

# The Church of the Damascus Road Echo!

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January 2004  
Fort Dodge & Rockwell City, IA

## Blessings

The blessings of this world  
Come from God above.  
The gift of each passing moment.  
The gift of His precious son.

Forever I am thankful  
For what Jesus did for me,  
Bearing all my sins  
That day on Calvary.

Even though I am not worthy,  
Jesus paid the price.  
His blood covers all my sins,  
giving me eternal life.

Each day I shall praise Him  
For His love that is so true.  
Take the time to seek Him.  
This is my advice to you.

For when my time is over,  
With Jesus I will be  
Wrapped in His gracious arms of love  
Throughout eternity.

*Robert L. Johnson II 3-11-2003*

## Thanks to Thee

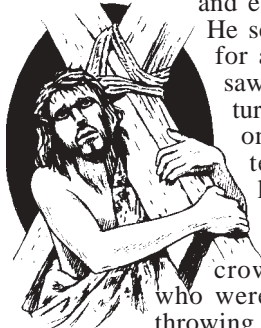
With a life full of despair,  
Where do I go from here?  
It's not for me to say,  
So I bow my head and pray:  
"Dear God, who's always there above  
With never-ending love,  
Forgive me, Father, for my life of sin,  
The roads I've traveled, the places I've been.  
I was selfish in my ways,  
Now I'm counting the days,  
Whatever it is you have planned for me,  
I'll bow my head and give thanks to thee.  
— "Woodpile" 5-7-03  
*Ray Steltenpohl, FDCF FED*

## Inside the Echo!

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## Still He Walked

He could hear the crowd screaming crucify, crucify. He could hear the hatred in their voices. These were his chosen people. He loved them and they were going to crucify him. He was beaten, bleeding and weakened, his heart was broken but still he walked. He could see the crowd as He came from the palace. He knew each face so well. He had created them, he knew every smile, laugh and shed tear, but now they were contorted with rage and anger. His heart broke, but still he walked. Was he scared? You and I would have been, so his humanness would have mandated that he was. He felt alone, his disciples left, denied, and even betrayed him.



He searched the crowd for a loving face, but saw very few. Then he turned his eyes to the only one who mattered most and he knew he would never be alone. He looked back at the crowd, at the people who were spitting at him, throwing rocks at him, and mocking him, and he knew that because of him they would never be alone, so for them he walked. The sounds of the hammer striking the spikes echoed through the crowd. The sounds of his cries echoed even louder. The cheers of the crowd as his hands and feet were nailed to the cross, intensified with each blow. Loudest of all was the small voice inside his heart that whispered, "I am with you, my son," and God's heart broke. He had let his son walk. Jesus could have asked God to end his suffering and pain, but instead he asked that God forgive the ones who were persecuting him. As he hung on that cross, dying an imaginable death, he looked out and saw not only the faces in the crowd, but also the faces of every person yet to be and his heart filled with love. As his body was dying, his heart was alive, alive with the limitless, unconditional love he has for each one of us. That is why he walked. So when you forget how much God loves you, or if you ask yourself can I be forgiven? And when you need to be reminded of how to live like Christ, remember, because he loved you, he walked for you.

— *Larry B. Lathrop, 7/4/03*



The first thing was light, He created the first man, known as Adam, and Adam was ever in his sight. Earth was what he named this world, for it was right. Earth is what we live on, for God created it.

Lord God then created Eve. In time she had Cain and Abel, which she had to conceive. Various kinds of animals were put on earth, but had to leave.

In a town there was Jesus who died on the cross for our sins. No one but Jesus was ever sinless. God gave great gifts to us. Some say the Bible means "Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth." In a period of time God will come to judge us to see what we are worth.

But we know we must always be ready before we go. Love is important among others and you must know, so pick up your Bible before the day comes and you never know, you just might go low!

— *by Matthew MacTaggart 10-29-03*

## No Excuses

The next time you feel like God can't use you, just remember -- Noah was a drunk. Abraham was too old. Isaac was a daydreamer. Jacob was a liar. Leah was ugly. Joseph was abused. Moses had a stuttering problem. Samson had long hair and was a womanizer. Rahab was a prostitute. Jeremiah and Timothy were too young.

David had an affair and was a murderer. Elijah was suicidal. Isaiah preached naked. Jonah ran from God. Naomi was a widow. Job went bankrupt. John the Baptist ate bugs. Peter denied Christ. Martha worried about everything. The Samaritan Woman was divorced...more than once! Zaccheus was too small. Paul was too religious. Timothy had an ulcer. and Lazarus was dead!

No more excuses. God's waiting to use your full potential now!

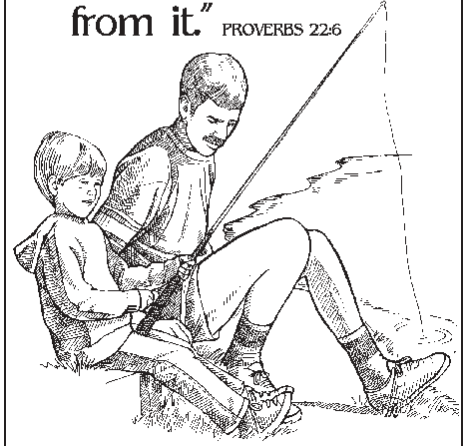
## Then God Created Church Secretaries with Typewriters.

*These sentences actually appeared in church bulletins or were announced in church services:*

1. Bertha Belch, a missionary from Africa, will be speaking tonight at Calvary Methodist. Come hear Bertha Belch all the way from Africa.
2. Announcement in a church bulletin for a national PRAYER & FASTING Conference: "The cost for attending the Fasting and Prayer conference includes meals."
3. The sermon this morning: "Jesus Walks on the Water." The sermon tonight: "Searching for Jesus."
4. "Our youth basketball team is back in action Wednesday at 8 PM in the recreation hall. Come out and watch us kill Christ the King."
5. "Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Don't forget your husbands."
6. The Peacemaking meeting scheduled for today has been canceled due to a conflict.
7. Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our community.
8. Don't let worry kill you off - let the Church help.
9. Miss Charlene Mason sang "I will not pass this way again," giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.
10. For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery down stairs.
11. Next Thursday there will be tryouts for the choir. They need all the help they can get.
12. Barbara remains in the hospital and needs blood donors for more transfusions. She is also having trouble sleeping and requests tapes of Pastor Jack's sermons.
13. During the absence of our Pastor, we enjoyed the rare privilege of hearing a good sermon when J. Stubbs supplied our pulpit.
14. The Rector will preach his farewell message after which the choir will sing "Break Forth into Joy."
15. Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24 in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.
16. A bean supper will be held on Tuesday evening in the church hall. Music will follow. ["Beans, beans, the musical fruit...?"]
17. At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be "What is Hell?" Come early and listen to our choir practice.
18. Eight new choir robes are currently needed, due to the addition of several new members and to the deterioration of some older ones.
19. Scouts are saving aluminum cans, bottles, and other items to be recycled. Proceeds will be used to cripple children.
20. Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you want remembered.
21. Attend and you will hear an excellent speaker and heave a healthy lunch.
22. Our church will host an evening of fine dining, superb entertainment, and gracious hostility.
23. Potluck supper Sunday at 5:00 P. M. - prayer and medication to follow
24. The ladies of the Church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon.
25. This evening at 7 P.M. there will be a hymn sing in the park across from the Church. Bring a blanket and come prepared to sin.
26. Ladies Bible Study will be held Thursday morning at 10. All ladies are invited to lunch in the Fellowship Hall after the B. S. is done.
27. The pastor would appreciate it if the ladies of the congregation would lend him their electric girdles for the pancake breakfast next Sunday.
28. Low Self Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 PM. Please use the back door.
29. The eighth-graders will be presenting Shakespeare's Hamlet in the Church basement Friday at 7 PM. The Congregation is invited to attend this tragedy.
30. Weight Watchers will meet at 7 PM at the First Presbyterian Church. Please use large double doors at the side entrance.
31. The Associate Minister unveiled the church's new tithing campaign slogan last Sunday: "I Upped My Pledge - Up Yours
32. Smile at someone who is hard to love. Say "hell" to someone who doesn't care much about you.

—John Sehring, Dell Rapids, SD (Dec 5, 2003)

**T**rain a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it." PROVERBS 22:6



## Drug Problem

I had a drug problem when I was young. I was drug to church on Sunday morning. I was drug to church for weddings and funerals. I was drug to family reunions no matter the weather. I was drug to the bus stop to go to school every weekday. I was drug by my ears when I was disrespectful to adults and teachers. I was also drug to the woodshed when I disobeyed my parents. Those drugs are still in my veins and they affect my behavior in everything I do, say, and think. They are stronger than cocaine, crack, or heroin, and if today's children had this kind of drug problem, America might be a better place.

## 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.

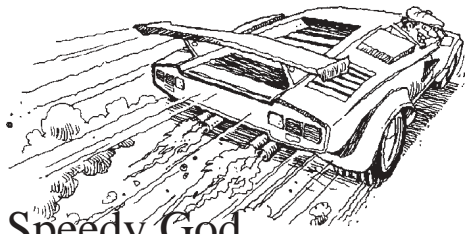
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## Peanuts





### Speedy God

Out of the blue one day, Jonah, 5, asked, "Mom, who is speedy God?" She wasn't sure what he meant, so she asked him to repeat the question. He repeated, "Who is speedy God? Is he the same as the real God or is he a different one?"

His mother told him she had no idea what he was talking about. So Jonah continued, "Well, you should know who he is. You talk to him in church all the time. The leader says: 'Let us give Thanks to God...' and then everyone says 'Thanks Speedy God'" (Thanks Be to God)



### World's Easiest Quiz?

(Passing requires 4 correct answers)

- 1) How long did the Hundred Years War last?
- 2) Which country makes Panama hats?
- 3) From which animal do we get catgut?
- 4) In which month do Russians celebrate the October Revolution?
- 5) What is a camel's hair brush made of?
- 6) The Canary Islands in the Pacific are named after what animal?
- 7) What was King George VI's first name?
- 8) What color is a purple finch?
- 9) Where are Chinese gooseberries from?
- 10) What is the color of the black box in a commercial airplane?

All done? Check your answers below!

**Answers to the 'Easy' Quiz**  
 1) 116 years; 2) Ecuador; 3) Sheep and Horses; 4) November; 5) Squirrel fur; 6) Dogs; 7) Albert; 8) Crimson; 9) New Zealand; 10) Orange, of course. What do you mean you failed?



### New Year's Resolutions

Use the code to read some important words to live by.

CODE:	A=1	D=4	H=8	L=12	P=16	T=20	X=24
	B=2	E=5	I=9	M=13	Q=17	U=21	Y=25
	C=3	F=6	J=10	N=14	R=18	V=22	Z=26
		G=7	K=11	O=15	S=19	W=23	

8 1 22 5    14 15    15 20 8    5 18    7 15 4 19

2 5 6 15 18 5    13 5

8 15 14 15 18    25 15 21 18    6 1 20 8 5 18

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8 15 12 25

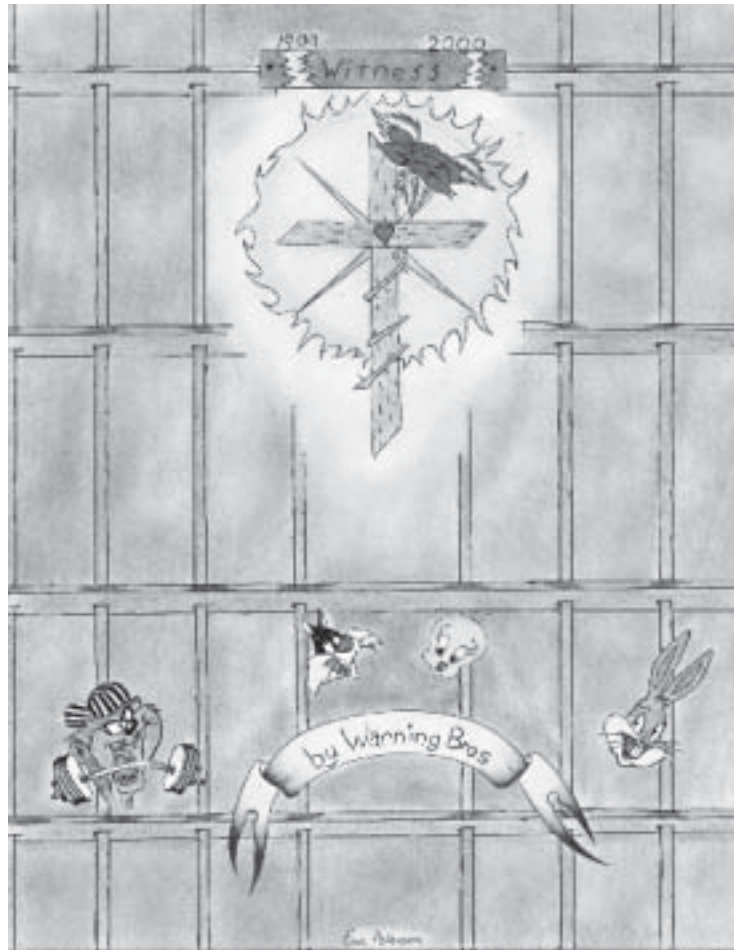
12 5 1 18 14    20 8 5    20 5 14

3 15 13 13 1 14    4 13 5 14 20 19

Answer: Have no other gods before me. Honor your father and mother. Don't misuse God's name. Keep the Sabbath holy. Learn the Ten Commandments.



by Ivan Perez-Rodriguez, June '03



by Eric Peterson

## I Walk Alone

Words of wisdom from the old and wise:  
Never judge a man by his look or size.

For when he walks alone in a  
field of thorns and weeds, laughed at by all,  
only in his heart does he bleed.

So, in your mind always  
remember to heed my advice,

Make jest of no man or forever pay the price.  
"He that walketh with wise men shall be wise:  
but a companion of fools shall be destroyed"  
(Proverbs 13:20). by Anthony Castro, Sr. FDCF

## 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.

## Worship & Bible Study

FDCF Fort Dodge

7:00pm Wednesdays ..... Holy Communion  
6:30pm Fridays ..... Prayer Team  
7:00pm Fridays ..... Bible Study

NCCF Rockwell City

6:30pm Tuesdays .... Prayer & Bible Study  
6:30pm Thursdays ..... Holy Communion

## Influence

If you are going to be used by God, he  
will take you through a multitude of ex-  
periences that are not meant for you at  
all. They are meant to make you useful in  
his hands and to enable you to understand  
what happens in other souls, so you will not  
be surprised at what you come across.

— William Bartlett FDCF 2003

## One With Him

What I want to be is a better person;  
To be truly nice without rhyme or reason.  
To get up each morning, And live my life for Thee,  
The One who sacrificed his Son that we may be free.  
To live and walk in the footsteps of the Holy One.

To have thy will, not mine, be done.  
I want to be truly honest with every word I say,  
To be blessed by the Holy Spirit is what I pray.  
Since I became a child of the Lord  
My life is filled with happiness, I'm never bored.

Oh, how my soul is overflowing  
With praise and forgiveness the Lord is sowing.  
I have given my self to him  
To do his will and reject all sin.

Satan cannot make me a worker of his way,  
Because I repent and the Lord saved me today.

— Cash J. Burch 7-26-03

## Asking Him from Within

As I entered alone in this tiny cell,  
I felt as though I was headed for hell.  
With walls cold and damp, door made of steel,  
The only thing left to do was drop and kneel.

If I wanted to be free and filled with love,  
I had to get in touch with the man above.  
Only he can open my eyes and make me see,  
Lift my spirits and set me free.

As I leave this tiny cell,  
I know I've escaped the bonds of hell.  
Because I opened the book and read within,  
I went to him and confessed my sins.

I knew if I wanted this new start,  
I had to ask him into my heart.  
He's the only one who holds the key,  
To grant me life in Eternity.

by Chris Egenberger FDCF '02

## Crayon Lesson

We could learn a lot from crayons:  
some are sharp, some are pretty,  
some are dull, some have weird  
names, and all are different colors...but they  
all have to learn to live in the same box, and  
each one is necessary to complete the pic-  
ture. We are all one box of crayons in Christ's  
family, the church.