



the Lampost

an EVERY-SO-OFTEN NEWSLETTER OF LAMPOST THEATRE CO.



The stories that make a year...

They remind you of why you do this ministry. They pop up now and then as gentle reminders of the Lord's grace. They are the little stories that exemplify what God is doing in lives around us, and what He is doing through the little daily efforts of Lampost. The names have been changed to protect the innocent...



Opening doors...



We have really begun to see the fruit of coffeehouse ministry. The variety of individuals that come through our front door is extraordinary: religious, non-religious, students, senior citizens, from every walk of life and worldview. What an opportunity to touch lives that never darken the doorway of a church.

Take "Tom" for example. He started coming in for the mocha lattes. Then he started coming back for the concerts. "I enjoyed the music, but the messages really started speaking to me." Tom was a spiritist. He believed in the supernatural but didn't think Jesus was anything special. Now Tom comes for the Bible study, he attends a local church, and has an appetite for the Lord. He has committed his life to Christ.

"You started getting to me," he says. Who ever knew that Grace could flow through a mocha?

There's also "Bill and Doris." They are credentialed shamans who started coming to our outdoor concerts this summer. "We looked everywhere for a good clean place to relax." I don't know where they stand now, but for a few summer evenings, they heard a clear gospel message and interacted with believers. This is a place where people choose to sit and listen.

There are countless others who cross our threshold, thinking that all they want is a good cup of coffee. The Spirit knows better, and it's great to watch the Lord start brewing up more than beans.



standing-room only crowd at one of our many student concerts.

Supporting the Body...

We continue to co-sponsor BASIC on the UNI campus - a gathering of about 800 students. The story used to be that after BASIC, students often went to the bar district for lack of any better place to fellowship. Now our theatre is full every Thursday night

continued...

www.lampost.com
info@lampost.com

204 W. Seerley Blvd.
Cedar Falls, IA 50613



it's a team thing...

It takes a team to do the labor of the Kingdom. The stories you read in this letter were made possible by a team working diligently together: students, adults, volunteers, and staff. And most of all, a Gracious Lord at the conductor's podium.

But it's not about us.

People like you are part of the team that keeps us going. There is no way to recount all that has happened in this past year:

lives transformed • messages proclaimed • students disciplined • souls saved

One of this year's blessings was to watch God provide a new staff team: all four came from different backgrounds, and no two are the same personality type. Each brings unique gifts to the work.



But it's the same with you. God has given us a team beyond the 4 walls on Seerley Blvd. We are enabled because of your generosity in prayer, finances, and volunteer work.

you. you're part of the team.

Thanks for supporting, praying, helping.

"how blessed are the feet..." staff team members
Dylan, Sarah, Rachel, Marissa, & Matt

DECEMBER 2004

STORIES, CONT'D

(from page one) as students fellowship, discuss, and listen to others use their musical talents to glorify God.

But it's more than a hang-out. Take the case of "Doug." He married young, and in a surprising move his wife left him. "My whole life was centered around her," he explains, "so now I really don't have any close Christian friends." He comes to Lampost because he can fellowship with people his own age who care about eternal things. This is something he couldn't find somewhere else, even in a church. "And I wasn't going to find it at a bar."

There are many believers of varying ages who have found Lampost as a place to connect. "It takes my Christian interaction beyond the church walls," said one.



outdoor concerts shine the message on our front lawn



students help out with painting shutters



Myka & Steven get in the Christmas spirit...



Saturday night: young & 'older' gather in the shop.

Bridging the eternal...

One of the most rewarding aspects of living here is when students turn to you in need. They know that this is more than a coffeeshop, and that there is someone on the premises at all times.

Take the phone call from "Tim." He lost a close friend to suicide. He called here because he knew there would be someone to talk to who would help steer his thoughts in the right direction. He was able to come in to be prayed with. Now whenever there is a deep need in his life, he calls for prayer. He knows that it works.

But all prayer appointments are not planned. There was the morning that "Judy" stopped on her way to work for a cup of coffee. She directs a local ministry for young women. While waiting for her coffee, conversation revealed that her ministry was in serious need of some immediate funds. Our staff was able to pray with her, sending her off with more than java. The same day we prayed, an unexpected donor stopped by her office and met the need. What a delight when she came back the next day to share her story!

How can we help but believe that prayer is a vital ministry. Opportunities for it come up all the time in this kind of work -- for believers and non-believers seeking help that can not come from themselves.

Watching it happen

Such stories happen constantly. We hardly anticipated the fruit that would come from the coffeeshop ministry: providing a place that bridges young & old, believer & non-believer, prayers & espresso. We have discovered that this is an essential territory for 21st century outreach. Where else would such diverse people come to your front door with their defenses down? As they rest from the craziness of life, they open their hearts to us and to the Good News.

Oh, yah: We are MORE than COFFEE...



RACING THE TRAIN

Racing the Train strikes a nerve...

We still get reports about the repercussions from this fall's youth production. Because of sell-out crowds, we doubled the performances, and in the end approximately 2500 people saw *Racing the Train*.

"There's still not a day goes by that I don't think about that play." That's what one of our board members was told by a non-believing friend that attended. Similar reports of people re-evaluating their lives come from believers and non-believers. Some made a first-time decision for Christ as a result.

After seeing the play, one woman volunteered to baby-sit for her entire couple's Bible study so the others could attend. The next week they met on the

local train tracks to discuss their own lives in light of the play.

The resulting discussion brought out so much deep sharing and confession that the group had to meet twice a week to process it all.

Similarly a local church performance resulted in dozens of students committing to small groups for the first time. "We've never seen this kind of response," said one seasoned youth leader.

The message of the play emphasized the need to stand against the tide of our culture, and to live honestly and accountably with others. It struck a nerve with young and old in unexpected ways. At the same time, the cast of 20 teens discovered what it really meant to live that message. The production process offered special opportunities for their discipleship as they worked, prayed, and studied together. "I will never be the same," said one. "I found out what it means to really live my Christianity."

"Stewing" about family...

In December we premiered *Christmas Stew*. Marsha has stewed for a while about the idea: a play where the characters reveal their inner thoughts to the audience. As a result, we see the contrast between the pretty picture we display, and the selfish thoughts we hide.

This contrast is revealed humorously as we follow a typical family gathering at Christmas. The result has tickled enough funny bones to reveal that many people share similar family experiences

When Simeon held baby Jesus in the temple, he told Mary and Joseph that Christ had come to "reveal the thoughts of many hearts." As thoughts are revealed in this play, the family realizes how ridiculous our egos are. In the end, we see how much we need the Savior who humbled himself in a manger.

Christmas Stew will be performed 10 times during December. Most nights have already sold out. Pray that it will strike hearts as it strikes the funny bone.

