

The Church of the Damascus Road

Flash!

Volume 9
Issue No. 5
October, 2006
Fort Dodge & Rockwell City, IA

From a Former Member

Pastor Carroll Lang—

8 years ago I left for Georgia with a breakfast, a meeting at the gate, and God's blessing.

Please use a portion of this (gift) to once again show a man, ready to start again, that both God and the world are ready for him.

Hope all is well with you, Pastor Lang.

Peace,

Adam Ross

Turning to God

Since I've turned to God my life has found meaning. I now have a purpose for being here. Ever since May 27, 2006, when I asked Jesus to come into my heart and to forgive my sins, I have not looked back. On July 12, 2006, I was baptized. I cannot explain the feeling I felt each time the water hit my head, it was better than any high I've felt.

I haven't smoked any cigarettes since June 2, 2006. I quit gambling and I try to be less selfish and when I crave to do these things I pray, and within minutes it passes and I feel more confident in myself and in Jesus. Without Jesus in my life there is no way I would have been able to accomplish the little things I already have. I've noticed by doing God's will, God answers a lot of prayers with "yes." The more obedient I am to God the more he rewards me.

I don't care today what others think of me. I've spent too much of my life worrying about what my so-called buddies thought of me, when I should have been focused on God like I am now. I'm very far from perfect and I know God doesn't expect me to be perfect, only to keep growing in love and faith.

Today my life consists of doing God's will because he's the one who loves me and who made me. The way I look to see if it's God's will is I look at my role model, Jesus, and I ask myself would he do it, if he would do drugs, smoke, gamble and be selfish? I would do it but he wouldn't. That is not his will. And I have given him my will in all areas of my life. Jesus is about love: so each day I challenge myself to learn a little about love and what it is. I felt this is something God wanted me to share, so I did. Thank you for reading and God bless.

— Corey Courtney FDCF 2006

The CoDR Booth at Fort Dodge Fall Fest 2006



CoDR had a booth at the Fort Dodge Fall Fest on September 16, 2006. Helping to set up and man the booth are Marge Everts, left back to camera, David Kraft, Judy Lang and, behind bars, John Everts.



Managing Time

This was taken from the book, A Kid's Guide to Managing Time, a children's book about using time efficiently and effectively, by Joy Wilt. I thought this was something to which we all could relate.

"Time has a past, present, and a future. Time never stops, slows down, or goes faster. Time always stays the same. Everyone has the same amount of time in a day, week, month, or year. It's what people do with their time that makes a difference.

"What do you do with your time? No matter who you are, time is an important part of your life.

"Think before you spend your time, use it carefully, and manage it wisely, because time is what life is made of."

— Tony Halsrud, FDCF 2006

Awaiting the Resurrection

Andrew Hellvig, former member of CoDR both in Rockwell City and Fort Dodge and the first to appear on our video, "Prisoners for God," died on July 14, 2006, in a motorcycle accident. His funeral was July 19 at Badger Lutheran Church, Badger, Iowa.

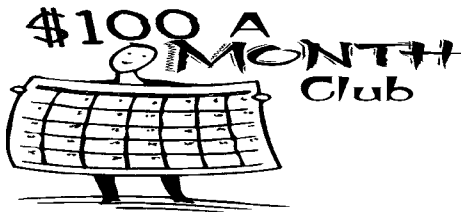
Andy met his wife, Sara, when she attended a worship service in FDCF. They were married in Badger and moved to Waterloo where he worked as an electrician. They moved to Badger for awhile, then back to Waterloo.

Andy started our prayer team before bible studies. Now he rests in God's arms.

— Pastor Carroll Lang

Inside the Flash!

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\$100-a-Month Club

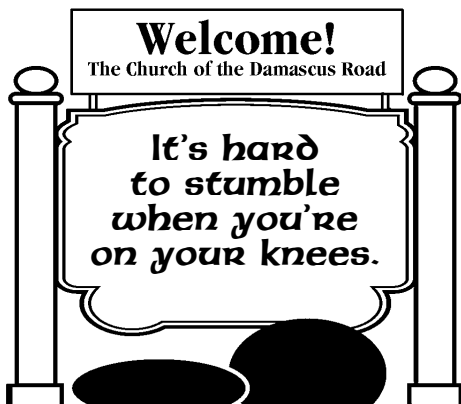
Donors of \$100 or More Per Month, both Churches & Individuals

- Augustana Lutheran, Manson
- Bethany Lutheran, Spencer
- Emanuel-St. John Lutheran, Lytton
- First Lutheran, Algona
- First Presbyterian, Fort Dodge
- Grace Lutheran, Fort Dodge
- 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. Olaf Lutheran, Fort Dodge
- St. Paul Lutheran, Palmer
- Sukup Manufacturing, Sheffield
- Trinity Lutheran, Hardy
- Trinity Lutheran, Spencer
- Zion St. John Lutheran, Sheffield
- Patricia Gohman, Monrovia CA
- Rev. Carroll & Judy Lang, Fort Dodge
- Troy & Karyn Leininger, Spencer
- Eunice Loots, Fort Dodge
- Larry & Cindy Lubinus, Grimes
- Adam & Inga Sanford, Frisco TX
- Melba Shelby, Fort Dodge
- Noel & Linda Singer, Webster City
- Vince & Leila Wilson, Fort Dodge

This Day's Thought

Never to judge rashly; never to interpret the actions of others in an ill-sense, but to be compassionate about their infirmities, bear their burdens, excuse their weaknesses, and make up for their defects—to hate their imperfections, but love themselves, this is the true spirit of charity.

— Nicolas Caussin



A Letter from Stefani

Dear Sponsors,

I am doing well, and happy to receive your letter. I am proud of you and pray God for all my loved sponsors. Since I was a child, I was taught to have faith in God. I tell you here it is cold and rainy, but when it is sunny I like the sea. I live in a port called Valparaiso. It is beautiful and there are many beaches, and one can get there walking.



I have fun with my friends and my little brother, Alejandro, who is 7 years old. School has been doing well, and I play basketball and I dance.

I love strawberry ice creams, the red colour, and my favorite tales stories book is *Papelucho*.

Kisses for all my sponsors. I love you. God bless you and all your family and children.

Your sponsored child,
Stefani Reynolds Hernandez



Bros in Blue Appreciation

Tuesday, April 4, 2006

Dearest friends:

Greetings in the mighty name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

I was moved to tears this morning when my husband and I received a card with pictures of the NCCF Brothers in Blue weekend 102.17, March 16-19, 2006.

Our son-in-law, J___ P___, sent this to us. We have written letters over 20 years to persons who are incarcerated. It is such a blessing to see others "with the heart of Jesus" to do so.

We prayed fervently for each and every one of you involved in this great ministry as well as for each and every prisoner involved and not involved in your organization. We know and understand that just because people are incarcerated does not make them "bad people." We all need forgiveness and we all must repent at some times in our lives, even as Christians.

May the blessings of God continuously fall afresh upon each one of you and your endeavors in these last evil days in Jesus' name we pray. Amen

Yours in Christ,
Leon and Shari Dale



To CoDR:

I would like to say, first off, that since I have been a part of the Church it has been a blessing from above, and this church was a part of it and I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart. When I first came to this church everyone thought I was going to it just to prove to the parole board, and that I only go to church to impress them, but I got more than that. I was glad to serve on the church council and be a part of this congregation and now I am leaving all of you great servants of the true Lord our God.

I would like to thank the Lord. I want to thank you, Pastor Lang, for everything that you have done for me, and most of all I want to thank the congregation for all their prayers, support and friendship. I have grown up with most of you in Christ; that is, you are truly a family to me and you all will not be forgotten.

I want you all to be safe, so I'm going to leave you with some words of wisdom that have kept me out of trouble. Stay out of the gambling game, don't get involved in the fights that go on here, don't get involved in the trading that goes on, 'cause I'll tell you it does nothing but cause trouble.

And last of all I want to leave you with the greatest wisdom of all. It comes from Matthew 22:39— "Love your neighbor as yourself." and treat each other with love, 'cause if you hate your neighbor you'll never forgive yourself.

I say I truly love all of you brothers (especially Tony) and I'll keep each and everyone of you in my prayers (and support the Church of the Damascus Road each month with money). Again, thank you for all the support. It will not be forgotten.

— Aaron Bury

The Church of the Damascus Road Flash!

Issue 9.5

October, 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
Joe Rodriguez, 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!*

It's a Ministry, Not a Program

AfterCare Training

Is there enough love in your life to include one more person? Do you wish to stop crime and cut prison costs? Would you like a healthier community? Can you dare to welcome a stranger with mercy and kindness? Do you have the resources of time and energy to invest in a new relationship?

Then you may be interested in becoming a Reentry AfterCare Team member.

A Reentry AfterCare Training Event will be held on Sunday, October 29, 2006, at Bethany Lutheran Church in Spencer. The event will start at 2pm and end at 9pm. Supper will be catered in and will be the only cost to the participants.

If you wish to attend, phone 515-955-3579 or email to DamascusCh@aol.com so we know how many meals to order and how many materials to provide. We will need the name, address, city/state/zip, phone(s), and congregational membership for each person registered.

The presenter will be Linda Schroeder, founder of COPE (Congregation Offender Partnership Enterprise), the model on which our Reentry AfterCare is based.

Register now, space is limited!



Matching Fund Raiser

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, Chapter 31175 will match all donations up to \$1,300 given by individuals between October 15 and November 15 designated for the AfterCare Assistance Fund. This fund will be used when an AfterCare team encounters unexpected expenses and does not have sufficient funds to meet the emergency.

Send your donations to CoDR at the address on page 4 during this time period and double the value of your gift.

— CoDR Thrivent Congregation Coordinators



The Lytton AfterCare group had some guests at their regular monthly meeting, Paul Harrison, and Pastor Carroll and Judy Lang. Refreshments added to the friendly atmosphere. Left front is Marge Everts., L-R top is Paul Harrison, Candice Booth, James Fontenoy, Cheryl Johnson, Nancy Rodemann, David Rodemann, Laurie Glasnap and Judy Lang. Photo by Pastor Lang.

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.



James Fontenoy, released from NCCF to the Lytton AfterCare, tells the team how he is doing on the job.

A Setback, Perhaps, but We're Ready to Go!

The two training events scheduled for September 9 and 10 at the Hotel Fort Des Moines were cancelled because the hotel had double-booked the space we were going to use. This dashed our hopes that over twenty new teams would result from the training to be able to provide Reentry AfterCare for a backlog of applicants needing a place to go. There are several very disappointed applicants whose time has run out.

But we are not giving up! We may not be able to schedule the Des Moines group until after the first of the year, but we are making plans for one training event at Bethany Lutheran Church in Spencer on Sunday, October 29, 2006 from 2:00 to 9:00pm. Supper will be catered so we can keep the learning going. If you are interested, see notice on the left.

— Pastor Carroll Lang

The Church of the Damascus Road
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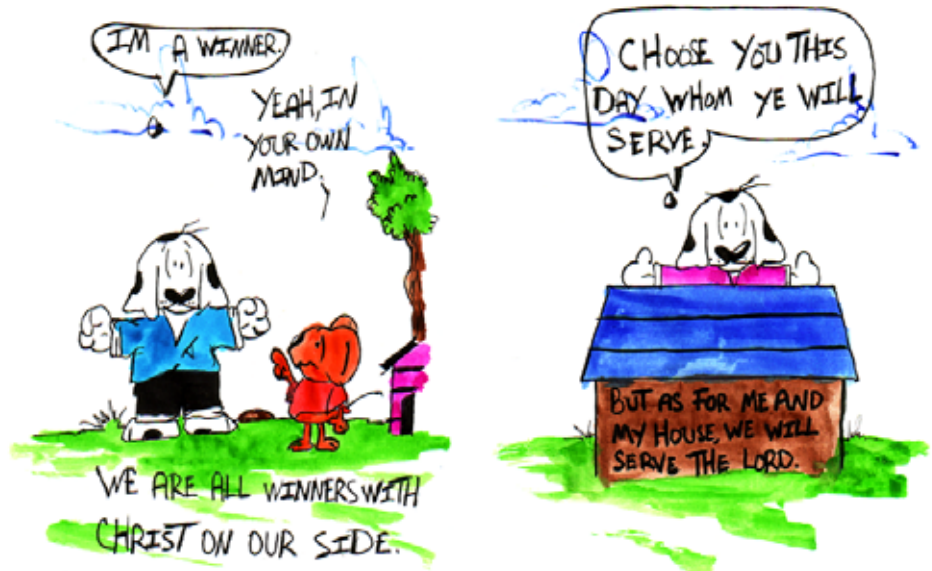
October 2006

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



Artwork by Lyle Harris, NCCF



<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

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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