

The Church of the Damascus Road

Flash!

Volume 11
Issue No. 5
September 2008
Fort Dodge & Rockwell City, IA



The Annual CROP Walk for CoDR will take place at NCCF on Saturday, October 4 and at FDCF on October 5. And we would ask your help in raising funds for world hunger through Church World Service.

If you would like to donate to our CROP Walk through CoDR, just send your donations marked for "CoDR CROP Walk" to the address on page 4.

At FDCF the inmate walkers are allowed to donate for themselves on the day of the walk, but they are not allowed to solicit from each other, so there are more walkers than donors. At NCCF the members of CoDR are permitted to solicit donations from other inmates, so more donors are involved than walkers.



Brothers in Blue

Brothers in Blue is scheduled for October 9-12 at NCCF and December 4-7 at FDCF. The teams are being assembled, and will be ready to conduct the weekends.

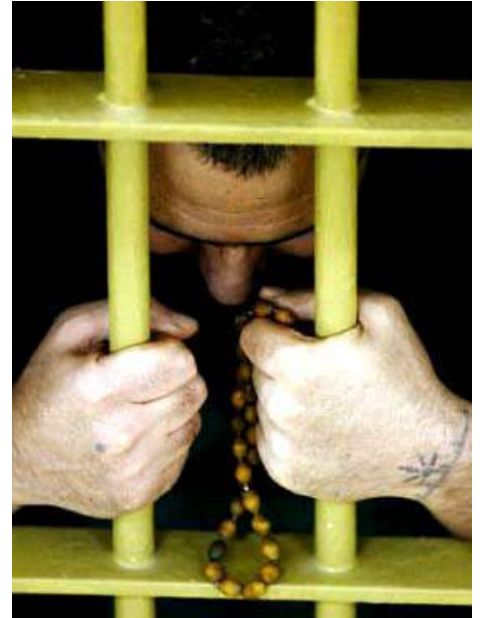
To attend a weekend at your facility, see Pastor Lang for an application. The deadline at NCCF is October 2, and November 21 at FDCF, no exceptions.

Inside the Flash!

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He Loves You

It's amazing and incredible but it's as true as can be, God loves and understand us all and that means you and me! His grace is all sufficient for both the young and old for the lonely and timid for the brash and the bold. His love knows no exceptions so never feel excluded, no matter who or what you are your name has been included. And no matter what your past has been trust God to understand, and no matter what your problem is just place it in His hand. For in all of our unloveliness this great God loves us still, he loved since the world began and what's more, He always will! God Bless!
—Roy Sullivan



Desperation Prayer

I bow down before you.
I feel so very weak.
Rescue me, dear Jesus,
In desperation this prayer I speak.

I feel lost and forgotten,
No one seems to care.
Turn your ear toward me, Lord,
For I know You're always there.

I hang my head in shame.
I let life get me down.
I feel like all is lost,
Satan is all around.

Save me, Lord Jesus,
Take this trembling hand.
Please, Lord, lift me up.
I'm a defeated broken man.

I'm weary of fighting
This never ending fight.
I long for the safety
In Your arms of might.

Alone I can do nothing.
With you I desire to be.
Rejoicing in your goodness
throughout eternity.

Amen
Robert L. Johnson II 2003

Country Gospel Event



Terry Smith and Wayne Longtin, Jr.

Our first Country Gospel Fundraiser was held July 13, 2008 on an acreage near Remsen, Iowa. Hosted by CoDR's newest member of the Outside Church Council, Mark Juhl and his wife Cheryl, the event featured Christian Music artists from near and far.

Terry Smith, on his way to another gig, came to worship at NCCF on the 17, much to the delight of the members.

Funds from the event were matched by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans and were given to CoDR.

One of the artists, Elaine Peacock, donated a CD in support of our ministry.

Hear From God

"I will hear what God the Lord will speak: for He will speak peace unto His people, and to His saints: but let them not turn again to folly." (Psalm 85:8)

God is constantly speaking to us, through our spirits. Our spirit is where He lives. He is speaking to your spirit right now. The spirit of a man is the candle of the Lord, searching out the thoughts and intentions of our hearts. It is where light resides. It is where we find the mind of Christ. He speaks to our spirits and our spirits speak to us. Are you sensitive to the voice of your spirit, or are you listening to your sense driven mind.

Your mind is where the voice of the world resides. The mind processes information coming to it through your senses. It hears the world. It touches the world. It smells, tastes, and sees the world. This is the realm where the evil one resides. This is where he manipulates you.

Your mind says it feels good, or it tastes good. Your flesh has driven it that way. The evil one has seen to it that your flesh is fed by your senses. Your mind is in the camp of the flesh. We need to transform our minds to the camp of our spirits, to the camp of the Most High God.

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." (Romans 12:2)

We need to put our flesh in check. If you are having trouble with desires coming from your flesh, fast! Fasting weakens your flesh. But for the results we all desire on one level or another it will do little good pulling away from our flesh (and it's natural desires) unless we draw near to God in His Word, and in prayer, and in the quiet times of meditating on Him, listen for His Voice.

Romans 12:1 exhorts us "...brethren, by the mercies of God...present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. Verse 2 says "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."

When we hear God's Voice in our spirits, we have proof of the perfect will of God in any situation not covered in His Word.

What job should I take?

Who should I marry?

What should I pray?

Where should I go to church?

We have lived x amount of years being conformed to this world through our flesh. We have been conditioned to believe in the natural. It is instant. I can see it. I can touch it. I can feel it. So we should not be surprised if it takes some time to draw away from the natural and draw near the supernatural.

It will take a fasted life to draw near to Him. But there is good news. As we draw near to Him, He will draw near to us.

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh to you. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up." (James 4:7-8, 10)

That's good news! God wants to draw near and He will, to the degree that we submit.

God is Holy. His glory is a consuming fire to sinful flesh. We need to prepare ourselves.

As I said, God lives in our hearts. We need to draw near, to listen for His Voice, the still small voice of the Holy Ghost.

Proverbs 20:5 says, "Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water; but a man of understanding will draw it out."

God, the Most High God, lives in our hearts. His counsel is in our hearts and we must draw it out. Be a "man of understanding" and draw on God's counsel. Our own ways seem right to us but unless the Lord directs our steps we are not in His perfect will.

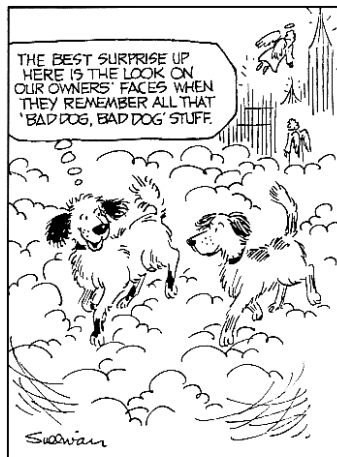
"Every good and perfect gift comes down from the Father of Lights, and there is no shadow of turning."

— William Bell



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

- Augustana Lutheran, Manson
- Badger Lutheran Church, Badger
- 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 Chrch, Hardy
- Zion Lutheran Church, Clear Lake
- Zion St. John Lutheran, Sheffield
- Patricia Gohman, Kingman AZ
- 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
- Rollin & Cleo Swanson, Fort Dodge
- Mary Wilkins, Fort Dodge
- Vince & Leila Wilson, Fort Dodge



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The Church of the Damascus Road
Flash!

Issue 11.5 September 2008

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
Gene D. Cook, Jr., Editor
Chad Bechtel, 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



Paul Harrison, Director of CoDR Reentry AfterCare

The Networks Continue to Build

As we look back on the success stories that this ministry has been blessed with it's always evident that the body of the church is always the people who serve, and the strength of service come from within. July and August had several tours of presentation and training events and some *real* capacity was established in areas in Iowa and other states that seemed to be lying dormant. In a conversation with a good friend of mine a few weeks ago, I was telling him how amazed that I was at the results of the past few weeks, and his response was, "If you keep planting seeds, pretty soon you will have a field" *Well put!* In the "field" we are seeing a bountiful harvest of opportunities that continue to grow with both pro-active and re-active crops that can benefit society today that is hungry for change.

On August 10th and 11th, Tamyra's and my home (which is no stranger to events) became a studio where one of the steps of completion for the Child Support Modification video was held. It was a great experience to see this great project take place which will be used as a tool for its viewers to who are entering the Department of Corrections to be educated and empowered to take the proactive steps they need to modify their child support order to their current level of income. It was also fun to see the reactions of Dave and Margie Munoz of Munoz productions as they learned of the hurdles that can trip these people and their families upon reentry. A very special thanks to the Department of Corrections, Department of Human Services CSC, Annie Casey Foundation, YMCA, Polk County Fatherhood Initiative, and most of all, the participants in the video who were telling of their lives to help others: Steve Hinders, Curt Boza, Dawn Robbins, Edwin Day, and others still in process, and to Munoz Productions who is doing a great job on this project! Upon completion this will be a very proactive measure to promote employment and family reconciliation, while helping those who participate to achieve a livable budget.

Through July and August were *several* Reentry AfterCare Training events in Spencer, Ottumwa, Mt. Pleasant; Keokuk; Moline, IL; Omaha, NE; Lincoln, NE; Hastings, NE; and many others! Most of these events were very well attended and a few were small group settings with community leaders, corrections and many other Faith-Based and Community-Based Organizations. All of these events had one thing in common, God sent all the right people and the timing has never been better. We also launched several presentations to employers in these areas that my wife cleverly named "The Pro's of Con's", these presentations are held in three different settings; Breakfast with Benefits, Lunch and Learn, Dinner and Dynamics. In all three settings employers are made aware of the benefits of hiring an RAC participant. These benefits include, but are not limited to: Tax Credits, Bonding, Accountability Circles, Workforce Development and United States Department of Labor opportunities including the Apprenticeship Training Program. Another great movement in this direction includes joint efforts like Jennifer Hanish who works with NE Probation RISE Program, working with Lauri Westfall Statewide Director of Heartland Reentry AfterCare for Nebraska has put together an employer/employee packet. This packet includes all the information included in the Pro's of Con's (and more), once again proving "Working together Works"!

As "Energy" becomes "Synergy" as we cast seeds to wherever the fertile soil may catch them, many caretakers of the soil have stepped up! While it would be impossible to thank everyone individually in this one page report (you know who you are), I do wish to say *thank you* to everyone who helped organize the many events listed on the left and recognize the fruits of your labor in the number of events that are coming up.

—Paul Harrison

RAC Trainings Schedule

- Sep 6 Broadway Presbyterian Church Community Fair, Quad Cities
- Sep 8 Reentry AfterCare Presentation Lincoln, Nebraska
- Sep 18 Breakfast with Benefits for Employers in Grand Island NE "Pro's of Con's"
- Sep 18 Lunch and Learn for employers in Hastings, NE "Pro's of Con's"
- Sep 18 RACTT in Hastings, NE
- Sep 19 Lunch and Learn for Employers in Lincoln, NE "Pro's of Con's"
- Sep 19 RACP for DOC and CC in Lincoln, Nebraska
- Sep 20 RACTT in Lincoln, Nebraska
- Sep 26 RACP for DOC & CC in Omaha, NE
- Sep 26 Lunch and Learn for Employers in Omaha "Pro's of Con's"
- Sep 26 RACTT in Omaha, NE
- Sep 28 RACP in Sioux City
- Sep 30 RACP in Des Moines Grand View College 11:00am and 8:00pm
- Oct 18 RACTT in Humboldt, Iowa
- Oct 24-25 Pastor Ed Nusslehoff's retirement BASH PCA Board Meeting Dance at the Cross, Sioux Falls, SD

Further Notes

Filling in many of the open dates in September, October, and into November are events being scheduled in Southeast IA, MN, CO, NE, IL, IN, OH, SC, and others not yet discussed. Please feel free to contact me at paul.aftercare@gmail.com for more information on any of these events or check the calendar at our website: www.reentryaftercare.org as more dates fill in!

Sad News!

Two of our RAC Participants have provided their teams with some learning curves in the past two months. It appears that both have a possibility to go back to a work release facility and grab a restart on solid ground working with their team and community corrections, instead of returning to prison. Please remember to keep this folks in your prayers! Working together Works!

Prayer Request: Please keep Merle Johnson and his family in prayer as they walk through the healing process of Cancer. Also Marcy Olson who has been on the ground floor of organizing the Butterfly House in Ames that will be a transitional House for women was involved in a car accident last week. Marcy is still hospitalized with broken ribs and other injuries. Please lift up these great people who lift up so many others!

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

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

September 2008

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.



www.codrcare.org

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.

Artists' Corner



Jean Keaton



Jean Keaton

NCCF Church Council

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 ? Vice President
 Daniel Skalla Secretary
 Lyle Harris Rober Fry
 Corey Mittrucker Luke Snyder

FDCF Church Council

Tony Halsrud President
 Chad Bechtel Vice President
 Alex Nolan Secretary
 Chad Bechtel Story Tellers Chairman
 Raymond Reynolds Gene D. Cook, Jr.
 Jeremiah Hemenway

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