

The Church of the Damascus Road

Damascus

Echo!

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Fort Dodge & Rockwell City, IA

Faith Is a Candle

In this sick world of hatred, violence, and sin, where men renounce morals and reject discipline. We stumble in "darkness" groping vainly for "light" to distinguish the difference between wrong and right. But dawn cannot follow this night of despair, unless Faith light a candle in all hearts everywhere. Warmed by the glow our hate melts away, and love lights the path to a peaceful, new day!



Roy Richards

Praise God

The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, these are the things I value most. God gave His only begotten son, so we would be cleansed of all the sin we've done. He did this out of unconditional love, it was all of us He has been thinking of. Jesus, through torture, was crucified, for all our sins this man died. Many people forget what He went through, and to think He did this all for you. I am forever thankful and unable to repay, what Jesus did on that special day. Through Him we all have eternal life, we can call to Him in moments of strife. Don't forget to make sure and thank this man, don't think he can't hear you because He can. I pray that all you brothers won't lose sight, this man our savior, He is our king, up to the heavens our voices should ring. This glorious man deserves all our praise, for what He did on those great days. I hope you all feel just like I do, because not only for me, He did this for you. We didn't have to ask, He took it upon Himself, to give us such unworldly wealth. Praise God

Solomon Alaska Smith

Today

Today is not as dark as some men would have you believe. Today is not as desolate and desperate as the media of time would betray. Today is the day of the Lord- a day of deliverance, blessing, and visitation, for you see, those who walk with the Lord walk in the light. They walk by faith and not by sight. But those who walk in darkness cannot see, yeah, even the God of this world has darkened their minds and all they see is desolation, darkness, and the end of time. The end of time will surely come. But remember, the Master said to us who walk and live in this time. "When these things begin to pass, lift up your heads and look up! Rejoice! For your redemption draweth high!" So today is not dark; Today is bright and today is light, Walk in the light and all of your pathways will forever be bright.

Damascus Road

Church of the Damascus Road, a congregation full of love. Inmates and our friends, receiving blessings from above. Worshipping God, allowing Him to see. Praising the love, He has for you and me. Each of us together, God is all around. Where two or more are gathered, Jesus will be found. All of us are different, yet all of us the same. Humbly praying, in Jesus holy name. Eyes are on Jesus, in heaven above. Though we are locked up, we are able to see. Soaring with the angels, our souls are truly free. Amen

Robert Johnson II

Tomorrow

So many are worried and depressed and some even almost driven to suicide-frustrated about tomorrow. What will tomorrow bring? Will tomorrow ever come? Will I be here? Will it bring fame or will it bring fortune? Will it bring blessings? Will it be bad or will it be good? Yeah, saith the Lord of host, tomorrow belongs onto the saints. Tomorrow can be filled and will be

FACING the FUTURE

filled with victory even as today-when you walk by faith. So see tomorrow as a stepping stone to greater success and achievement in the realm of God. Tomorrow is bright, for tomorrow belongs to the saints who walk in the light. Tomorrow is good, for the father of lights sendeth down always unto his own that is good. For God is good; Yeah, his mercy endureth forever. Trust in the Lord and leave it in His hands. Walk by faith and shout above the turmoil. All is right and all bright. For we are children of light. They know that there came out from the heaven long ago the Champion sent by the father and in the world of darkness, He came and said, "I am the light of the world. Follow me and you will walk not in darkness." Yeah, now you walk in the fullness of God and the glory of the father.

Inside the Echo

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Natural Highs

- Falling in love.
- Laughing so hard your face hurts.
- A hot shower.
- A special glance.
- Getting mail.
- Hearing your favorite song on the radio.
- Finding the sweater you want is on sale for half price.
- A long distance phone call.
- A bubble bath.
- Giggling.
- A good conversation.
- The beach.
- Finding a \$20 bill in your coat from last winter.
- Laughing at yourself.
- Laughing for absolutely no reason at all.
- Having someone tell you that you're beautiful.
- Laughing at an inside joke.
- Friends.
- Falling in love for the first time.
- Accidentally overhearing someone say something nice about you.
- Waking up and realizing you still have a few hours left to sleep.
- Your first kiss.
- Making new friends or spending time with old ones.
- Playing with a new puppy.
- Late night talks with your roommate that keep you from sleeping.
- Having someone play with your hair.
- Sweet dreams.
- Road trips with friends.
- Watching a good movie cuddled up on a coach with someone you love.
- Wrapping presents under the Christmas tree while eating cookies and drinking eggnog.
- Song lyrics printed inside your new CD so you can sing along without feeling stupid.
- Going to a really good concert.
- Getting butterflies in your stomach every time you see that one person.
- Making eye contact with a cute stranger.
- Winning a really competitive game.
- Spending time with close friends!
- Seeing smiles and hearing laughter from your friends...
- Holding hands with someone you care about.
- Running into an old friend and realizing that some things (good or bad) never change.
- Discovering that love is unconditional and stronger than time.
- Riding the best roller coasters over and over.
- Hugging the person you love.
- Watching the expression someone's face as they open a much-desired present from you.
- Watching the sunrise.
- Getting out of bed every morning and thanking God for another beautiful day.



Just because you may not see Him, doesn't mean that He's not there!

Jayson King

Pastor Lang, A True Friend in God

Though I'm not incarcerated in Rockwell City or Fort Dodge, I was once in both institutions. I went through some painfully difficult times while in both institutions.

In Rockwell City, I was overwhelmed and concerned with many things. They range from the loss, temporarily, of my daughter Abigaile Marie Reece an infant, to the sudden disappearance of my brother Keith Allen Reece. My fiancée lost her residence and was in major monetary agony.

I felt really bad. I couldn't let go. I would constantly dwell on my problems. I felt all alone quite suddenly.

My brother turned up a few days later. He was seeking help with his personal life. He too felt bad, couldn't let go and would constantly dwell on his problems. I was without a friend.

Shortly thereafter, I was transferred to Fort Dodge. While I was there, I found that I was suddenly without my fiancée, Constance Marie Reece Wilson, I lost the trust of several family members. I was told I'd never see my son again and my daughter was sick a lot. I spent a lot of time in "The Hole." I felt bad. I couldn't let go. I would dwell on my problems constantly. I still felt all alone. I still was without a friend.

Now I'm in Anamosa State Penitentiary. I knew a few people here from back home. I'd been feeling down and out. I'd mope around like a blind man in the wilderness at night. I feel sometimes like screaming. I felt all alone.

Well one day, I was going through my property to do a cell change and I ran across an address, phone number, and name. The name was none better than the good Pastor Lang. I couldn't just leave it in there and not put it to use.

So I called Pastor Lang and he was there. I told him of all the changes in my life and about my daughter's growing up quickly.

I asked if I could receive the CODR Flash here, "Not a problem", he said.

"Can I still write and draw for it as well? Even though I'm an outside source?"

"Ryan, you are not an outside source. You too are one of God's children."

Through you Pastor Lang, you are a true friend in God. I now no longer hang my head low. I know that I am not alone. I don't mope around, and I'm not down and out.

Humbly

Lord as we look upon you in your manger, who is even worthy to be in your presence?

Knowing you left your heavens, to come and die for us.

And that we would nail you to the cross,

for our sins to be relieved.

How can we gaze upon your majesty?

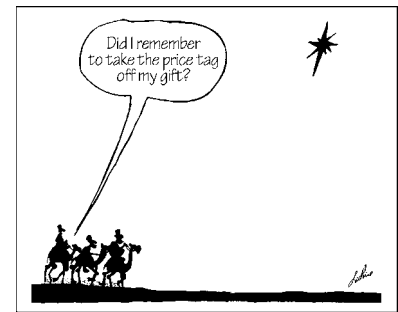
So pure, Gods innocents and glory to be seen.

The only way we can find you Lord,

is humbly on our knees.

Yes Lord, the only way we can find you, is humbly on our knees.

Roger Andrews



A Gift to You

The Lord gives us His golden love, a spectacular gift sent from heaven above! He blesses us with each new day, and listens thoughtfully to us every night when we kneel down to pray.

Truly grateful we should be! Jesus is the one who has set us free! Now we can be called the children of God! In Jesus name, Amen!

Michael E Nellist

**The Church of the
Damascus Road
Echo!**

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The official publication of The Church of the Damascus Road, a Christian Community of Reconciliation, serving the inmate population of the medium security units at Rockwell City and Fort Dodge, Iowa.

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Self Seeking Church

Reconciliation means the restoring of the relationship between the entire Human Race and God, putting it back to what God designed it to be. This is what Jesus did in redemption.

The church ceases to be spiritual when it becomes self-seeking, only interested in the development of its own organization.

The reconciliation of the human race, according to His plan, means realizing Him not only in our lives collectively. Jesus sent Apostles and teachers for every purpose- that the corporate person of Christ and His church made up of many members might be brought into being and made known.

We are not here to develop a spiritual life of our own, or to enjoy a quiet spiritual retreat. We are here to have the full realization of Jesus Christ, for the purpose of building this body.

Are we building up the body of Christ, or are we only concerned about our own personal development? The essential thing is my personal relationship with Jesus Christ- "... that I may know Him"... Phillipians 3:10.

To fulfill God's perfect design for our lives requires our total surrender-complete abandonment of ourselves, to Him. Whenever we only want things for ourselves, the relationship is distorted.

And we will suffer great humiliation once we come to acknowledge and understand that we have not really been concerned about realizing Jesus Christ Himself, but only concerned with knowing what He has done for us.

Our goal should be God Himself, not just joy or peace, or even blessings, but Himself, our God. It is very important to recognize that God should have complete control of our lives, and we should always be focusing on how we as His servants can please Him by our service.

For some, the church is a building or a gathering looking for a feeling of relaxation! Jesus said that the body of Himself was the foundation of the church, and we as members of that body should do our utmost to build that body up in all the glory of Jesus Christ.

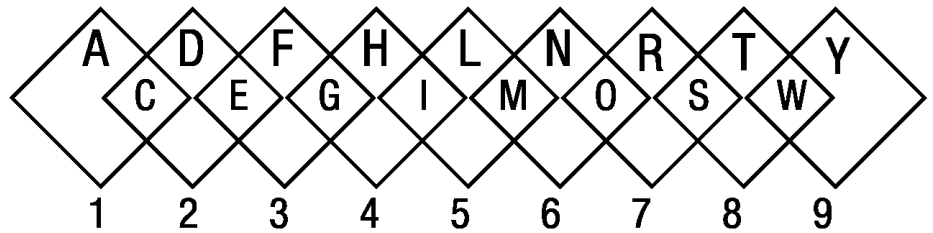
The only way an individual can become a member of the church is by accepting Jesus Christ as his personal Lord and Savior. When you do that, then you become a member of the church of Jesus Christ.

God Bless, Roy Richards



"A New Year – A New You"

Find the words from 2 Corinthians 5:17.



" e ' 8 4 2,3 7 2,3 3 6,7 7 2,3 4,5 3

1 6 9 6,7 6 2,3 4,5 7,8 4,5 6

1,2 4 7 4,5 7,8 8 ' 4 2,3 4,5 7,8 1

6 2,3 8,9 1,2 7 2,3 1 8 4,5 6,7 6 ;



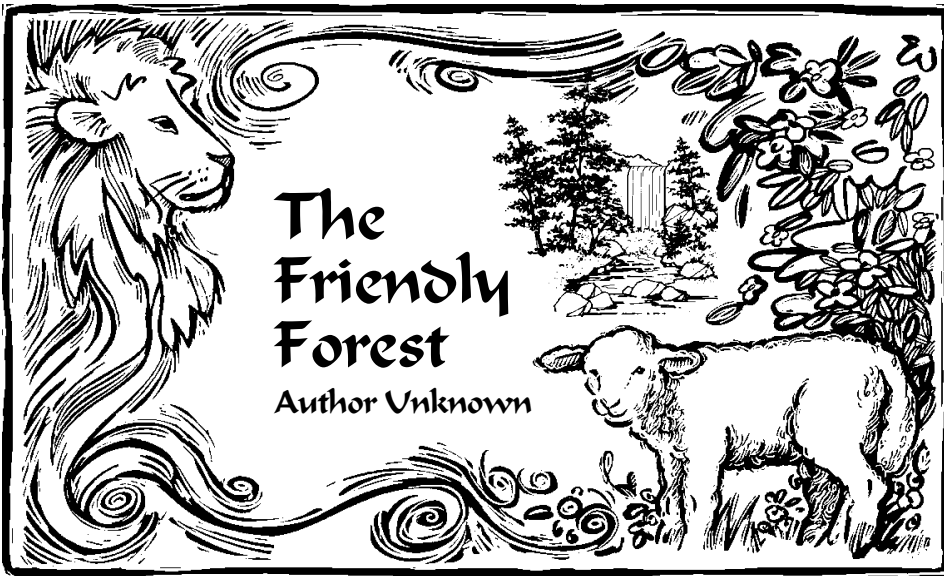
8 4 2,3 6,7 5 2 4 1 7,8

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6 2,3 8,9 4 1 7,8

! " 1,2 6,7 5,6 2,3

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!



Once upon a time in the Friendly Forest there lived a lamb who loved to graze and frolic about. One day a tiger came to the forest and said to the animals, "I would like to live among you." They were delighted. For, unlike some of the other forests, they had no tiger in their woods. The lamb, however, had some apprehensions, which, being a lamb, she sheepishly expressed to her friends. "But," said they, "Do not worry, we will talk to the tiger and explain that one of the conditions for living in this forest is that you must also let the other animals live in the forest."

So the lamb went about her life as usual. But it was not long before the tiger began to growl and make threatening gestures and menacing motions. Each time the frightened lamb went to her friends and said, "It is very uncomfortable for me here in the forest." But her friends reassured her, "Do not worry, that's just the way tigers behave."

Every day, as she went about her life, the lamb tried to remember this advice, hoping that the tiger would find someone else to growl at. It is probably correct to say that the tiger did not really spend all or even most of its time stalking the lamb. Still, the lamb

found it increasingly difficult to remove the tiger from her thoughts. Sometimes she would just catch it out of the corner of her eye, but that seemed enough to disconcert her for the day, even if the cat were asleep. Soon the lamb found that she was actually looking for the tiger. Sometimes days or even weeks went by between its intrusive actions, yet somehow, the tiger had succeeded in always being there. Eventually the tiger's existence became a part of the lamb's existence. When she tried to explain this to her friends, however, they pointed out that no harm had really befallen her and that perhaps she was just being too sensitive.

So the lamb again tried to put the tiger out of her mind. "Why," she said to herself, "should I let my relationship with just one member of the forest ruin my relationships with all the others?" But every now and then, usually when she was least prepared, the tiger would give her another start.

Finally the lamb could not take it anymore. She decided that, much as she loved the forest and her friends, more than she had ever loved any other forest or friends, the cost was too great. So she went to the other animals in the woods and said good-bye.

Her friends would not hear of it. "This is silly," they said. "Nothing has happened. You're still in one piece. You must remember that a tiger is a tiger," they repeated. "Surely this is the nicest forest in the world. We really like you very much. We would be very sad if you left." (Though it must be admitted that several of the animals were wondering what the lamb might be doing to contribute to the tiger's aggressiveness.)

Then, said two of the animals in the Friendly Forest, "Surely this whole thing can be worked out. We're all reasonable here. Stay calm. There is probably just some misunderstanding that can easily be resolved if we all sit down together and communicate." The lamb, however, had several misgivings about such a meeting. First of all, if her friends had explained the way the tiger's behavior by saying it was simply a tiger's nature to behave that way, why did they now think that as a result of communication the tiger would be able to change that nature? Second, thought the lamb, such meetings, well intentioned as they might be, usually try to resolve problems through compromise. Now, while the tiger might agree to growl less, and indeed might succeed in reducing some of its aggressive behavior, what would she, the lamb, be expected to give up in return? Be more accepting of the tiger's growling? There was something wrong, thought the lamb, with the notion that an agreement is equal if the invasive creature agrees to be less invasive and the invaded one agrees to tolerate some invasiveness. She tried to explain this to her friends but, being reasonable animals, they assured her that the important thing was to keep communicating. Perhaps the tiger didn't understand the ways of a lamb. "Don't be so sheepish," they said. "Speak up strongly when it does these things."

Though one of the less subtle animals in the forest, more uncouth in expression and unconcerned about just who remained, was overheard to remark, "I never heard of anything so ridiculous. If you want a lamb and a tiger to live in the same forest, you don't try to make them communicate. You cage the bloody tiger."

Worship & Bible Study

FDCF Fort Dodge

7:00pm Wednesdays Holy Communion
7:00pm Fridays Bible Study

NCCF Rockwell City

6:30pm Tuesdays Bible Study
6:30pm Thursdays Holy Communion

Contributions invited

The editor of this newsletter is inviting ALL READERS to contribute articles, poetry, art work, and opinions for the newsletter. So don't be bashful.



This is our second issue of "The Church of the Damascus Road Echo!" It's published between issues of the Flash! and is for distribution inside the two prisons in Fort Dodge and Rockwell City. Tell us what you think about it by writing letters to the editor and giving them to Pastor Lang or Glenn Wooten or Darrel Pennel. We want the Echo! to be yours.

