

# ECHOES

August 2011

## Mission Statement

As brothers and sisters in Christ, we are called to *invite* people to know Christ, to *build* a community of faith, and to *serve* all in love to the glory of God!  
*Adopted Easter, 1995*



*Notes From  
Pastor Dave*

## Seeing The World Through God-colored Glasses

*Jesus said to them, 'Have you never read in the scriptures: "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is amazing in our eyes"?' (Matthew 21:42)*

Dear Friends,

I was standing at the altar leading worship when I happened to look at the flowers one Sunday. It was a beautiful arrangement. What I really noticed was one stem that came up and branched out like a firework going off. And then it hit me – it was some kind of a piece of grass that had gone to seed, making a beautiful star. All I could help thinking was that it was pretty in the flower arrangement, but if I saw it in my yard, I would have pulled it up or cut it down. In my yard, it would have been a weed. Here it was something that added to the beauty of worship.

When we lived in other parts of the country, I worked hard on my lawn. I tried to keep the weeds out. And I fought hard against what we called “crab grass.” I prided myself on killing it. Now we live in Central Texas, and our entire lawn is made up of something called “St. Augustine grass.” It is the very thing that I used to call crab grass. And now I am trying to grow it rather than kill it.

How often we value things based on their context, or on how others value them, or by what is trendy, (or simply by what will grow in a hot, hostile environment!).

It reminds me a little of new neighbors that moved in from Southeast Asia, and asked how they could get “those pretty yellow flowers” to grow in their yard. They were referring to dandelions! Now those are

## Palm Valley Lutheran Church A Stephen Ministry Church

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Rev. Dr. David P. Koppel, Senior Pastor  
Rev. Joaquin Figueroa, Hispanic Ministry  
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Mollie DeVries, Executive Administrator  
Anna Froehlich, Director of Youth

something I can grow! But isn't it interesting that they valued something that I didn't value at all?

When I was a kid, I moved from one side of the country to the other, and I found that things that were popular in one part of the country weren't necessarily popular in another part of it – everything from the kind of clothes that I wore to the games and sports that I played. And it didn't seem to follow any logic. Things that were important at one time in one place were not at another. When I spent a summer at camp, everybody who was anybody had a hand-woven bracelet. Oh sure, we loved everybody, but all the popular kids, boys and girls, had these bracelets. It was the status symbol of the summer.

When the summer ended and we all went home, nobody back at school could see the value of these bracelets – they said, “Why are you wearing that ratty old thing? Get rid of it!” Hmmm.

Right now gold is selling for about \$1,600 per ounce. But it is only that valuable if you can find somebody who is willing to pay that price for it. I suspect that sooner or later as the economy stabilizes a bit more, the price will drop. But it is really only worth what people think it is worth at any given time.

*Jesus said to them, 'Have you never read in the scriptures: "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is amazing in our eyes"?' (Matthew 21:42)*

He was talking about himself. Here He was, the Son of God, and people didn't see the treasure that they had right in front of them. They rejected him, and yet He is the savior of the world.

The value that God puts on things is often different than the value that we put on things. And the value that God puts on people is often different than the value we put on people.

We pay attention to how people look, to their ethnic background, to the way they talk and their accent, to their socio-economic status, and we make snap judgments about them. We think we can know what they are all

*-continued on page 6-*

# Financial Notes August 2011



Church Operating Budget:  
January - June 2011 Income \$ 388,215 (99.2% Projected Income for 6 months)  
January - June 2011 Expense \$ 352,567 (88.3% Projected Expense for 6 months)  
Net \$ 35,648

**Have** you ever felt you were not accomplishing your goals or that you are not where you once imagined you would be in life? I have.

Then I heard this man's account of his life and it gave me a new perspective on the things that were important. A prominent man (we can call him Victor) tells the story of "a little that made a great deal of difference in his life".

During the depression he was down to his last hundred dollars with very little prospect of financial survival. On an impulse he gave just about all of it to a mission in response to a plea to support the poor.

He said somehow that act, which at the time seemed like reckless generosity, did more good for him than it probably did for the mission.

It was a turning point in his life. It freed him from excessive worry and excessive concern about the future. Somehow after that he was able to act more effectively, more freely.

In the long-run his business grew and he has prospered ever since. But Victor insists that his giving out of his poverty was the *little generosity that made the significant difference* in his life. I had to think on that for a while before I could see the whole of what he was saying.

I would like to share a poem with you by Jessica Powers that I recall reading long ago, phrases of the poem often come to mind and reminds me that but for Gods' gifts, I (we) am nothing, I (we) am empty.

### **If you have nothing:**

*The gesture of a gift is adequate.*

*If you have nothing:*

*Laurel leaf or bay, no flower,*

*no seed, no apple gathered late,*

*do not in desperation lay*

*the beauty of your tears upon the clay.*

*No gift is proper to a Deity;*

*no fruit is worthy*

*for such power to bless.*

*If you have nothing;*

*gather back your sigh,*

*and with your hands held high,*

*your heart held high,*

*lift up your emptiness.*

By: Jessica Powers

## **To keep you updated on PVLC happenings:**

**The** Esther Circle has donated new Altar Linens in honor of their circle members who have gone before them. Beautiful embroidery was added to each piece by Anne Grimes. Thanks to our ladies of the Esther Circle for these lovely linens.

**The** Property Committee has recommended to council and the council has approved the refinishing of the Sanctuary hardwood floors as well as the wainscoting, trim and doors of the original narthex. This project will begin in the very near future and our goal is to accomplish the task with the least inconvenience for our members. These funds will come from the Capital Reserve account, not from our operating funds. So if you will, please bear with us as we strive to make our beautiful historic sanctuary even more attractive in this process.

**Our** new "hearing enhancement" devices have arrived and have been installed. There are four of them available at the ushers stand in the old narthex as you enter the sanctuary. If you wish to try one out, please feel free to do so. Just speak to the usher and they will provide you with one. Again if you wish to order your own personal unit to be used in conjunction with the transmitter, or your own "ear bud" to be used with one of these four units, please contact me.

**Our** windows and doors project have been delayed by about two weeks due to supplier issues. We do hope to have the project finished before school begins.

**The** summer is growing short and there is much to be accomplished but we will stay on task.

En agape,

*Mollie*

Mollie DeVries, F.C.B.A.  
Executive Administrator

**Church Council Report**

Summary of action taken at the regular meeting of the Palm Valley Lutheran Church Council on Wednesday, July 20, 2011:

- Council approved the Properties Committee's recommendation to refurbish the wooden floors in the Sanctuary and the small narthex area (bead board, trim, 6 doors, newel post and banisters).
- Council finalized details for the Strategic Planning meeting on August 13, which will be attended by the church council, staff and the chairperson or a chosen representative from each of the eight standing committees.

Respectfully submitted,

Manny Castro  
Council Secretary

**WOMEN**

***News and Events***

**of Palm Valley Lutheran Church**

*August Calendar*

Tuesday, weekly,	1:00 p.m. Afternoon Quilters
Wed., Aug. 10	12:00 p.m. Prayer Group
Thurs., Aug. 18	6:30 p.m. Adults' Night Out
Sat., Aug. 20	4:00 p.m. Circulo de Mujeres Marta
Mon., Aug. 22	5:45 p.m. Sing-Along @ TCC
Mon., Aug. 22	6:30 p.m. Sassy Seniors
Thurs., Aug. 25	3:00 p.m. Cluster

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**Lutheran World Relief**

Can you believe it's almost back to school time? By now, all the school supplies are on sale. Would you consider buying a few extra items when shopping for your children to donate to Lutheran World Relief School Kits? The supply list has changed somewhat this year, so we are in special need of ballpoint pens (NO GEL INK). We can also use rulers with both inches and centimeters on them, blunt tipped scissors with metal blades, 16- or 24-count crayons, #2 pencils with erasers, and spiral notebooks. Bags will be purchased due to a design change - if you prefer to donate funds, we'll use that money toward the purchase price of the bag (\$1.50 / bag). If you have any questions, contact Becky Reichardt.

*Sassy Seniors*

Sassy Seniors has the following schedule for the 4th Monday of the following months subject to changes as needed:

<b>August 22</b>	<b>Springhill, Pflugerville</b>
<b>September 26</b>	<b>Mimi's, RR</b>
<b>October 24</b>	<b>Saltgrass, RR</b>
<b>November 28</b>	<b>Olive Garden, RR</b>
<b>December</b>	<b>NO Meeting</b>



**HISPANIC**  
Ministry

**FIRST STEP:**

*We admitted we were **powerless over Alcohol** and that our lives had become unmanageable.*

By Pr. Joaquin Figueroa

July the 11<sup>th</sup> the Palm Valley AA Recovery group opened its doors for our church members and for the Round Rock community that are struggling with alcoholism/drugs and want to stop drinking/using. We are so happy that out of five attendants to the first meeting, four were PV members that already are in recovery. THANKS BE TO GOD.

Although we are content with the initial attendance, we want to be a tool as well for those who still are struggling with alcohol/drugs and that are destroying their lives and the lives of beloved ones who as often happen, are confused and do not know that alcoholism is a disease. It is a terrible disease that affects body, mind and spirit. As a matter of fact, *in 1956 the American Medical Association declared that alcoholism was a disease.*

Dennis C. Morreim in his book "The Road to Recovery" says that "there is no better word to describe the nature of alcoholism and the dilemma of the alcoholic than "powerlessness." *Powerlessness simply means that despite the fact that chemical or alcohol usage is interfering with some person's ability to properly manage their lives, they still cannot quit or adequately control their use of alcohol.* This urge to use alcohol and other drugs takes precedence over their families, work and social life. They give no regard to what substance abuse will do to their physical, mental or emotional health.

*This definition of powerlessness appears simple and explicit enough, yet the inability to fully understand it, accept it and admit it is the initial stumbling block in the efforts of many chemically dependents people to begin recovery.* Society has traditionally placed the stigma of shame on anyone afflicted with alcoholism. The inability of "handle one's liquor" is seen by many as the sign of a weak person who lacks willpower. No one cares to admit defeat. Our natural instincts revolt against the idea of powerlessness. We want to believe and give the impression that we are in control of our lives. Admitting powerlessness is a giant step. It is the first step. And it is not easy.

*One of the most prominent symptoms of alcoholism is denial of the condition.* Denial is the means for survival and control. Every day, even though they suffer from a fatal condition, alcoholics play the game of denial. It is all

a part of the insidious problem that destroys health, family, financial security, spirituality and life itself. One AA member told me once, "An alcoholic lives in 'sincere delusion'. I just felt that I was different from all other people. I functioned best with a little alcohol in me and wished other people would understand that and leave me alone!"

The book of Genesis tells us that humans were created in the image of God but that the image has been tarnished by sin and rebellion. The problem of alcoholism, along with all other human problems, is a reflection of this fallen nature confronted by humankind. Rev. Gordon Grimm, director of training and head of pastoral care of Hazelden Treatment Center said: "For me the parallel here in Step One is the theme of man's basic estrangement. A lot of alcoholics would like to make their alcoholism the basis of their estrangement and they think that's what makes them different. But it is deeper than that. There are human limits and human conditions. For me, the First Step has to do with God the Creator, and we are creatures. We are not gods. We are like gods and made in God's image, but we are not limitless. We do have limits. Powerlessness, acceptance, surrender--these concepts are important working concepts of everyday life. It is important to see them as part of the whole human condition. It is easy to blame the alcoholic in our society and make him the scapegoat in this estrangement, but we are all a part of it."

As we can see, powerlessness is not a characteristic peculiar only to alcoholism. It is an appropriate term that speaks to the human condition but is also applicable to human problems other than alcoholism. Such things as food, sex, work, relationships, etc. can become obsessions. There is tension within us because of our human condition. No one is a perfect person. We may choose to do right, yet somehow sin is still present and we feel powerless to do what we desire to do. St. Paul expresses this dilemma saying, "*I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do, I do not do, but what I hate I do...For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do -this I keep on doing*" (Rom.7:15-19) Martin Luther says that we are both saint and sinner at the same time (*simul justus et peccator.*) If we live in a denial that this condition persists within us, our lives are filled with tension and defeat. Not until we are honest about (surrender to God) our fallen condition, (our humanness) can emotional and spiritual recovery begin." AMEN? AMEN!

So, ready to start a new life? If so, come to meetings, Mondays 7 PM at the PV Ministry House.



## Social Ministry

## STORIES TO TELL AND GIFTS TO SHARE

### **LEND A HAND AT THE SERVING CENTER**

There are many ways you can help out or volunteer at the Round Rock Area Serving Center. One of the easiest ways is to help stock the food pantry by bringing items to church and putting them into the shopping cart in the narthex. There is a need for more food in the summer as children do not get meals at school.

To help support the food pantry and other social service programs, the Serving Center provides “Treasures”, a clothing and furniture thrift store open to the public. Donations of clothing, books, furniture, and appliances are always needed! The Serving Center offers other services including financial assistance for utilities, rent, prescriptions, and other needs, clothing and furniture vouchers, and community gardens. Other programs at the center are the Round Rock Community Clinic, the Volunteer Center, and Computers for Kids.

Over 200 volunteers help out in the Center’s programs. Opportunities include picking up food at local grocery stores, unloading, sorting and stocking food, serving as cashiers or pricers, doing interviews or serving as a receptionist, delivering or collecting furniture, unloading trucks, helping in the Treasures store, and doing data entry. As a volunteer, you may choose your area and the days and times you can help out.

The Center, located at 1099 E. Main Street, Round Rock, is a non profit organization and it carries out a community wide mission of churches, other organizations, and individuals serving human needs in Round Rock and surrounding areas. It has a membership of 27 churches, including Palm Valley, and 7 businesses. Contact the Serving Center at 512-244-2431.

“Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you.” ~Luke 8:39

“For we cannot keep from speaking about what we have seen and heard.” ~Acts 4:20

We all have stories to tell: humorous anecdotes, learning experiences, news about our families, triumphs and tragedies, plans for the future. And as the people of God, we have stories to tell about what God has done for us and about the difference that God’s grace has made in our lives. Sometimes we are less aware of these stories, or are reluctant to share them, until they are coaxed out of us—but they are there, part of who we are.

That’s not all. Whether we know it or not, we also have stories to tell about what God has done *through* us—stories about how God has used us to make a difference in the lives of others. Getting to know those stories makes us even more aware of God’s grace.

God has given us so much—and the gifts of God are for sharing. The theme of this year’s upcoming Stewardship program is *Stories to Tell & Gifts to Share*. With an enthusiastic focus on God’s gracious gifts to us, this program celebrates the gift of God’s Word, the story of our salvation in Jesus Christ, and the wonderful gifts of grace that fill our lives because of God’s unending love. We are encouraged to acknowledge and respond to God’s many blessings with gratitude, joy, and generosity.

As part of the *Stories to Tell & Gifts to Share* program, various members of our congregation will share their own stories of faith with us at all services on four consecutive Sundays, beginning on September 11<sup>th</sup>—we plan to invite each of you to write your own personal “faith story” and submit it to the church office.

Our plan is to make a compilation of these stories, which will then be made available to all members of our Palm Valley family. By sharing these personal accounts, we will learn, be inspired, and grow in faith and love, as we travel this journey together.

Luscaine Stratton  
The Stewardship Committee

# Thank You

-continued from page 1— Notes from Pastor Dave—  
Seeing the World Through God-colored Glasses.

I would like to thank my Palm Valley Church family for all the calls cards, visits and prayers during my hospital stay. I'm home now and am doing fine. God bless each and every one of you.

Jack Madsen

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Dear Palm Valley Family,

Thank you very much for the generous scholarship money. The church will always be a part of my life, especially at Baylor.

Love,  
Scott Smith

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PVLC Board Members:

Thank you very much for the generous scholarship I received. I plan to use it for books and tuition at UTSA this fall. Thanks again for your support in my pursuit of an education.

Respectfully,  
Gus Barrera, Jr.

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Thank you to my Church family for all the prayers during my recent biopsy. God is good.

Ann Walker

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Thank you to our Church family at Palm Valley Lutheran for the countless acts of love and concern, since Earl's diagnosis and his treatment for cancer 2 months ago. Your phone calls, visits, cards, gifts, food and prayers are deeply appreciated. Chemotherapy continues indefinitely. The treatments show improvement in Earl's condition for which we are grateful. We are blessed with answered prayer.

Earl and Janis Seay

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Palm Valley Scholarship Committee,

Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to receive a scholarship this year! The money will be very useful as we pay for my college tuition at Texas A&M this year! Thank you again, and God Bless.

Love,  
Bailey Mikulencak

status we assign to them. Most, if not all of the time, God has a different value for them. He loves and cherishes all His children. Maybe we ought to also.

At the same time, we try to wear the right clothes, say the right things, and look the right way so that people will like and value us – and often it is based on fads and trends, looks and the amount of money that we appear to have. It usually is just that silly.

God looks at you and me, and sees something beautiful. He sees someone worth dying for. He sees someone of infinite value.

From now on, I am going to think about that piece of beautiful grass in the altar flowers, and try to see it as God might see it. I am going to try to look at the people around me, and see them as God sees them. And from now on, I am going to try not to think so much about what other people might be thinking of me, and I am going to play to an audience of one. Because in the end, it's what God thinks of me that matters.

Let's try to see the world through "God-colored" glasses.

*In His Grip,*

*Pastor*

**Special Thanks to these Helpers  
with the August Echoes:**

*Johnnie Pecht  
Pat and Herb Wolf*

*Ann Grimes  
Jean Kammer*

## ***Adult Education at Palm Valley***

### ***New on Mondays:***

#### **Alcoholics Anonymous**

7:00-8:30 PM

Ministry house in front of church

For info contact:

[jfigueroa@palmvalleylutheranchurch.org](mailto:jfigueroa@palmvalleylutheranchurch.org)

### ***Coming this fall:***

Wednesday night is Faith Night! Along with great programs for our kids and teens, we also provide interesting and helpful classes for you! Come grow with us.

#### **Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University**

More than one million families have attended *Financial Peace University* with amazing results. On average, these families paid off \$5,300 in debt and saved \$2,700 in just the first 90 days! Stop worrying about money, and start your journey to Financial Peace today.

September 14<sup>th</sup> to December 14<sup>th</sup>

6:00- 8:00 PM

cost is 99.00/family

For more information or to register please contact:

[financialpeace@pvlc.org](mailto:financialpeace@pvlc.org)

#### **Wild at Heart**

Is a best selling book by John Eldridge that has healed and freed the hearts of millions of men around the world. This men's only small group study will begin in late September. Day and time TBD. For more info, contact [ironmen@pvlc.org](mailto:ironmen@pvlc.org)

#### **Sundays (on going)**

##### **Bible Study with Don Cotton**

**10:00 AM, Room 22**

This class concentrates on a particular book of the Bible and slowly digests the meaning and significance of each passage for our daily lives.

##### **Women's Bible Study with Sharon May**

**For women of all ages**

**10:15 AM, Room 21**

The women will choose various books, courses and topics and will include various chapters/verses from the Bible.

##### **Adult Sunday School**

**10:15, Conference Room**

topics and leaders vary

##### **Estudio Biblico with Pastor Joaquin Figueroa**

**11:00 AM, Room 18**

This Bible study is in Spanish.

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## **Palm Valley Lutheran Cooperative Preschool**

*I*t's hard to believe there is just one month of summer left! The start of another preschool year will be here before we know it! We are looking forward to seeing all of our preschool families again. The first day of preschool is Tuesday, September 6<sup>th</sup>. We still have a few openings left for this school year. If you or someone you know is interested in enrolling in our preschool please contact the preschool office at **388-5054** or [abc123@palmvalleypreschool.org](mailto:abc123@palmvalleypreschool.org). We are in the office on Tuesday through the summer and will resume our Tuesday / Thursday schedule the last week of August.

Visit our website [www.palmvalleypreschool.org](http://www.palmvalleypreschool.org) for more information about the preschool.

Director: Cathy Cummings

Asst. Director: Natalie Cearley



**\*\*\* IMPORTANT\*\*\***

**COMBINED SERVICE**  
**ON AUGUST 28 !!!**

**V**acation Bible School - By the time this news-letter goes out VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL is likely to be over! Join us Sunday, **July 31st** at the 9am service for a special VBS Celebration presentation!

**RALLY DAY** is around the corner! In keeping with tradition, we will kick-off the school year with Rally Day. We will celebrate with a **combined service at 10 a.m.**, our Ministry Fair and a meal to share together at 12:15. Here are some specifics:

**Sunday School &**  
**Wednesday Evening Faith Nights**  
**will be on break for the summer.**

**J**AM (Jesus & Me) - This volunteer-led ministry is in need of volunteers to help keep this mid-week program for Preschool-5<sup>th</sup> graders going. If you are interested, please let us know. Planning for the fall will begin soon!

- The **Ministry Fair** will begin at **9:30 a.m.** Between 30 and 40 ministries, study groups and fellowship opportunities offered at our church will be represented. Please come and decide how YOU would like to get involved this year!

**Y**outh Praise Team - Will be starting up again this fall for 2<sup>nd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders – if you enjoy singing praises – come join the fun!

- We will have **ONE service on August 28th in the CLC starting at 10:00 a.m.**, bringing all the best from each service to share!

**N**ext Two Children's Ministry Meetings - Sunday, July 31st and Sunday, August 21st at 11am – all are welcome – come see what Children's programs we have planned for the fall.

- Following the service, we will proceed with the Ministry Fair, have meet-and-greet with the children and their Sunday School teachers, provide games for the children in the Oak Grove, and set up for **Lunch at 12:15'ish!** Gus Reichardt and the "Iron Men" will smoke the chickens. Congregation members are asked to bring side dishes or desserts to share.

For more information on Children's Ministry (2s – 5<sup>th</sup> grade), please email us at [childrensministry@pvlc.org](mailto:childrensministry@pvlc.org).

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**Teacher/Small Group Leader Training ...**  
**Priority – Save the Date!!!**

**We will need "all hands on deck" to make this a Sunday to remember! If you'd like to volunteer, please contact Susan Thompson, Lisa Napolitano or a specific committee member in the area in which you'd like to get involved.**

We will be hosting a teacher / leader training on **Wednesday, August 24<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.** for those leading ANY class at Palm Valley. This session is a **MUST** for all who teach a children or adult class at Palm Valley, or lead a small group. We will be addressing critical issues for our mutual success, such as how we communicate with each other, how we deal with domineering participants, how we draw out shy class members, how we address difficult theological questions, and more! Please look for an invitation from Pastor Koppel soon. Dinner and childcare will be provided.

## ***SMALL GROUP NEWS!***

***“40 Days of Community – Better Together”*** is coming this fall! We’ll begin this churchwide campaign in October, focusing on how our purposes are fulfilled together, in community. Our Pastors will preach on the topic each week and are again encouraging everyone in the congregation to join a six-week, small group study. **Leaders needed!** If you are interested in leading a small group, either at the church or in your home, please contact Susan Thompson at [smallgroups@pvlc.org](mailto:smallgroups@pvlc.org). DVD’s and training will be provided for all leaders! Sign up for small groups will begin on Rally Day – August 28.

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## ***Community Outreach Event Volunteers and Donations Needed!***

Our next Outreach Event will be held on **August 14th** at the Wal-Mart on E. Palm Valley Blvd. from 1-3:00 p.m. Come join us in handing out ice cold water in a Palm Valley Koozie. All you need is a smile and a willingness to meet our community. If you can't make it that day, we could still use your help with donations of bottled water. We will be handing out 1000 koozies, so we need lots of water! You can leave cases of water outside the office on any Sunday. Hope to see you there! If you have any questions, please contact Lisa Napolitano..

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## ***NAME TAG SIGN-UP HAS BEGUN!***

If you’d like to have an engraved name tag with our new Palm Valley logo on it just in time for Rally Day, please sign up now! There will be someone available after every service on **July 31st** and **August 7**, or you can go on the church’s website:

[www.palmvalleylutheranchurch.org](http://www.palmvalleylutheranchurch.org) to request your tag.

## ***HIGH SCHOOL MISSION TRIP TO NEW ORLEANS***

Eleven members of Palm Valley traveled to New Orleans for a week of mission work on June 12-17. We joined with 40 other students from around the U.S. We slept on a church floor, prepared our own meals, had twice daily Bible studies and worked hard. We also had an incredible amount of fun.

The two major projects we participated in were working with young people at APEX which is an inspiring day camp program run by a local church for inner city kids who would otherwise be running the streets all summer.

The other project was working to rehabilitate a high school that is scheduled to reopen for this fall. (Half of New Orleans schools are still closed due to Katrina.) We stripped and painted the third floor corridor.

We also worked at a thrift shop that supports a residential drug rehab program and a sheltered workshop for mentally challenged adults. One of the highlights of the trip was a "prayer caravan" we took visiting places that were severely impacted by Katrina.

We stopped and prayed at different locations and talked with some of the very few residents who have returned to the Ninth Ward. Student participants included: Allison Wojtowecz, Kaitlyn Dietz, Holly Van Hooser, Jessica Brunssen, Kira Koppel, Wendy Skinner, Kenneth Williams, Garrick Frankeny and Drew Thompson. Adult leaders were Ken Anderson and Carlin Hohman.

***Next Echoes Deadline:  
Friday, August 19, 2011***



Notes from my desk....

Wow! The summer has come to an end in what seems like the blink of an eye.

During the Summer months we had:

- 19 students on mission trips. 10 Jr. High Students to Mission Arlington and 9 High school students to New Orleans.
- We also sent 17 Jr. High and 1 High school students to Camp Chrysiads .
- 13 students (which included 2 new students that found out about the trip from our new electronic sign) to Schlitterbahn.
- 12 students for the D- Now retreat.

What a summer it has been indeed! Of course, with a growing youth program we have had a few growing pains, including a trip that grew from 6 students to 13 overnight. As a result, I need your help to ensure the safety of our students. We are putting a new policy into effect regarding any youth activity that has travel or an overnight stay: **each student must RSVP 5 days before the event.** My heart's desire is to have every student participate in every event, but I also want to make sure that we have enough supervision so that every student is safe and happy.

As I look back on my first six months it has been a true privilege for Stephen and me to serve you and your students. It has been a true joy to get to know each student. I tell you the truth when I say *each* one has brought a smile to my face. Over the next few weeks, I will be calling each high school student in our church, if you don't get a phone call by the end of September let me know. This is an attempt to get to know these students better. I want to thank you for all your help and prayers. Please continue to pray for the youth as we seek new ways to grow and serve the Lord.

In his love,

Anna Froehlich

### August Events:

August 17, 2011:

6<sup>th</sup> grade welcome party

If your student is entering the 6<sup>th</sup> grade, please come join us for a night of fun!

August 24, 2011:

The Café opens again!!!!

August 31, 2011:

Thank you party for Mr. Paul Vacula

### Youth Fundraiser:

**On Sunday August 21, 2011 we will be having a Pancake Breakfast served by our youth!!!!**

**We will start serving after the 8 am service until 11 am.**

**Please come support the youth!**

### ELCA National Youth Gathering:

July 18-21, 2012 National Youth Gathering will be in New Orleans, LA for those entering the 9<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> grades plus members of the class of 2012. The cost of the trip will be approximately \$700 per school student. A \$150 deposit for members or \$200 for non-members is due **September 25, 2011** to reserve your student's spot! Sign up today on the youth bulletin board.

### Upcoming events:

#### 2011

July 25-29 - PVLC VBS

September 17 - 6<sup>th</sup> grade Welcome Party

September 25 - Deposit deadline for ELCA National Youth Gathering (Classes of 2012-2017)

November 11-13 - Jr. High Gathering

December 7, 2011 - Last Meeting of the year and Christmas Party

#### 2012

Jan 13-16 - Southwest Synod Sr. High Youth gathering in Austin

July 18-21 - National ELCA Youth Gathering New Orleans, LA