

The Church of the Damascus Road *Flash!*

Volume 11
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May 2008

Fort Dodge & Rockwell City, IA



Our Annual Golf Tourney

Golf Tourney Fundraiser

Our 2nd Annual Golf Tourney fundraising event will be Saturday, June 21, at 9am at the Oakridge Golf Course near Goldfield. Registration is \$30 and that includes the noon meal. They have carts to rent, call 515-825-3611. This is a two-person best shot play with a shotgun start at 9:00am.

Many prizes will be awarded. If you know anyone willing to sponsor a hole (\$100) or donate a prize, call Kathy Hansel at 515-545-4354 or 515-356-2341 or email her at << persons@wccta.net >>.

This is a fundraiser for CoDR, with matching funds from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans.

Many golfers joined in the fun last year and have been asking when our next tourney was going to be. Join us for a good time and enjoy conversation over lunch.



"Er... Yes... I did sometimes play golf on Sunday, but I never enjoyed it."

from *The Joyful Noiseletter*
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Letters from Stephanie

Here are the two latest letters from our sponsored child, Stephanie Alejandra Reynalds Hernandez from Chile. It's good to hear about how she is doing, and how much she appreciates our support. We've supported her now since 2000. Here is some information on her.



Birthday: 8/5/92. Living conditions: Two bedroom home with dining room, and kitchen, living with her parents. Construction of home is wood walls, slate roof, and wood floor. They have a portable gas stove for cooking, and Stephanie sleeps on a wooden bed. They do have running water, and electricity in the house. Her parents make \$160 per month. Stephanie has no health problems reported.

Dear Sponsors,

I hope this letter finds you and your family in good health. I would like to tell you that I passed to the tenth grade with a good final mark. My family and I had a very good time in Christmas and I celebrated New Year with my friends. Well, thank you very much for all the help you have given me. May God bless you and your family for your kindness; your sponsored child,
Stephanie Alejandra Reynalds Hernandez.

Dear Sponsors,

I can tell you that I am attending the first grade of high school. I've gone to the park and I like playing soccer. My family is doing well and I hope yours too. I hope as well to receive a letter from you. I can tell you that I've been doing well in school and having a good time with my classmates. I am obedient at home and I want to thank you for everything. May God always bless you. It says good bye to you,
Stephanie Alejandra Reynalds Hernandez.

Pastor Lang is on Medicare

Pastor Lang turned 65 on February 18, 2008 and shared an ice cream birthday cake with friends who had attended worship at the Fort Dodge facility. When he graduated from Cedar Falls High School, 65 was retirement age and seemed a looonng way off in the future. Now retirement age is 66 and it's reeeaaally close!

Serving as pastor of The Church of the Damascus Road has been the most rewarding time of his career, which began in 1969, yet he plans to retire in the first half of 2009. The church councils of CoDR will serve as the call committee in the selection of a new pastor, interviewing candidates, and voting on which one to recommend to the Bishop of the Western Iowa Synod ELCA for issuing a letter of call.



Pastor Lang holds up an ice cream cake decorated with "Happy 65th Birthday, Carroll."

God's View

A person of integrity has nothing to hide, but a constant sinner loses his pride. So if you do not want to be left behind on judgment day, then call on God and save your soul today.

—Albert Cooper, FDCF

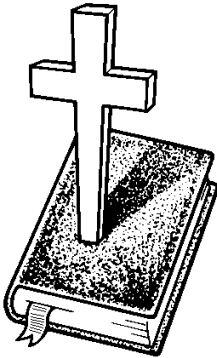
Inside the Flash!

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Noel

Necessity of eternal life. Eternal life is necessary to spend forever, with God and Jesus. Eternal life is God's stamp of approval or acceptance of us, at having been obedient to his word. Eternal life guarantees, that we will spend eternity enjoying true peace, happiness and joy within the Kingdom of Heaven. Without eternal life, this life is not life but only mere existence.

— Kenneth Crawford (FDCF)



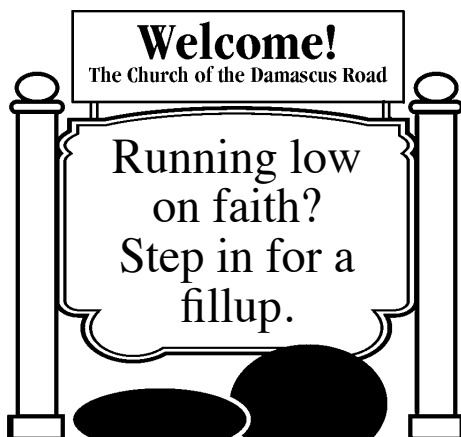
The Bible

Some say the Bible is all a myth
I would answer with something like this
Were the worlds formed by some big bang?
Or something similar from which we came?

Science first denied that there is a God
Now they're not sure and study on
Darwin's theory with a single cell
"It's only a theory" Darwin would tell

With all the evidence so clearly seen
And DNA proving from one source we came
So why is it so hard for us to believe?
Is there a God? Have we been deceived?

The Man in question, from Galilee
Did signs and wonders for all to see
Claimed a Kingdom from above
He didn't want taxes, only our love.
— William Bell FDCF



Set Free

A len you can't go on
A place is set aside
Broken men have gathered
Jesus at their side.

Ministering to their hearts
Healing broken souls
Graciously love given
He begins to make them whole.

Down on bended knees
Speaking from the heart
The precious blood of Jesus
Sets them all apart.

Apart from worldly sin
No longer must they be
A victim to life's circumstances
For Jesus set them free!

—Robert L. Johnson II 10-3-2003

Prison Ministry Top 10

You know you are addicted to prison ministry when:

10. You critique the razor wire fence.
9. You think orange jumpsuits are a fashion statement.
8. You notice with excitement the signs for the local bond bailsmen.
7. You frisk your daughter's preschool friends before they get into your car.
6. You would rather go to church in jail than at your home church.
5. You know all the verses to "Amazing Grace."
4. You serve your family pre-portioned meals on plastic divider trays.
3. You count the silverware after dinner.
2. You can sense in your mind a jail in a 5-mile radius before anyone else in your car.
1. You watch the evening news with pen and pad in hand for new ministry prospects.

—Bars and Stripes Newsletter
from Prisoners for Christ

Temprament

You can't get rid of a bad temper by using it.
—Unknown

Memory Verses for May

But whoever listens to me will live in safety and be at ease, without fear of harm (Proverbs 1:33).

For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline (2Timothy 1:7).

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble (Psalm 46:1).

Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is kept safe (Proverbs 29:25).



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
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- Noel & Linda Singer, Webster City
- Rollin & Cleo Swanson, Fort Dodge
- Mary Wilkins, Fort Dodge
- Vince & Leila Wilson, Fort Dodge



The Church of the Damascus Road
Flash!

Issue 11.3 May 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
Tony Halsrud, 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

Reentry AfterCare Training Events have been scheduled for May 17 (for volunteers) at Trinity Lutheran, Council Bluffs; June 14 in Ottumwa; and June 15 in Grand Island, NE. More are being scheduled in Waterloo, Humboldt, Conrad, Mt. Pleasant, Keokuk, and in Omaha and Lincoln, NE. Call 515-955-3579 to register.



Paul Harrison, Director of CoDR Reentry AfterCare

Breaking the cycle of '1'

The success of the Reentry AfterCare Ministry over the past two years can be attributed to matching an individual (1) to a community (many) that is a match to provide the resources needed for a successful reentry.

One person standing strong is often recognized as 'power,' but if you look deeply into the source of that power you will find many! The CEO of a large company cannot operate without the structure of a board and supported by the employees and networks of marketing personnel and the customers that provide the economic support that the company needs to survive and grow. A pastor or priest can lead a congregation, but, without the people of the congregation, the congregation would without either financial or service support. The same is true of our country's leadership — the president or the most decorated leader will not be found fighting a war all alone. Again, our leaders are surrounded by many.

When we look at the structure of support that our society has proven to be the most effective in most situations '1' supported by 'many,' you will also notice that those in isolation do not have that much needed support. Ruby Paine in her book, *A Framework for Understanding Poverty*, also talks about the need for breaking the cycle of '1' by teaching those in poverty to think outside of '1' day at a time. If every decision made in life is based only on how that decision affects '1' day of our life, with no thought of the consequences the decision produces the day after, any control of the future will be non-existent.

...if strength is truly in numbers, and '1' by itself is not a productive number if it's not supported by 'many,' why do we... think the dynamics will be any different?

So, if strength is truly in numbers, in several arenas, and '1' by itself is not a productive number if it's not supported by 'many,' why do we, as society, look the other way when '1' person walks out through the gate of a prison? What's more, why would we think the dynamics will be any different? '1' individual going through a time following release (where anxieties are high and obstacles are dominant) that is not supported by 'many' does not have any better chance for success than a '1'-man army winning a war.

Evangelist of Success

Paul Harrison not only embodies success, having served 14 months in the Iowa prison system, he came out and hit the ground running. That's what you have to do (with caution) "when you leave a 3-mile-an-hour life in prison and enter a 60-mile-an-hour world."

Paul developed his passion for a Reentry AfterCare ministry while he was still serving time, while attending a Brothers in Blue Via de Cristo weekend. There he became aware of a fledgling ministry starting up in The Church of the Damascus Road. He began asking a lot of questions and was very impressed with the model of Reentry AfterCare that CoDR was developing.

Since his release he has catapulted this ministry into the public arena. The Iowa Department of Corrections is very aware and approving of this ministry. Paul has had several training sessions for IDOC in various Judicial Districts. He has conducted training sessions in other states and now this ministry is known as far as Washington DC.

In the beginning of his ministry he attended all the training sessions offered by the Compassion Iowa Grant that CoDR was awarded. There he learned the importance of networking services in each community, and he attributes the success of this ministry to that networking, and Paul gives all the credit to that success to networked volunteers in each community.

—Pastor Carroll Lang

Matching '1' person to these 3-7 person teams and networking with the Department of Corrections and other organizations has a payoff of 'many'!

In the past two years over 800 people, making up forty-five Reentry AfterCare Teams, have become the 'many' to assist the '1' individual through the trauma of reentry from corrections to society. Matching '1' person to these 3-7 person teams (that have the necessary resources to assist the released person in thinking outside of '1') and networking with the Department of Corrections and other organizations has a payoff of 'many'!

As we pass the benchmark of having served 100 individuals who not only broke the cycle of '1' by becoming part of a supporting community during reentry, but most have continued to move forth into their future by becoming one of many, becoming part of the team that served them and thus giving back what they got to the next participant, and to the community.

Please continue to help us Break the Cycle of '1' with many as we form more Reentry AfterCare Teams, and remember that MANY is a community, and working together works. "Investing in communities NOT more prisons."

Paul Harrison, Director Reentry AfterCare



Matthew 25:36

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

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

May 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



Robert Bevington FDCF 2008



Josh '07 - submitted by Jonathan Kopaska

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

6:45pm WednesdaysHoly Communion
 6:30pm FridaysPrayer Team
 7:00pm FridaysBible Study

NCCF Rockwell City

6:30pm TuesdaysBible Study
 6:30pm Thursdays.....Holy Communion