



**THE CHURCH OF THE
DAMASCUS ROAD**
PRISON MINISTRIES

Matthew 25:35-36

"For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me."



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How about this good looking bunch of Volunteers!

Thanks to everyone who participated in the Volunteer Orientation at Rockwell Prison May 16th. Volunteers were able to participate in worship services that following Thursday evening for the first time in 3 years! We definitely have room for more, so check out the application process in "Ways to get involved" a few pages down.



Check out our new Website and Social Media pages at

- <https://www.codrcare.org>
- <https://www.facebook.com/ChurchoftheDamascusRoadPrisonMinistry>

Our Phone # is the same (515) 955-3579



GREETINGS FROM PASTOR KELLI

Hello Church of the Damascus Road Supporters! I hope you're all well and enjoying the beautiful weather we're having. It feels so good to be out in the sun. I spent last weekend cleaning out the garage (*my yearly ritual*) and I think I even got a little sunburn on my neck! Things have been coming alive and blooming in the yard and things have been coming alive in the CODR ministry as well.

April and May have been great months for us. We received a lot of awesome feedback and support from the March Newsletter mailing so we've decided that in addition to the quarterly postal mailing, we'll publish an electronic newsletter each month to send out via email. If you receive the postal mailing and would rather just get the email, let us know and we'll update our mailing list. We just want to make sure everyone is staying up to date on the great things happening in this ministry!

Our attendance at the Rockwell City service is growing especially now that the volunteers are back. The regulars are inviting others to come and the ones that are showing up are having a great experience so we're moving in the right direction. We've also started handing out bibles to all the newcomers as well as copies of "Hear My Voice, A Prison Prayer Book". Special thanks to Jim Fevold for supplying us with the prayer books.

On the Reentry side, our "Connie's Closet" clothing and hygiene supply program for the Fort Dodge Community Corrections Center (men's halfway house) has been growing. Connie just came in today with some donations from Grace Lutheran Church that she'll be taking to the facility this afternoon (5/31). We've also received donations from Lisa Scott at Northfield Community Church, so great job everyone! The men and staff down at the Fort Community Corrections Center thank you. It makes a big difference!

As we're looking ahead, please pray for us as we're considering what it would look like to open a residential facility of our own. This is the biggest need the men in Reentry have and has the potential to be a wonderful way to minister to not only the Reentry candidates but also our community. This would give us the ability to centralize our ministry resources, minister to guys in much deeper ways and not rely on the limited influence we have inside the prisons. As you can imagine this is a huge undertaking and one that we don't want to rush into. We want to make sure we're following God's call in this important area so that means asking for his guidance in prayer.

Thank you all so much for your continued support! We're making a difference in the lives of many people!

Pastor Kelli

Ministry Supporters For the months of April & May 2023

St. Paul Evangelical Church, Manson

Augustana Lutheran Church Marcus

Badger Lutheran Church, Badger

First Presbyterian Church, Lakota

Bethany Lutheran Church, Spencer

First Lutheran Church, Algona

Zion St. John Lutheran Church – Sheffield

Faith Lutheran Church, Holstein

Eagle Grove Evangelical Lutheran Church – Eagle Grove

Peggy Hopp

Darin Dykstra

Bess Madsen

Lee & Molly Gallentine

Kay & Keith Lowe

George Hedges

Jean Basinger

Faith Lutheran Church, Marcus, Ia

Bethany Lutheran Church, Laurens, Ia

Noel & Linda Singer

Norman Lindquist

Larry & Susan Legore

St. John American Lutheran Church, Cedar Falls

New Covenant Christian Church, Fort Dodge

Rev. Darrel Gerrietts

Adam Sanford

Elaine Nauss

Grace Lutheran Church, Fort Dodge

Lyle & Hilda Hartling

Roger Natte

St. Paul Lutheran & Presbyterian Church, Rockwell City

Mark & Cheryl Juhl

Susan Erickson

Lyle & Maureen Cameron

Wayne Pfannkuch

Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Albert City

How Can I Get Involved?

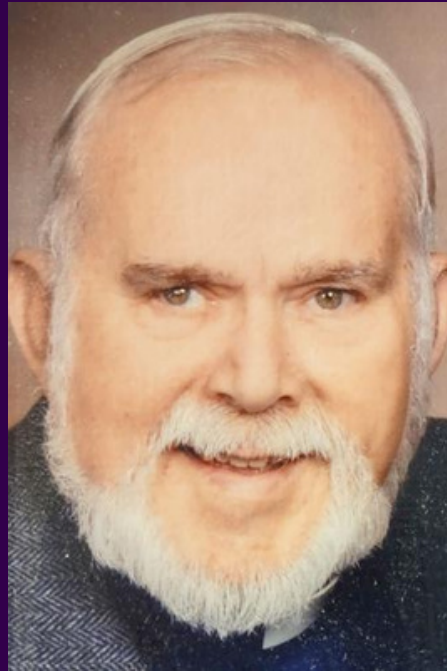
This is an exciting time for CODR ministry because we have a great foundation established and some awesome ways for people to get involved right away, but we also have a lot of space for creativity and new ideas.

We know God is putting His ministry team together by calling people from many different locations and backgrounds. If you feel that God is nudging you in this direction, we would love to get to know you and help you find where God wants you to serve.

- ➔ **Join us for Worship!**
Worshipping with the men inside of the prison walls is an amazing experience! The guys love knowing that they are valued and not forgotten. We need worship volunteers at both Fort Dodge and Rockwell City prisons. Ministers and musicians are especially welcome! Volunteering inside of the prison requires filling out an Iowa DOC volunteer application form which includes a background check, then completing some short video training courses.
- ➔ **Connie's Closet (meeting basic needs at the Fort Dodge men's halfway house)**
Men entering the Fort Dodge Community Corrections Center (men's halfway house) after release have next to nothing, so we supply their closet with basic needs such as: Clothing, Shoes, Coats, washcloths, towels, and Hygiene supplies. This level of support requires no special training and is coordinated by a CODR volunteer lead (Connie).
 - *Currently we are in need of Towels, Washcloths, and men's shorts and sweatpants (XL-3X), Shirts (XL-5X), Belts (all sizes), Shoes (tennis shoes, black dress, non-slip and work boots, socks (6-12 size), Underwear (L-3X), Plastic hangers. Donations can be dropped off at St. Olaf or Grace Lutheran Church in Fort Dodge Ia.*
- ➔ **Transportation Assistance - RCF**
Men entering the RCF after release often times do not have access to transportation, so volunteers provide rides to appointments, job interviews, home visits etc. This level of support happens in partnership with AFES (Athletics for Education and Success - Fort Dodge) and does require some training and a DOC background check.
- ➔ **Become a CODR Council Member**
As we're reimagining what this ministry will look like in the future, we could use your support. Our goal is to have our CODR Council reflect the diversity in our community as well as the diversity of the population we serve. We would love to have more churches, community organizations and demographics represented. Give us a call!
- ➔ **Reentry Teams - RCF and beyond**
Men transitioning back into to society face many barriers and can have many needs. Reentry Mentors develop a relationship with their mentee and provide support across a broad spectrum. Reentry candidates are selected through a vigorous application process in concert with DOC staff to ensure that they are good candidates for CODR Reentry Support. This is a much more involved level of support and requires training by the DOC and CODR Reentry Coordinator. Reentry Volunteers are also encouraged to participate in weekly worship services at one of the prison facilities.

Remembering Pastor Carroll Lang

February 18, 1943 – February 20, 2023




During the spring of 1997 as the new Fort Dodge prison was being established, Pastor Carroll D. Lang was called as the Mission Developer Pastor of The Church of the Damascus Road. This new congregation would include the Fort Dodge and Rockwell City Prisons. Pastor Lang officially began his ministry on August 1, 1997 at the facility in Rockwell City.

On Thursday, August 28 the first worship service was held with 24 inmates and 12 guests attending. Later bible studies began on Tuesdays. In April of 1998 the Fort Dodge facility began receiving inmates from the Classification Center in Oakdale, near Iowa City. 19 inmates were brought in the first week and of those 12 attended the very first Fort Dodge prison service. The ministry grew quickly and soon well over 100 men were attending services and bible studies between the two facilities. Right away the need for reentry support was recognized so Pastor Lang partnered with DOC staff to form what was to become the CODR Reentry process. Inmates would apply to be accepted as Reentry Candidates and teams of volunteers were identified and trained to provide support for men transitioning out of incarceration.

In 2009 Pastor Lang retired as CODR Lead Pastor but stayed very involved overseeing the Reentry process.

Carroll's tireless work both inside and outside the prison walls transformed the lives of many men and their families. He has left a legacy of healing and restoration that we are proud to inherit. The partnerships he created and nurtured in this ministry has enabled The Church of the Damascus Road to thrive even through the pandemic. His life was an inspiration to us all.

Our thoughts and prayers remain with his family, especially his beloved wife Judy.

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