

The Church of the Damascus Road *Flash!*

Volume 10
Issue No. 5
September 2007
Fort Dodge & Rockwell City, IA



Important dates in September:

3rd-Labor Day

9th-National Grandparents Day

11th- Patriot Day

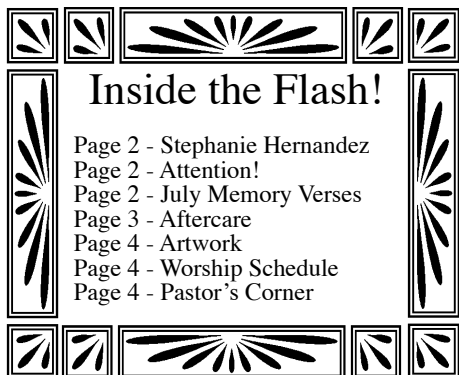
Sept. 15th-Oct. 15th- National Hispanic Heritage Month

23rd-First Day of Autumn

An Easy Way to Support CoDR

How many times a day do you search the Internet? Two times? Five times, ten times, or more? What if I told you that you could benefit CoDR just by using one search engine in particular? Well, it's true! Go to goodsearch.com and in the box that says, "Who do you GoodSearch for?" type in "Church of the Damascus Road". Then, every time you search, GoodSearch will give 1 penny to CoDR. Doesn't sound like much? Well, if we had 100 supporters of CoDR use it just 2 times a day, it would raise over \$700 for Church of the Damascus Road in one year!! How easy is that? And just so you know, the site is powered by Yahoo!, so you'll get the same quality search results that you're used to. What's unique is that they have developed a way to direct money to Church of the Damascus Road with every click. If you have any questions, go to goodsearch.com and look at the FAQ's or you can call or email DamascusCh@aol.com. The more people who use this site, the more money will go to CoDR!! So please spread the word to your friends and family!

—Sara Hellvig



CoDR's Tenth Anniversary!

In 1997 Pastor Carroll Lang was extended a call from the Western Iowa Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to develop a prison congregation called The Church of the Damascus Road.

He began this ministry on August 1st in the North Central Correctional Facility in Rockwell City. Pastor Lang started by having Bible studies and by the end of the month was conducting worship services.

When the Fort Dodge Correctional Facility was completed, Pastor Lang and Judy participated in the "40 Winks in the Klink" fundraiser and open house. Inmates started arriving in late April of 1998 and Bible studies and worship services were started by the first part of May 1998.

That's TEN YEARS AGO!

We are planning a special event to commemorate the tenth anniversary of CoDR. Therefore, the Annual Meeting of The Church of the Damascus Road has been moved from its regular time in January to a new time — November 10, 2007. It will be held in St. John Lutheran Church in Pomeroy, Iowa, on Hwys 4&7.

The Outside Council of The Church of the Damascus Road (Dennis Booth, Lytton, president) has appointed a committee to start planning a 10th Anniversary Celebration at our Annual Meeting.

The day will begin with a couple of informative sessions on pertinent AfterCare topics: Reentry AfterCare at 10am and Inside/Out Dads and Marriage Matters at 11am. We will have a meal at noon. Then we will have a program, sharing time, and fellowship in the afternoon.

Former members from over the past ten years will be invited to be with us and tell about what the church has meant to them.

We are still in the planning stages. More information will be coming out later. But we want you to know the date and location so you can plan on coming. We are hoping to fill the church with many former members, supporters, and volunteers!

If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact Cynthia Hanks, our office manager, at 515-955-3579 or at DamascusCh@aol.com or Judy Lang at 515-576-6810 or JudithLang@aol.com.

Sincerely,
10th Anniversary Planning Committee
Arnie Evans, Holstein
Lee Kuhrt, Pomeroy
Pastor Carroll and Judy Lang, Fort Dodge
Rollin and Cleo Swanson, Fort Dodge

Grace Thought

I do not understand the mystery of grace—only that it meets us where we are, but does not leave us where it found us.

—Anne Lamott





Stephani Reinald Hernandez

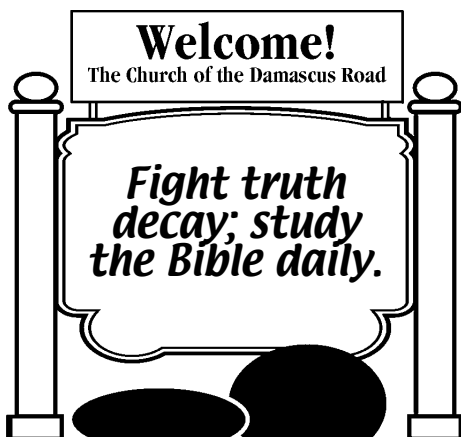
This is our latest picture of Stephani, our sponsored child from Chile. Her 15th birthday was in August. We get current updates from Children International periodically, so if you are interested in more information about her, or how you can sponsor a child, ask Pastor Lang, or one of the Inside Church Council members. Although we haven't met her in person, we support her with our prayers, and money through the Children International organization. Sponsorship is \$22 each month, and we usually always give an extra gift for her birthday, and holidays.

Attention! Please Note

Within these walls we worship regularly with liars, thieves, gossips, backbiters, people with troubled marriages, alcoholics, and drug users. We welcome hypocrites and jealous, envious, coveting, materialistic sinners, of all types, shapes, and colors. The good news is we all have something in common — we have all learned that the Church, the Body of Christ, is a hospital for sinners, not a museum for saints. We have all learned that the Lord is our rest, that he reaches out to save us, and that we are the redeemed community of the saints.

We come here to worship and praise him, and to continually plan how we might be better agents of change, salt and light in a darkened world that needs the good news: that Jesus saves. You are welcome, but be forewarned: we take Christianity seriously!

— Anonymous



\$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, 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
- Vince & Leila Wilson, Fort Dodge

FROM THE PRESIDENT

FDCF INSIDE CHURCH COUNCIL
COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Correspondence is important for us all, no matter where we are. It is our goal at The Church of the Damascus Road to continue to have contact with our family and friends. This is important for reconciliation and continued support while we are separated and incarcerated. However, we can't make anything happen from in this place at this time. We encourage our friends and family to contact us at any time, as it is so important to us in this environment.

Hebrews 13:3 says: "Remember those in prison as if you were in prison with them. And remember those treated badly as if you yourselves were suffering." NIRV

— Tony Halsrud, FDCF Inside Church Council President



from The Joyful Noiseletter
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The Church of the Damascus Road
Flash!

Issue 10.5 September 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

Memory Verses September

The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble (Psalm 9:9).

You, O Lord, keep my lamp burning; my God turns my darkness into light (Psalm 18:28).

A righteous man may have many troubles, but the Lord delivers him from them all (Psalm 34:19).

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." (John 16:33).

Reentry

AFTERCARE!

It's a Ministry, Not a Program

As we continue to grow, the network of support and capacity to serve does the same. On July 2nd, Pastor Lang, Judy and I met with Ken Quintus of On Common Ground Ministries. This Ministry in north central Iowa is providing housing for a number of men who are making changes of their own accord. A by-product of these relationships is the ability to serve those whom we cannot serve on our own. For instance I have a letter on my desk from a gentleman in Las Cruces, New Mexico, who has been writing to Ken. On the days when I think that things are not moving quickly enough, I just read something like the above paragraph and think *wow* — “*in a year and a half!*”

Trainings: We have a number of Reentry AfterCare trainings coming up in the next few weeks, so once again our number of AC Communities is going to be growing very quickly. August 4 we held a training session at the Sixth Judicial District just in time, as their first participant arrived before the class was done. Upcoming dates August 19 at Epworth, August 25 in Waterloo, and September 15 in Davenport. Pending dates exist in Council Bluffs, Sioux Falls, Newton, and others. We also did a Marriage Matter Mentor Couple Training on August 18 in Fort Dodge.

Sponsorship Meetings: We now have a team of sponsors who are generating some really good applications through “Women at the Well” at Mitchellville. I attended the Inside Council Meeting on July 31 to begin the process of rebuilding our foundation of sponsors at Rockwell City. This is the process of identification that is crucial to the very beginning step of the screening process. As these things come together we will be generating more applications, and filling the Community Teams who are awaiting participants.

Inside/Out Dads: The first class finished with great reviews in Newton and the identification process for the next class has begun. The first class at Rockwell City has been accompanied by some great feedback, and again, as it was in Newton we are identifying more AC Participants as well as those who can be served by MM Mentors, assisted by DHS, and other agencies. Fort Dodge Inside/Out Dads has yet to begin, but it will be soon!

Placements: In the month of July Reentry AfterCare placed three ladies and six men, for a total of nine reentries for the month. Also we were active in eleven assists, meaning that we assisted folks by connecting them to the resources in the community in which they planned to locate. It appears that we will be doubling that number in the month of August, and the cool thing is we will have more than enough AC Teams to support this. We will finally get caught up in placing participants into Community AfterCare Teams that have been waiting on participants.

Reaching out: Almost a year ago we had an AC Participant come to us from a facility in Michigan. This man has overcome some of the largest obstacles that most of us could ever dream of, and in his tracks came others. I'm now working on releasing a man back to Iowa from SD, and one from New Mexico, as well as working with other states to deal with detainees, child support and other obligations.

Presentations: On July 15 Rollin Swanson and I went to Badger Lutheran and did a presentation on The Church of The Damascus Road, Reentry AfterCare, Inside/Out Dads and a the big picture on Reentry. Also we were blessed to raise over nine hundred dollars that will be financial support for helping others during the reentry process. While remembering this day please keep in mind former

member Andrew Hellvig who was a member of The Church of The Damascus Road, and was taken from this world over a year ago during an ATV accident. His wife Sara continues to support our ministry, and is working with CoDR to make sure that Andrew is remembered in our congregation.

The Reducing Recidivism and Second Chance Act of 2007: While some of you may have heard me speak of this piece of legislation, originally called Sen. Bill #1934, it is now in Judiciary Committee and needs our support. Please take time to research this bill and you will see that it runs in tandem with our model of Reentry.

On July 25 I went to Cedar Rapids to participate in an Employment Resources workshop through the ICN. This event was held at over four hundred locations, with over four thousand people in participation. This was a great global view of faith based and community based organizations that are working together all over the nation, networking with the resources and support of Government offices and agencies. It is great to get opportunities like this to enforce that our model of reentry is one of great structure. It's actually pretty simple, “working together works”. The very effective bi-product of bringing people together for trainings like this is the capacity to serve always increases in the room itself. Present at this workshop were a number of FBCOs and CBCOs along with Department of Corrections Staff, all coming together to give their best effort to achieve a common goal. The group that I met with is going to begin holding monthly meetings to bring others to the table, such as the employers and other community leaders. The next meeting will be September 10 in the Cedar Rapids area. Please contact me if anyone has an interest in attending.

Reminder: We have a number of training events coming up in the weeks to come. These activities are raise awareness and recruits individual servants who are the backbone of the success this great ministry has experienced. So please let others know who might be interested in ANY part of the mission of Reentry AfterCare and the supportive outreach ministries we are involved with.

THANK YOU! So much is being accomplished! Growing pains? Yes! But to see so many peoples' lives being changed through the Churches, and the ministries make every pain a milestone when we overcome them. NONE of this would happen without our army of dedicated volunteers. Blessings and Peace to everyone who has served this great ministry in any way! You are making a difference! Thank you!

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Reentry AfterCare Director
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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

September 2007

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



"Damascus Road" by Christopher Egenberger, FDCF 2007



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.

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 Andrew Richards

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