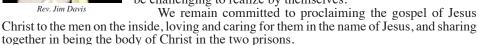
An Eye on the Future

It's difficult writing this newsletter article without being able to get inside to spend time with the guys. While I stay in touch through CorrLinks with the Presidents of CoDR FD and RC, it's not the same as being there with them for worship, prayer, support of each other and the other ministry we share. We're hoping to get back inside this summer, God willing.

Tim Fouse-Clark is the most recent chaplain for NCCF and FDCF. I have communicated with him a bit through email and he sounds like he will be very supportive of CoDR. He is looking forward to learning more about CoDR. I hope to have lunch with him soon.

We will also soon be welcoming a new warden for NCCF and FDCF. I look forward to building positive, supportive relationships with both the warden and chaplain that will be beneficial for the ministry of CoDR.

We continue to explore the possibility of CoDR being part of a shared ministry with several area congregations. We believe the relationship could be beneficial for all the congregations involved. It seems that we will probably know the direction this will go by the end of July. We are cautiously hopeful that this arrangement might provide long-term stability for all these ministries that may be challenging to realize by themselves.

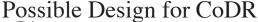


We appreciate your prayers, the many ways you support this life-changing ministry, and your financial gifts. Jesus reminds us that when we visit the prisoners, we're also visiting him. Thank you for your support in loving Christ as we love the men in the two prisons.

When we are able to return to NCCF and FDCF for worship we will invite all of you to join us to experience this life changing ministry for the men on the inside and those of us who are blessed to share in this ministry with them.

God bless all of you.

-Pastor Jim Davis



oDR started a long-range planning process in the Fall of 2019. We made good progress until March 2020 when the pandemic shut down our congregations, including CoDR. While most of our congregations have reopened for some form of in-person worship, volunteers are still not allowed to enter the North Central or Fort Dodge Facilities. We're hoping we will be by this Fall. Along with our ministry inside at a stop, COVID made it difficult to meet and plan for the future of CoDR. While meeting with each other has been a challenge, we have managed to make progress, but it has been slow.

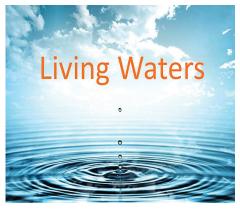
One of the possibilities CoDR leadership has been exploring is becoming part of a shared or parish ministry where several congregations share staff and resources to better serve all the members we are called to minister. The CoDR Outside Church Council voted in March to have me develop a model for ministry that would include CoDR. Inside leadership is aware of what is happening and is supportive of CoDR being part of a shared parish ministry.

I have made a recommendation to Bishop Halaas for such a ministry that would include CoDR. After she has a chance to review the recommendation, we will begin moving in that direction. While this is changing how CoDR has been structured, we're confident being part of a shared ministry will be a blessing, and help us continue to proclaim the life-changing gospel of Jesus Christ to the men on the inside through our presence and love for them.

Please pray for us as we await the time when we'll be able to be inside for worship. We're grateful for your prayers and support that make this ministry possible.

Any questions? We welcome them. God bless all of you.

-Pastor Jim Davis



Living Waters

Drink in deeply of the Living Waters Holding up your sons and daughters All get filled with the Holy Ghost Taking back all that's lost

Today's the day to take the land Promised from when time began Be strong and of good courage God's Holy Spirit will go before us

Let us go in power and take the land With Holy Ghost, and God's Right Hand So how then could we ever loose? Only if we should so choose

So dance before Him, all your might And sing Him a knew song We take the land at first light Peace in our hearts, all fear is gone

Jesus filled us with the Holy Ghost Let the Living Waters flow Surround us with Your Heavenly Host Tomorrow the Promised Land we go

—William Bell-8/3/00

Inside the Flash!

Page 2 - Come, You Blessed of my Father

Page 2 - Holy Humor

Page 3 - Ministry Supporters

Page 3 - Waiting for the Future to Unfold

Page 4 - Worship/Bible Study Schedules

Page 4 - Inside/Outside Church Councils

Page 4 - Invite a Council Member

Page 4 - Artist's Corner

amascus Road Inside News Issue 24.3

Come, You Blessed of My Father By: William E. Bell 05/05/06

Those who work in Corrections will tell you that many people who are subjected to jail and/or prison will find GOD. They call it "Jail House Religion" because it has been their experience that soon after one is no longer incarcerated; they leave that "Religious Experience" behind. For the most part they are right.

I for one do not doubt the sincerity of these jail house conversions. God will use a crisis situation in our lives to draw us near to Him. Very few would call out to Him, with a broken and contrite spirit, without some sort of crisis or hardship.

Spiritual transplants occur as people become Christians and receive a new heart. But to grow strong in the Lord they must receive intensive nurturing, renewing their minds with the Word of GOD. Their spirits are a new creation in Christ Jesus, but their souls (minds) and flesh (bodies) want to continue on in the things they are used to.

It is exciting to be part of the birthing process, by praying them into the Kingdom of GOD. However, it is necessary to nurse new born children of GOD on the Word, and to intercede for them till Christ is formed in them. The Churches involved in prison ministry for the most part focus on in prison services and Bible studies, which is a very important part of the process. But what has been lacking is the aftercare ministry, which would continue the work when a prisoner is released.

No one is suggesting that coddling these people is the answer, but if we deal with them scripturally, we do not want "the cares of this world nor the deceitfulness of riches to choke the Word from their hearts." We must help provide fertile ground for the seed to grow and bear fruit (Mark 4:14-20).

Paul wrote to the new Christians at Galatia: "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you" (Galatians 4:19). These were baby Christians to whom Paul wrote, ever careful to see that they receive the right teaching and grow to maturity. He prayed fervently, interceding for them, holding them before the Throne of GOD.

Jesus told us that when we withhold things from His children that they need, when it is within our power to provide it to them, that we are in essence withholding it from Him. We will be held accountable for our actions on that great and terrible day of His coming!

I want to hear on that day; "Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit that kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; For I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.... I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me" (Mathew 25:34-36, 40).

"Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ" (Colossians 2:8).

Rather than question these conversions of those who are in prisons, because of the outcome once they are released, maybe we should question how the world describes "Jail House Religion."

Would there be a different result if the Church became accountable for these new converts, rather than release them into the same environment from which they came, and expect a different

Let us step back from the wisdom of the world and take a look at this issue in light of scripture: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are new" (Corinthians 5:17).

"Bill had been a drug smuggler for years. He lived on both sides of the border between the U.S. and old Mexico. He was arrested this side of the border in New Mexico and ended up serving prison sentences in two states as a result of those convictions. Though he had been addicted to narcotics for years, he rationalized that what he did was not so bad, because all he sold was marijuana. Over the years, seeing what narcotics did to people, ruining their lives, he would not be a part of that evil. He never realized that marijuana also had a lasting effect on people, just as alcohol or tobacco...

While in jail he got a chance to observe the Church services held right on the cellblock every Sunday. He noticed that even the most hardened criminals were quiet and respectful when the pastor came and spoke about Jesus, and after about two months of asking questions he realized that Jesus Christ had to have been the Son of GOD. While reading the prayer on the back of a pamphlet, asking Jesus into his life, he felt as if warm oil had been poured out over his head, and that he was at peace. He knew without a doubt that something had just happened to him. In his spirit, all things had just become new. That was in 1986.

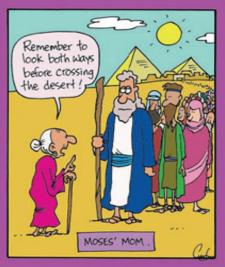
For the next three years, while in prison, he studied the Bible, and it was evident to everyone he knew that something was different about Bill. He was very different, almost peculiar.

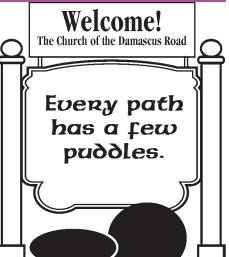
When he got out of prison in 1989, and moved back home with his family, he very soon found himself back in his old lifestyle starting with alcohol, then pot, and on to narcotics, and within one year he was in worse condition than he had been before.

Mathew 12:43-45: "When an evil spirit comes out of a man, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, 'I will return to the house I left.' When it arrives,

Continued next page

Holy Humor





Get the Flash! in a Flash

To receive the Flash! electronically as a .pdf, just send us your email address (include your name and address so we can stop sending by mail) to cdlng@aol.com.

Thanks!

—Carroll Lang, Editor



Issue 24.2

May/June 2021

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. Carroll Lang, Editor, 515-571-6566 Judy Lang, Proofreader

Anyone wishing to be on our mailing list may send name, address, and phone numbers to the address below, or by e-mail at: DamascusCh@ aol.com. The Flash can also be sent to your email address. Our office is at St. Olaf Lutheran Church.

The Church of the Damascus Road 239 North 11th Street Fort Dodge, IA 50501 Phone: 515-955-3579

Email: DamascusCh@aol.com

May/June 2021 3 Damaseus Rose

Ministry Supporters

Churches, Organizations & Individuals (based on 2020 donations)

Mission Partners \$3,000+ per year
Emanuel-St. John Lutheran Church, Lytton
Faith Lutheran Church, Odebolt
St. Olaf Lutheran Church, Fort Dodge
St. John's Lutheran Church, Le Mars
Trinity Lutheran Church, Rutland
Dale & Nancy Bruns, Jolley
Lee & Molly Gallentine, Webster City
Lyle & Hilda Hartling, Lohenan, MO
Rev. Carroll & Judy Lang, Fort Dodge
Charles & Mary Sukup, Dougherty

Sponsors \$2,000-2,999 per year
First Lutheran Church, Milford
St. John Lutheran Church, Pomeroy
Hands of Hope Conference
Dennis & Candace Booth, Lytton
George Hedges, Scranton
Troy & Karyn Leininger, Spencer

Extra Milers \$1,000-\$1,999 per year

Augustana Lutheran Church, Manson
Badger Lutheran Church, Badger
Bethany Lutheran Church, Laurens
Bethany Lutheran Church, Laurens
Bethany Lutheran Church, Algona
First Lutheran Church, Algona
First United Methodist, Fort Dodge
Grace Lutheran Church, Fort Dodge
Hope Lutheran Church, Everly
Lost Island Lutheran Church, Ruthven
New Covenant Church, Fort Dodge
Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Albert City
Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Glidden
St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Fort Dodge

St. Paul Lutheran Church, Palmer
St. Paul Lutheran Church, Rockwell City
Trinity Lutheran Church, Ottosen
Zion St. John Lutheran Church, Sheffield
Stanley & Marlene Ahrendt, Sioux City
Dave & Luann Bohnet, Jefferson
Richard Hersom, Fort Dodge
Rev. Jim & Mindy McColley, Fort Dodge
Norman & Alice Nielsen, Spencer

Adam & Inga Sanford, Allen, TX
Melba Shelby, Fort Dodge
Noel & Linda Singer, Webster City
Judith Walrod, Somers
onard & Geoganne Woodruff, Fort Dodge

Elwood & Lavon Ricke, Fargo, ND

Leonard & Geoganne Woodruff, Fort Dodge
Friends \$500-\$999 per year
American Lutheran Church. Melvin

Faith Lutheran Church, Holstein
First Presbyterian Church, Jefferson
First Presbyterian Church, Lakota
Good Hope Lutheran Church, Titonka
Immanuel Lutheran Church, Harlan
Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Humboldt
Samuel Lutheran Church, Eagle Grove
St. John's Lutheran Church, Corwith
St. John's Lutheran Church, Treynor
Ullensvang Lutheran Church, Thor
Darin & Linda Dykstra, Maurice
Glen & Sharon Houts, N. Sioux City, SD
Fr. Margaret Jackson, Fort Dodge
Duane & Carol Kropf, Kimballton
Ken & Heidrun Mechler, Sheffield

Dale & Lisa Siebrecht, Curlew Rev. Paul Stone, Eagle Grove, Christopher & Rebecca Worley, Alexandria, MN



Roger Natte, Fort Dodge



Still Waiting for Our Future to Unfold Last issue I wrote: "We are still not allowed inside to join our brothers for worship, but the

Last issue I wrote: "We are still not allowed inside to join our brothers for worship, but the ministry of CoDR inside continues faithfully during this lockout." This is still true, but there is hope for the future, since our brothers are now allowed in-person family visits.

Let us continue to pray for the end to the pandemic, that we reach herd immunity so the prisons can open up again and our reentry ministry can continue as before.



When we are allowed once again to meet face-to-face with our brothers who are hoping for a chance to make a new start with the help of a Reentry Reintegration Team. At least then the team and camdidate will be able to assess each other and decide if the partnership will be a good "fit" for both. That's one of the important parts of our process we have not been able to do during the lockout, and we look forward to meeting again.

So, again, what the future holds for reentry, we do not have a clear picture right now, but even though we don't have a 100% success rate, people realize we have helped *some*, and want to know more. We shall see how that evolves in this uncertain time. Are we all in this together? I pray that we are.

-Rev. Carroll Lang



Continued from page 3

it finds the house unoccupied, swept clean and put in order. Then it goes and takes with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man is worse than the first. That is how it will be with this wicked generation."

With his brother who was an alcoholic and a drug addict, and father who drank often, it was an easy and natural thing for him to do. With many cares of this world to contend with, and as ambition to reach a level of financial independence that he had once enjoyed, the Word took a back seat in Bill's program.

The parable of the sower, which Jesus gave to us in Mark 4, touches on this very subject. "The sower sows the Word... Now these are the ones sown among the thorns: they are the ones who hear the Word, and the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things enter in and choke the Word and it becomes unfruitful." But then He continues: "But these are the ones sown in good ground, those who hear the Word, accept it, and bear fruit: Some thirty-fold, some sixty and some a hundred.

What would be conducive to good ground for a newly-born Christian whose spirit is a new creation, but whose mind and body still need to be renewed?

I believe that an aftercare ministry is imperative to the successful transition from prison (and learning about the things of God) to the community (putting them into practice) – "And be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Romans 12:2)...

The Word of GOD says that Satan is the god of this world, so why would we ever leave these newly born Christians in the hands of secular authorities when it is within our means to provide a viable alternative through the Church?

"I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to ME" (Matthew 25:40).

The Church of the Damascus Road Aftercare Ministry has been reaching out to those who can benefit from our ministry. In the past few months we have built a foundation of sponsors from each of the participating worship services that are here at NCCF. These sponsors allow us to identify men that are committed to growing spiritually, and in need of assistance to reenter society. In March we held a weekend of Training at Cherokee, IA, facilitated by C.O.P.E. of St. Louis, MO. The yield of that weekend was additional support teams in Sioux City, Holstein, Lytton, Rockwell City, and Carroll IA; these are in addition to the already existing teams in Humboldt and Fort Dodge.

CoDR is a non-profit Reentry Reintegration Ministry, that works....... SCRIPTURALLY!!!

Thank You, William E. Bell

Invite a Council Member

ur worship services are on weeknights so that people on the outside can worship with the inmates and not miss worship in their own congregations. This allows members of the Outside Council to visit congregations on Sundays, and give a brief update on the ministry during worship, or to the children, an adult forum, or a cross-generational class session, or any or all of the above about CoDR, and are open to suggestions. Just need time to prepare.

Call 515-955-3579 or write to The Church of the Damascus Road, 239 N 11th St, Fort Dodge, IA 50501 or email <DamascusCh@aol.com> to arrange for a visit.

Inmates:

ou can have your original artwork in this space in the Flash; get permission from your counselor to hand it to the pastor. It will be scanned and then returned to you.

The Church of the Damascus Road 239 North 11th Street Fort Dodge, IA 50501 515-955-3579

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



May/June 2021

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. Inmates, get permission from your Counselor to hand it to the pastor. Don't be bashful.



CoDR on FaceBook
The Church of Damascus Road is now on Facebook. There are currently a few videos and pictures and will be updated when more are available. Also check for updates for upcoming events. To LIKE us, log into Facebook with the link https://www. facebook.com/thechurchofthedamascusroad

James Rainer "Jesus On the Cross" FDCF

Non-Profit Org U.S.Postage **PAID** Fort Dodge, Iowa Permit #4

Artists' Corner

NCCF Church Council

| Kline Goeders- <i>Pres/ST</i> . | Lib |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Tim Smith-VP | |
| Zachary Dye-Sec | Troy Johnson |
| Tanner Rosberg | Iesse Flynn |
| Tunner Trasserig | |
| | |

Weekly Schedule

| 6:30pm Tuesd | lays | Bible | Study |
|--------------|------|-------|-------|
| | days | | |

Reintegration Steering Committee Unfilled-Pres.....Judy Lang-VP/Treas Candace Booth-Sec......Kelli Glasgo Mark Juhl Ed Fleming Doug Rossbach Dave Bohnet Jan Enderlin Connie Gustafson Joyce Phelps...........Carroll Lang-R/R Director Rev. Jim Davis, Interim Pastor

Outside Church Council

| Outside Charen Council | |
|--|----|
| Mark Juhl- <i>Pres</i> Dave Bohnet- <i>V</i> | P |
| Judy Lang- <i>Treas</i> Doug Rossbach-Se | ec |
| Joyce Phelps Kelli Glass | 20 |
| Ed FlemingCandace Boo | th |
| Carroll Lang Jan Enderl | in |

Connie Gustafson Rev. Jim Davis, Interim Pastor

FDCF Church Council

| Trekel Barker -Pres/ST | . Bradley Bauman- <i>VP</i> | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Dakota Reme-Sec | | |
| Doug Young | . Kristopher Crabtree | |
| Joseph Chapman | Quartez Watson | |
| John Lusk | | |
| Aaron Britton | | |

Weekly Schedule

6:30pm Wednesdays Holy Communion 5:30pm Wednesdays . Bible Study/Council

A note to secretaries and pastors-Copy Me, Please!

e 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.

Thank you for your support.

Carroll Lang, Editor