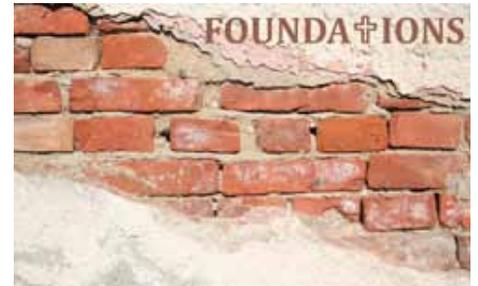
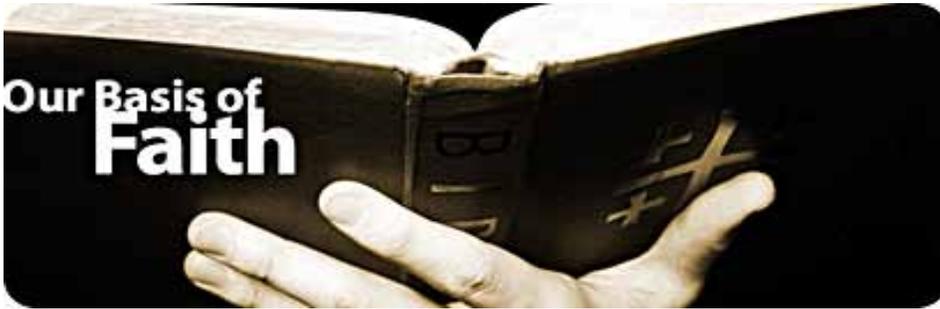


# The Church of the Damascus Road

## Flash!

Volume 20  
Issue No.2  
March 2017  
Fort Dodge & Rockwell City, IA



## The Basis of Faith

Of late I have heard a lot from others about faith that leaves me a bit disconcerted. I could go through a complete teaching of the word “faith” in the Hebrew or Greek, but that doesn’t mean much to those who don’t speak it. Many “believers” will quote Romans 10:17 “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” And they believe, erroneously, that is all they need do, to hear it and believe it.

In the New Testament, Yahshua (Jesus) spoke of signs many times, and even Paul makes note of it in 1 Corinthians 1:22 “For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom.” Signs are those things provided through the Scriptures that provide the knowledge to understand our salvation and eternal life. In the verse prior to Romans 10:17, verse 16 reads: But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah said, “Lord, who has believed our report?”

The gospel means “the good news,” there were no New Testament gospels written as yet when Paul wrote this. He was referring to Isaiah 53:1 “Who has believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?” Who will believe in the coming Messiah, if you haven’t understood the Word of God, the Old Testament?

Signs are found throughout the Bible, they provide prophecy of what is to come, and what has been. When God commanded Moses to be His earthly guide, it is written in Exodus 4:17 “And thou shalt take this rod in thine hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs.” Signs, without them we are oblivious to the truth. When Yahshua spoke in John 17:17 “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.” He was making the point that without the Word, we would not know the truth of our salvation or the truth of eternal life. And without signs to justify our belief, we could take the book “Moby Dick” and create a faith around the great white whale, and no one could contend against it!

The renowned 19th century evangelist, George Mueller, said that, “Faith is believing that every word in the Bible speaks truth.” Not just the New Testament or the Old Testament, but the entire book, from Genesis through Revelation. And what is the Bible full of? Signs! Why did the disciples of John the Baptist leave John to follow Yahshua? Because they were looking for the signs that would show them, according to the Word of God, that this man Yahshua was the Messiah.

If you say to me, that means I have to have proof that Yahshua is the Messiah where is the faith in that? You haven’t been listening, faith is the belief that every Word in the Holy Scriptures is truth. And by those Words we are given the signs that we can say in faith, “because the entire Bible speaks truth, this is what the Messiah is prophesied to do, and He did them. Therefore, Yahshua is the Messiah.”

John 2:11 “This beginning of miracles (signs) did Yahshua (Jesus) in Cana of Galilee, and many, manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.” The disciples believed because they knew the signs spoken of in the Old Testament, the Hebrew Scriptures. And they witnessed Yahshua performing the signs that the Hebrew Scriptures said He would do if He were the true Messiah.

2 Timothy 2:15 “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” It isn’t enough to just hear it and believe it. Now how do you define your faith?

—Michael Alkire, Dec. 2015

## CoDR Foundation

The Church of the Damascus Road has established a Foundation. We received a very generous gift from a St. Olaf Lutheran Church family with the understanding that we establish a Foundation in support of The Church of the Damascus Road.

The foundation has been established. We hope it grows to help support the ministries of this congregation in perpetuity.

The Foundation’s separate Board of Directors will decide each year how to use the income from the capital in the fund. While none of the principle can be used for current expenses, the income from investments will help maintain and grow CoDR’s programs and services.

Donations for the Foundation should be in addition to regular, ongoing donations to support CoDR’s ministry.

If you are considering CoDR in your will, bequests to the CoDR Foundation is a perfect way to ensure that your legacy lives on in this ministry inside the walls and fences, and will continue to grow more support as time goes on.

Thanks for your consideration and support of The Church of the Damascus Road into the future.

“Whatever you have done to the least of these my brothers, you have done it to me.”  
*Matthew 25*

## Inside the Flash!

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### Words from God

**D**uring the December 2016 Brothers in Blue, in the Fort Dodge Correctional Facility, the Palanca team was blessed to have the Spiritual leading of an outside team member. One night he challenged each of us to go back to our units and meditate, listening to the voice of the Father and then bring a “word from God” with us the following morning. There were many words that were given to the members of our team, yet not one of them the same. Each one of us were given a different word, showing how the Spirit works differently in each of us to work together as one, edifying and uplifting the body as a whole. The Spirit spoke again to bring these “words” together into a message from Him (below), to share with others how we are all called and anointed to be His witnesses in whatever place we may find ourselves. Whether you are swinging a hammer, leading a group, sitting at a computer, caring for someone under anesthesia, or locked behind a fence or wall; we are called to shine a light reflecting the love He has given us with others. It was truly amazing to watch this team, this “body,” working as one with humble spirits and servants’ hearts to not only serve Him, but to serve others and be a light right where they were. So we not only say “Thank you,” but also challenge each person reading this to be that light for Christ right where you are each day; serve Him, serve others, show His love!

### In This Place

**Y**ou have been anointed to by My witness in this place. Offer patience and forgiveness always; because it was first offered to you. Your perseverance through faith will inspire others to do the same. Be obedient to My will and in doing so you will confirm My sovereignty in this place. The enemy no longer has dominion in your life. Instead, I have given you peace and true happiness; possibly for the first time. While I accept your praise with joy, what I desire most is for you to recognize My love. I love you!



### Beep, Beep, Beep

Where am I going with my life?  
 Why am I running with this knife?  
 What if I slip and fall?  
 Do I even care at all  
 That I could stab myself in the chest  
 Or cut myself and bleed to death?  
 How did this needle get in my arm?  
 Why am I stealing Annie from this farm?  
 My mind is losing reality’s grip,  
 I think it’s time to abandon ship.  
 In the dark abyss I go,  
 Chained to the rock pulling me down so low.  
 Where the pressure never gives or lets up  
 Crushing my spirit and draining my cup.  
 My cup of life no longer flows over  
 With the weight of my sin on my shoulders.  
 A flash of light and my breath is gone,  
 Why did I live my life so wrong?  
 Why didn’t I take the time to stop and think  
 Or try to swim when I started to sink?  
 With no life left and only darkness,  
 I’m locked into my past of selfishness.  
 Beep, Beep, Beep,  
 There is that familiar sound.  
 I open my eyes and look around.  
 Everyone’s crying and in a daze  
 Until they see me and are amazed.  
 I see the pain that’s in their eyes  
 I open my mouth, but start to cry!  
 It’s too late now, ‘cuz they already know,  
 They all had to watch my addiction grow.  
 Time is back and my feelings are real.  
 Thank you, Lord, for granting my appeal.  
 He gave me breath and brought me back  
 On this earth, in this world, in the hospital I sat  
 Confused and scared, I started to run,  
 Locked and loaded, carrying this gun.  
 “Death before dishonor,” my loyalty cried!  
 Running from God and trying to hide,  
 Not ready to pay the price for my sins,  
 Losing in a game where the house always wins.  
 He watched me as I stumbled and fell,  
 Until the time was right and He pulled me from Hell.  
 What I thought was the end was only the start  
 Of God, my Father, and His Son, changing my heart.

—Jonathan Gardner NCCF 10-11-12



### Get the Flash in a Flash

We now send the Flash! electronically as a .pdf to those who request to get it via the web. Not only do we save paper, ink and printing costs, but you will get your newsletter in a flash, and you can also see photos in color. Just send us your email address (include your name and address so we can stop sending by mail) to [cdlng@aol.com](mailto:cdlng@aol.com).

Thanks!

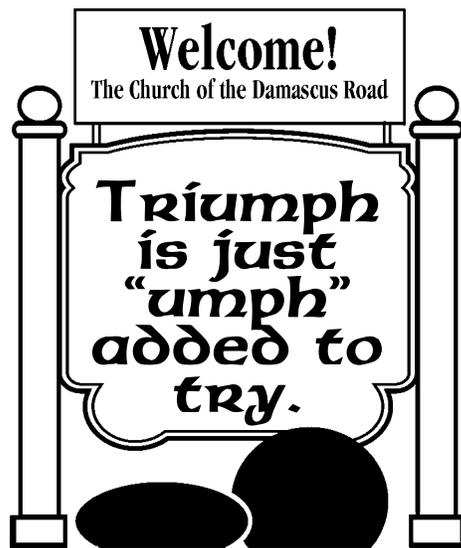
—Carroll Lang, Editor

### Note to Supporters

**S**ince we began the \$100-a-Month Club, the list of churches and individuals contributing \$100 per month had grown to 58. However, the value of \$100 has been diminishing while expenses continue to rise.

Please consider increasing your donation to \$125 or more each month to help us “keep our heads above water.”

So now the list will also reflect those who give \$125 or more each month.



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

Issue 20.2 March 2017

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. Paul Stone, Pastor  
 Carroll Lang, Editor  
 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](mailto: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



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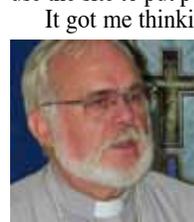
*Thank You*  
 FOR YOUR HELP

# REentry integration

"It's a Ministry,  
 Not a Program"

## God Stays the Course

Before 2017 is over, Mark Zuckerberg will no longer be with Facebook, only 17 years after creating the social media site. When he started it he wanted to create a community of people around the world who would come together in support and encouragement. Instead, people use the site to put people down and say nasty things about people. Mark is disgusted because of that.



It got me thinking. God created a world. A perfect world, with plants, animals and humans living in harmony — for a short time. Then humans blew it and the harmony was destroyed. However, even though I am sure God is disappointed, unlike Mark Zuckerberg God has not quit. He has continued to love everything and everyone he created and, because of Jesus' life, death and resurrection, God never throws in the towel. He loves us in spite of ourselves. So, whether we are small time sinners or big time sinners, he "loves us anyway."

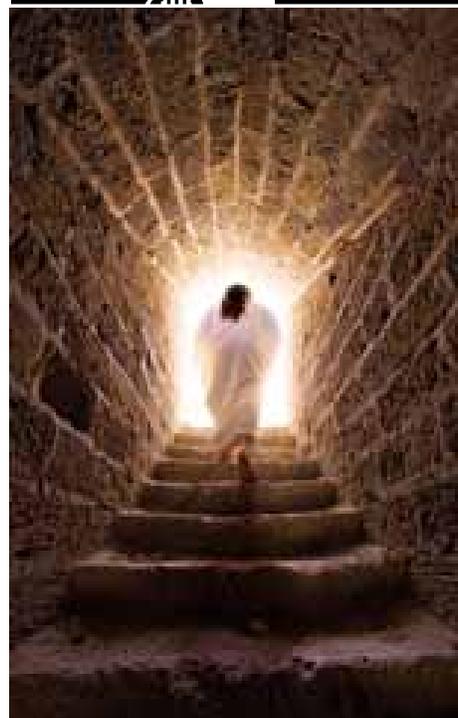
That's true of all who, in their sin, commit crimes and end up in prison. God loves and forgives them and wants us to do the same. That's where we all can help. As a caring part of a Reentry Reintegration team you may need to help a returning citizen maintain a positive attitude and approach to living "on the outside." You may also have to provide food and drink for this 'stranger,' help him find clothes to wear and assist him to make the transition back into society by helping him find a job and a congregation and realize his niche in your community. When you do, you will have been part of bringing about a miracle. You may have to help others in the community love them as God loves them.

Because of prison overcrowding, there is a push to give early releases to ease the problem, and caring trained reentry teams are needed now more than ever.

If you are willing to form a Reentry Reintegration team in your area, contact me by phone or email below and we will set a date for a training session.

We also need help to form new teams in western Iowa, developing more teams around the state (and the USA). Please give me a call at 515-571-6566 or email me at CDLng@aol.com.

—Rev. Carroll Lang, NW IA Director



## The Tomb

*Tune: The Old Rugged Cross*

In a tomb far away,  
 My Savior did not stay,  
 He loved us so much he arose.  
 And he didn't stop there,  
 He appeared in the air,  
 To take us some day to his home.  
 CHORUS

CHORUS:  
 So forever I'll love that dear tomb,  
 For he rose from it at early dawn,  
 And a room he has for me somewhere,  
 And he's coming someday in the air.

Oh, that old humble tomb,  
 There was really no room,  
 As it was when he first came to earth.  
 But he left that dear place,  
 And the earth can't erase  
 All the things Jesus did from his birth.  
 CHORUS

*Words by Don Will*

## Invite the Pastor

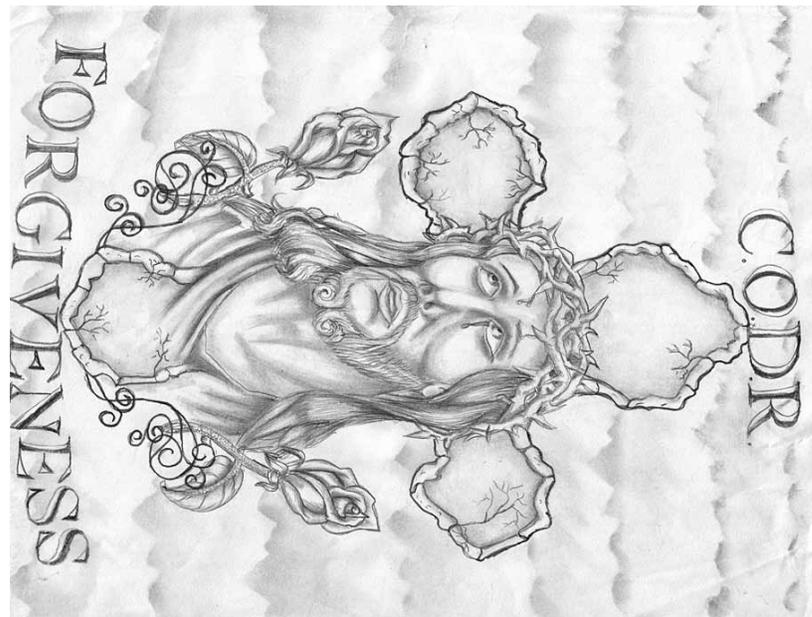
**O**ur worship services are on weeknights so that people on the outside can worship with the inmates and not miss worship in their own congregations. And this enables the pastor to visit congregations on Sundays. He can give a brief update on the ministry, a sermon, a children's sermon, an adult forum, a cross-generational class session, or any or all of the above, and is open to suggestions. Just needs 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:

**Y**ou can have your original artwork in this space in the Flash; simply hand your art to Pastor Stone. It will be scanned and then returned to you.

James Rainer FDCF 2017



Artists' Corner

The Church of the Damascus Road  
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515-955-3579

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## CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Thanks for  
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March 2017

## All Readers: Send Contributions

**T**he 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.



www.codrcare.org

## CoDR on FaceBook

**T**he 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>

### NCCF Church Council

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Ben Gordon ..... Joshua Schaefer  
Mark Wastun ..... Terence Walker  
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Charles Foster ..... James Whitehill

### Weekly Schedule

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

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Mark Juhl ..... Mike Malvesti  
Pastor Kim Wills ..... Doug Rossbach  
Pastor Paul Stone ..... Carroll Lang-Dir

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Judy Lang-Treas ..... Doug Rossbach-Sec  
Dennis Booth ..... Barb Rossbach  
Mike Malvesti ..... Pastor Paul Stone  
Carroll Lang ..... Pastor Kim Wills

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Christopher McCoy-VP/Choir . Alan Lucas  
Chad Burmester-Sec/ST ..... Terry King  
Michael Goehring ..... Kelton Houts  
Lamint Prince ..... James Rainer  
Richard Dodd ..... Bradley Baumann

### Weekly Schedule

6:30pm Wednesdays ..... Holy Communion  
6:30pm Fridays ..... Bible Study

A note to secretaries and pastors—

## Copy Me, Please!

**W**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.

— Pastor Paul Stone