

The Church of the Damascus Road

Volume 10
Issue No. 2
March, 2007

Fort Dodge & Rockwell City, IA

Flash!



Time

When, as a child, I laughed and wept,
Time crept.
When, as a youth, I dreamed and talked,
Time walked.
When I became a full-grown man,
Time ran.
And later, as I older grew,
Time flew.
Soon I shall find, while traveling on,
Time gone.
Will Christ have saved my soul by then?
Amen.

—Inscription on clock in Chester Cathedral, England

The Sinner in Us

Jesus was sent from above
For us sinners to worship and love
God sent his only son from up high
To be sacrificed on the cross and die
He helped the poor and healed the blind
He cured the sick in a short time
He is always there when we need him most
When he needed us we were only ghosts
Christ did a lot of wonderful stuff
All we did is deny it, drink, and lust
So if you're a sinner and do not believe
Put your hands together, close your eyes
And get down on your knees
Pray to the Father and Son up above
So once more Christ can send down his love
Now if you guys don't believe me
Look in the bible, John 3:16

—Jeffery Verschuure

Inside the Flash!

Page 2 - From the Pews Humor
Page 2 - FDCF & NCCF Councils
Page 2 - Memory Verses
Page 3 - Reentry AfterCare
Page 3 - Compassion Iowa Grant
Page 4 - Invite the Pastor to Worship
Page 4 - Worship Schedules
Page 4 - Inmate Artwork

Stop Fighting It

I was sitting looking at four walls, my future, with no care at all. I grab my bible from time to time, it's calling to me saying we need to stick together we're running out of time.

I feel the blood pumping fast in my veins, fire burning inside, something was telling me that the bible and I were somewhat the same. Stop denying it, it will only drive you insane. I look through the book with stress on my mind trying to ease the time. God knows my heart. The scripture will come in time to ease my troubled mind. So I sit back and look at these four walls listening to the bible telling me that I will not win by myself, I will only fall with every step. The difference is that the bible won't fall, so give me your four walls. Heart, mind, body and soul will go through it, big and bold and never have to crawl.

—Micheal Sellers

Think about this... THE FAMILY CIRCUS



"...God deals us each a hand at birth. How we play the cards is up to us."

from *The Joyful Noiseletter*
Reprinted with permission of Bill Keane

My Walk with God

What does it mean?
What does it cost?
I know He did it for me
But I am still lost
In a world of money and lust
I've got to find an answer
Of why He valued me so much
That He bared my cross
I am forever thankful
That I realized
God came down in Jesus form
And looked into my eyes
Now I found what I've been looking for
And dedicate my life
To spread the word of God's great love
So people will come to Him more and more
I can't do it alone, I need your help
Please come with me and see
What He has done for you and me
I thank Him daily and say my prayers
That the word will spread
And people will know He cares
—Kyle McMenamin FDCF

True Happiness

Albert Schweitzer: "Every person I have known who has been truly happy, has learned how to serve others."

WONDERFUL • COUNSELOR • THE MIGHTY GOD • KING OF KINGS • MESSIAH

Jesus

THE GREAT I AM • EVERLASTING FATHER • LORD OF LORDS • PRINCE OF PEACE

The U in Jesus

Before U were thought of or time had begun
God stuck U in the name of his son
And each time U pray, You'll see it's true
You cannot spell Jesus and not include U
You're a pretty big part of his wonderful name
For U, he was born, that's why he came
And his great love for U is the reason he died
It even takes U to spell crucified
Isn't it thrilling and splendidly grand
He arose from the dead with U in his plan
The stones split away, the gold trumpet blew
And this word resurrection is spelled with a U
When Jesus left earth at his upward ascension
He felt there was just one thing he had to mention
"Go into the world and tell them it's true
That I love them all; just like I love U
So many great people are spelled with a U
Don't they have a right to know Jesus too?"
It all depends now on what U will do
He'd like them to know, but it all starts with U
Will U pass it on,
Jesus

—Dwight Vermeer

From the Pews

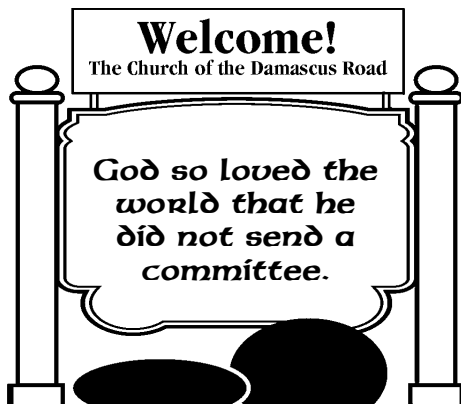
A minister parked his car in a no-parking zone in a large city because he was short of time and couldn't find a space with a meter. So he put a note under the windshield wiper that read: "I have circled the block 10 times. If I don't park here, I'll miss my appointment. FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES." When he returned, he found a citation from a police officer along with this note. "I've circled this block for 10 years. If I don't give you a ticket, I'll lose my job. LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION."

A Sunday School teacher began her lesson with a question, "Boys and girls, what do we know about God?" A hand shot up in the air. "He is an artist!" said the kindergarten boy. "Really? How do you know?" the teacher asked. "You know - Our Father, who does art in Heaven..."

A minister waited in line to have his car filled with gas just before a long holiday weekend. The attendant worked quickly, but there were many cars ahead of him in front of the service station. Finally, the attendant motioned him toward a vacant pump. "Reverend," said the young man, "sorry about the delay. It seems as if everyone waits until the last minute to get ready for a long trip." The minister chuckled, "I know what you mean. It's the same in my business."

One Sunday after church Mom asked her very young daughter what the lesson was about. Daughter answered "Don't be scared, you'll get your quilts". Needless to say, mom was perplexed. Later in the day, Pastor stopped by for tea. Mom asked him what that morning's Sunday school lesson was about. He said "Be not afraid, thy comforter is coming." Now it made sense.

There was this gracious lady mailing an old family Bible to her brother in another part of the country. "Is there anything breakable in here?" asked the postal clerk. "Only the Ten Commandments," answered the lady.



Church Leaders

The Church of the Damascus Road has three church councils, an Inside Church Council at FDCF and NCCF, and an Outside Church Council which meets at St. Olaf Lutheran every third Monday. The Inside Church Councils are responsible for the life and mission of the congregation, while the Outside Church Council is responsible for the support of the congregation. To show their partnership, the Outside and Inside Church Councils meet together twice per year in each institution.



FDCF Council, front L-R: Randy Elliot, Tony Halsrud, Joey Vazquez, rear: Joseph Kosiba, Dusty Lear, Kyle McMenamin.



Outside Council, front, L-R: Pastor Lang, John Everts, Dennis Booth; middle: Pastor Kay Wold, Judy Lang, Kathy Hansel, Pastor Danette Johns; back: Paul Peterson, Rollin Swanson, Bub Gleason, Paul Harrison.



NCCF Council, front L-R: Lyle Harris, Nick Maharas, JoRay Dale, Levi Dull, Terry Hill; rear: Britton Anderson, Joseph Mrozek, Dan Skalla, Tom Reed, Dan Waters, Steve Anderson

March Memory Verses

He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak (Isaiah 40:29).
 I tell you the truth, if a man keeps my word, he will never see death (John 8:51).
 For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even to the end (Psalm 48:14).
 With God we will gain the victory, and he will trample down our enemies (Psalm 60:12).

The Church of the Damascus Road Flash!

Issue 10.2

March 2007

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

Kyle W. McMenamin, 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.

Office at St. Olaf Lutheran Church
 239 North 11th Street
 Fort Dodge, IA 50501

Reentry *AFTERCARE*

It's a Ministry,
Not a Program

Compassion Iowa Grant Draws to a Close



John Johnston tells about his experience with AfterCare to Curt Smith and Anne Brown from the Iowa Department of Corrections.



Judy Lang, John Johnston and Paul Harrison take turns presenting the CoDR Reentry AfterCare ministry to Curt Smith and Anne Brown of the IDOC.

The Church of the Damascus Road was awarded a Compassion Iowa Grant in May 2006 which will end in February 2007. Compassion Iowa was awarded a large grant for the purpose of creating networking between community and faith-based organizations throughout Iowa. In turn, Compassion Iowa awarded grants to 26 organizations around the state, two of which are in Fort Dodge: Calvary Memorial Church of God in Christ, and The Church of the Damascus Road.

There were four required two-day training events and ten one day special interest training events. At first, Paul Harrison and Mark Haase were going to be the two persons to attend the required events, but in the end it was Judy Lang and Paul Harrison who attended most of them. John and Marge Everts attended one of the special interest training events.

Although the requirements of the grant took a lot of time and energy, the benefits of networking made it worth it. We have learned about many other ministries that complement the ministry of AfterCare. We now can create networks of resources offering needed services for ex-offenders.

On February 19, 2007, Mark Buss, Marriage Matters and a regional leader in Compassion Iowa, presented CoDR with a plaque, reading, "The Church of the Damascus Road, Successful Sub-Grant Recipient, June 2006 – February 2007. A capacity-building project for Iowa faith-based and community organizations funded

by the Compassion Capital Fund Demonstration Program, U. S. Department of Health and Human Services."

Being part of Compassion Iowa we have been very actively scheduling after-care training events in Boone, Spencer, Fort Dodge, Cherokee. More are scheduled for Muscatine and Nevada. A training event scheduled for September in Des Moines was postponed and because many of the participants are also involved in politics, we are still trying to reschedule these events.

Our style of aftercare is even being "exported" to other prison congregations. In Colorado's women's prison just north of Denver, New Beginnings Church, organized about 5 years ago, is showing great interest in providing aftercare. In Maryland, where the Community of St. Dysmas ministers to 5 prisons and is the original prison congregation, will host a training event in Hagerstown.

The Church of the Damascus Road AfterCare ministry is also of interest to the Iowa Department of Corrections, which is taking seriously the role of faith based organizations in providing the highest quality of aftercare. It's as if society has come full circle since Old Testament times where a person who committed a crime remained in the community while making restitution to the person who was offended. More communities are beginning to realize that they have a responsibility to reduce recidivism and the costs of incarceration to society.

Recognition of a job well done



The Church of the Damascus Road, Successful Sub-Grant Recipient, June 2006 – February 2007. A capacity-building project for Iowa faith-based and community organizations funded by the Compassion Capital Fund Demonstration Program, U. S. Department of Health and Human Services



Pastor Carroll and Judy Lang and Paul Harrison, receiving the Compassion Iowa Plaque from Mark Buss, Regional Coordinator.

The Church of the Damascus Road
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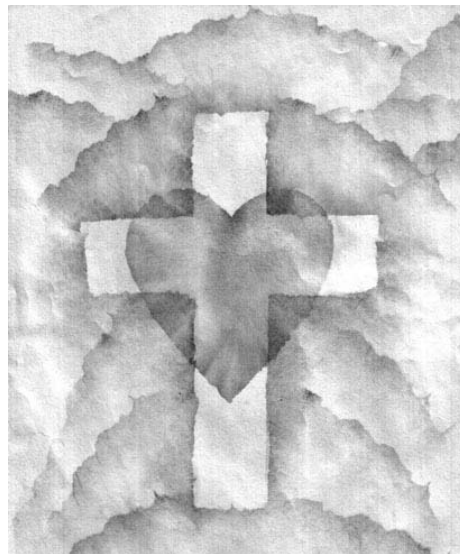
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Invite the Pastor to Worship

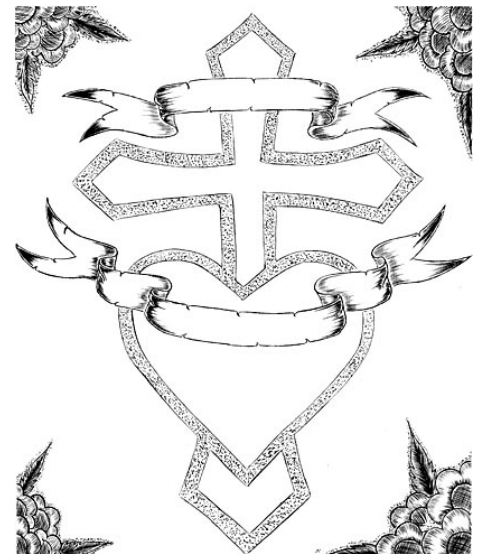
The worship services at The Church of the Damascus Road are scheduled on week-nights for two reasons. One is to enable people on the outside to worship with the inmates and not miss worship in their own congregations. The second is to make the pastor of Damascus Road available to visit area congregations 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



Jeff Pearson FDCF 2007



Rafael Cardenas FDCF 2005



<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

JoRay Dale President
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 Britton Anderson John Johnson
 Dan Waters Terry Hill

FDCF Church Council

Tony Halsrud President
 Kyle McMenamin Vice Pres/Editor
 Joey Vasquez Secretary
 Randy Elliott Story Tellers
 Billy McGonigle

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

6:45pm 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