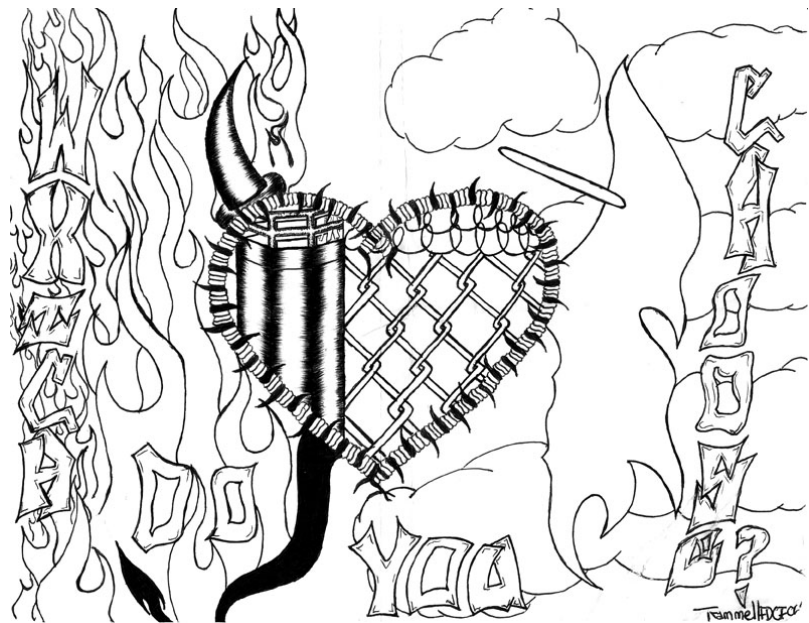
August 2006

**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**



Jeffery Trammel FDCF 06



<http://www.frontiernet.net/~codr/index.html>

**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.

**NCCF Church Council**

- David Porter ..... President
- Jerry Hansen..... Vice President
- Daniel Skalla..... Secretary
- James Pospisil ..... Lyle Harris
- Robi Meyer ..... Dennis Kaplan
- David Janssen

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- Randy Elliott ..... Kyle McMenamin

*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

**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