



HAVE GUITAR: WILL TRAVEL

BY MATT HOGAN

My favorite missionary is made of wood. It has six strings and 21 frets. It has been played among the volcanoes of Southern Peru, in the villages of rural Mexico, from a city street in busy Madrid, on top of a newly constructed brick wall in Poland, on a hotel balcony in downtown Prague, and inside a cistern on an archaeological site in Israel. My guitar case has as many stickers as my passport has stamps.

Few things get me more excited than taking God's Word to other countries all over the world. I started playing guitar in preparation to lead worship for a short-term missions team that spent a summer in Poland. Over the last decade I've had the chance to serve the Lord in Mexico, Poland, the Czech Republic, Peru, Spain, and Israel. Wherever in the world the Lord takes me, I always take my guitar.

When I was in college, we learned that music is not necessarily a universal language. The music of different cultures is just as different as the languages they speak. But it is amazing how the praises of God's people can sound the same in any language.

Most recently, I've been a part of the summer and winter teams our church has sent to Galeana, Mexico. This last summer was my fourth trip with our church. And, as always, I brought my guitar. The national pastor who works with us in Galeana is named Pastor Rito. Pastor Rito loves to sing. Before his wife passed away, he would go from village to village, from church to church singing duets with his wife. So naturally, when we go to villages and church services, Pastor Rito wants to sing. And he usually asks me to play along. . . even though I've never heard the songs, and don't know what they mean.

After four trips, I've pretty much got the routine down. Almost everything Pastor Rito sings is in the key of G. So I strum a G chord, then just try and follow him as he sings. This last trip, a special soloist came to the church service, and asked me if I could play along while he sang. We stumbled through the song the first time, then I suddenly realized he was singing "He Touched Me" by Bill and Gloria Gaither, only in Spanish. Naturally, the second time through the song, when the congregation sang along, I did a lot better.

When I was in music school, one of the things they taught us was how to accompany a melody without necessarily knowing the chords that fit beneath it. At the time, I figured this was an important skill because it was required to pass my piano proficiency test, and maybe it would help on a graduate school exam. I had no idea when I was learning how to harmonize songs on the fly, that I would be doing it sitting in a dirt courtyard in the middle of a village in Mexico, or that I would be using it to accompany songs in a language I didn't even understand.

What an amazing feeling it was, to have that connection with another Believer in Christ. Right there in the moment: without a script, without music, just two people from very different backgrounds and cultures, relying on the Spirit of God to help us through the song. It was such a powerful reminder to me, of just how big and diverse the body of Christ really is. And, in the end, just how much we have in common.

It's easy to look around on a Sunday morning and get the picture in your mind that the Church is just those people you share a pew with. As we look toward our Missions Sunday and Missions Fair next month, be thinking about ways you can get involved with ministries that take us outside the walls of the church. Maybe if not to another country, then to the other side of town. Missions has a way of teaching us things and stretching us in ways we could never imagine.

Final Court Resolution of Case Against Former Church Bookkeeper

By Richard Klapper

As the congregation is aware, a former bookkeeper of the church had been charged with theft of church funds in early 2007. The case has been slowly making its way through the justice system for the past two years. As of June 2, 2009 the case has finally been resolved. Since I am not currently in Alvin to report to the congregation personally I want to take this opportunity to inform the congregation of the outcome of the case.

The church's former bookkeeper, Kristi Kidd, plead guilty to felony theft charges relating to her theft of monies from the church two years ago. For her guilty plea the following punishment was handed down.

She now has a felony conviction on her record which will allow future potential employers to find out about this incident in a routine background check.

She received the maximum probation of 5 years during which time if she breaks any of the provisions of her probation or is convicted of any other offense her probation may be revoked and she may go to jail.

The terms of her probation are as follows:

She must meet on a regular basis with her parole officer in Brazoria County to report on her progress in meeting the terms of her probation.

She will have to pay \$2,451.03 in restitution to the church to reimburse us for the money not already reimbursed to the church by insurance.

She is required to serve 240 hours (the maximum) of community service.

She must pay a fine of \$750.

She must pay \$281 in court costs.

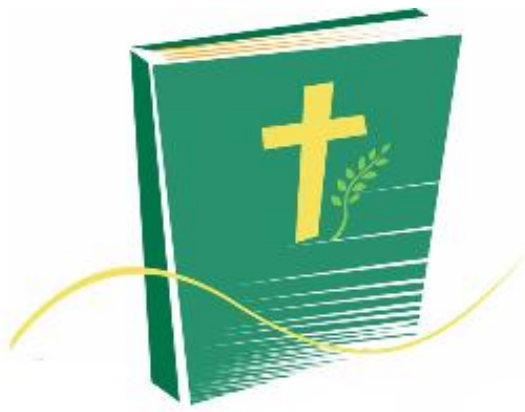
She must pay \$960 in attorney fees.

She must pay \$873.97 in "other costs" which include the court cost for a Certified Public Accountant to review the church's books for her defense.

She must pay \$25 to CrimeStoppers to aid in funding their ongoing operations.

She must make a public apology to the church membership during a Sunday service.

Those of us involved in pursuing this case are glad to finally close this sad chapter of our church's history. It has taken many hours of work by numerous individuals to resolve this matter. Now that it is over I would hope that the congregation would join me in praying for Ms. Kidd and her future.



BIBLE Studies

ADULT FALL BIBLE STUDY OFFERINGS...

By Pastor Linda Snow

Disciple 1 :Becoming Disciples Through Bible Study is a 34 week journey through the biblical story from Genesis to Revelation. The purpose of this first class in the Disciple series is to develop strong Christian leaders through regular in-depth study of Scripture. Disciple making and Christian nurturing are its goals. *(It is recommended that you complete Disciple 1 prior to Disciple 2,3,4 but not required)*

Disciple 3:Remember Who You Are - Participants in this 32-week session study, sixteen sessions on the prophets and sixteen on Paul's letters. You will read the major and minor Old Testament prophets, with the exception of Daniel, and will read the thirteen letters traditionally attributed to Paul.

Disciple 4 - Under the Tree of Life is a 32-week study that concentrates on the Writings of the Old Testament- Ruth, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Lamentations and Daniel. New Testament scriptures include the Gospel of John, 1,2,3 John, James, Jude and Revelation.

Companions In Christ - 28 week journey on spiritual formation. Daytime and nighttime groups forming.

Motherwise - a women's study and fellowship led by Addie Ruth Faist and Louise Bowling on Wednesday morning. During the fall quarter they will be studying **"Covenant: God's Enduring Promises."**

Dave Ramsey Financial Peace University- a ten week study on financial freedom. (Watch for details of an introductory session prior to beginning the class).

GriefShare - a 13 week Christian-based grief recovery program open to the community of Alvin for anyone that has lost a loved one through death. Classes will be formed depending on type of loss and availability to meet daytime or evening. Contact Linda Snow for more information.

In addition there will be **short term daytime studies** led by Bob Vaughn during the year, and Advent and Lent studies led by Pastor Ryburn.

Other classes will be added for the winter/spring quarters.

Additional information about all these classes is available on the information tables outside the church office. Please sign up.



Music Notes:



It's that time again! **Chancel Choir rehearsals resume Thursday, August 13th.** This fall, we are working on a very special presentation of Messiah by George Frederick Handel. If you like to sing, now is a great time to join the choir! Even if you've been gone for a while, its time to come back and experience the beauty of one of the most beloved pieces of music of all time.

Calling all ringers! **Handbell practice will resume Thursday, September 3rd.** We are gearing up for the Bay Area Bell Fest on Saturday, October 24th!

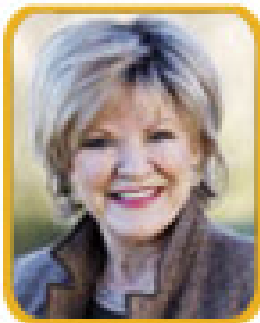
Invitation to Women of all Ages and Stages!

We are pleased to announce the "Covenant: God's Enduring Promises" by Kay Arthur will be our Wednesday Morning MotherWise Bible study, beginning with fellowship at 9:00am September 2nd. We shall open with prayer promptly @ 9:20am, followed by discussion and DVD. Kay and her husband began Precept Ministries International in 1970.

As always, babysitting will be available. Please notify Addie Ruth at 281-331-3008, if you are bringing children.

If you are planning to attend and desire to have a workbook available, please contact Addie Ruth at 281-331-3008 or Louise at 281-331-0174 or bowlingofalvin@sbcglobal.net no later than August 31.

We are excited about this study and hope to see you in September!!



About the Author

Since founding Precept Ministries International (www.precept.org) with her husband, Jack, in 1970 with the vision to establish people in God's Word, internationally known Bible teacher and award-winning author Kay Arthur has written more than 100 books and Bible studies.

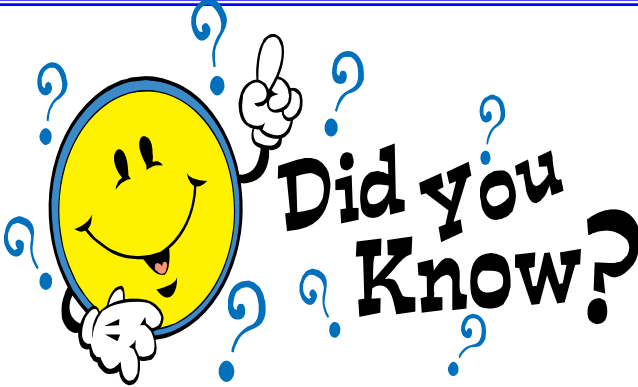
Personal and passionate, engaging and knowledgeable, Kay will lead you on a rich journey of discovery and relationship with our covenant-making, covenant-keeping God.

This is Kay's third women's Bible study with LifeWay Christian Resources, with others including Lord, Teach Me to Pray: Practicing a Powerful Pattern of Prayer and Return to the Garden: Embracing God's Design for Sexuality. She joins Beth Moore and Priscilla Shirer in Deeper Still LifeWay women's events held around the country.

Kay is the teacher and host of "Precepts for life," a radio and television program that reaches a worldwide viewing audience of more than 94 million people, teaching them how to discover truth for themselves.

Through training workshops and Bible conferences; through Bible studies in local churches and small-group studies; through television, radio, and online media; through Bible study tours to biblical sites; and through international efforts in approximately 150 countries and 70 languages – Precept Ministries International is establishing people around the world in God's Word.

Kay serves as Executive Vice President and shares the office of Precept CEO with Jack. The Arthurs live in Chattanooga, Tennessee.



That IRA distributions to charities can be excluded from income?

Applies to: IRA owners age 70 1/2 or older who can transfer up to \$100,000 from their IRAs tax-free directly to eligible charitable organizations.

Details: Whether they itemize or not, eligible IRA owners can direct that

a distribution from their accounts go directly to an eligible charity. The contribution counts toward their required minimum distribution, but the amount isn't added to their taxable income.

For some taxpayers, that's better than taking the distribution and then making the donation. Some taxpayers can't itemize, and others will be eligible for other tax breaks if the distributions aren't included in their taxable income.

Distributions must be from IRAs; those from employer-sponsored retirement plans, including SIMPLE IRAs and simplified employee pension (SEP) plans, are not eligible. Also, donor-advised funds and supporting organizations are not eligible recipients of such transfers.

This particular tax break has been extended before and may be again. "It might become one of those continually expiring provisions". "It's fairly popular with the senior set."

To learn more: [IRS Publication 590](#), Individual Retirement Arrangements, has more information on [qualified charitable distributions](#).

Christian Homes Needed



Share! Is looking for Christians –with or without children – willing to share their homes, love and understanding with a youngster for a school year or semester. The children, ages 15-18 are covered by insurance and bring their own spending money. They come from over 25 countries and arrive each August for enrollment in their new school. Host families provide room, board and a loving environment. If you would like a REWARDING AND EDUCATIONAL experience for your family next school year, please call Yvette Coffman: 800-941-3738 or visit www.sharesouthwest.org. Please help us promote peace by SHARE!ing Your Heart & Home.

from the **YOUTH PASTOR**

Congratulations to our Confirmation Class of 2009

We would like to take a moment to recognize and congratulate our Confirmation Class of 2009. I would also like to thank Christy Scales for her leadership of the class in '08-'09.

Our Confirmation Class is:

- Taylor Crainer
- Bethany Wennerstrom
- Nicole Delaune
- Justin Espey
- Brooke Hern
- Kate Jernigan
- Jake Johnson
- Morgan Killen
- John Horton
- Trent Galetka
- Lucas Loftin
- Haley Nash

Congratulations ladies and gents!

We would also like to say thank you to our mentors for the great job they did this year with our students. We couldn't have done it without you.



Back to School Bash August 23, 5:15 pm

I know you don't really want to think about school starting back up, but it is around the corner. On Sunday August 23 we will be joining the other churches in our district at a Back To School Bash at Friendswood UMC. We will meet at the church at 5:15 and head over to FW for the event. We will finish around 8:00 and will be home around 8:33.

Join us for food, fun and worship as we get ready for a new year in our mission field!

Middle School Madness

Beginning September 13 at 4:30 on Sunday afternoon we will be flooding (not literally) the building with Middle Schoolers.

Join us this fall for our new Middle School ministry. The time will be filled with high energy games (and a few messy ones with food involved),
Snack time and a Bible study called "Surviving Middle School."

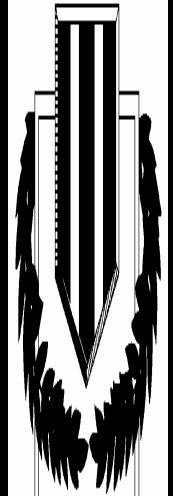
Parents, we need your help to make this ministry work. Please see Roger to volunteer.

Fusion News

It is time for Fusion to get started again. I have totally missed having it this summer and can't wait to get going again.

We will begin Fusion on Wednesday September 2 at 6:00 pm (note the time change)

See ya September 2!



DO YOU NOT
KNOW THAT
IN A RACE
ALL THE
RUNNERS
RUN, BUT
ONLY ONE
GETS THE
PRIZE? RUN
IN SUCH A
WAY AS TO
GET THE
PRIZE.

1 CORINTHIANS 9:24

from the **YOUTH PASTOR**

What does God expect of me? That has been a disturbing theme for me during this summer. It has cost me a good amount of sleep as I have struggled with that question.

I have always believed that I had a pretty good handle on that issue, but the books I have been reading this summer and the scripture that keeps pounding away on me are beginning to make me feel as if I might have had some of it wrong. I have assumed that God wanted me in church, around Christian people, in Bible study or teaching it, listening to Christian Music and doing Christian things...

But is that really what God expects of us? Is that what He did?

The more I read the more I believe that I have gotten it wrong. I have been hard pressed this summer to see where I have any connection with the unbelieving, non-Christian world. What friends do I have that aren't Christian? What places do I go where I encounter unbelievers? Doesn't God expect us to be in the world and make a difference?

Jesus left heaven and left His comfort zone that he might encounter thieves and liars and sluts and sinners...the least of these. Can I (or you) do any less? Where is your contact with the world? How are you making a difference? **What does God expect of you?**

I would chance a bet that it is more than what we are doing and what we are being. I would chance a bet that Jesus has called us to a higher call than where we are. The call is not an easy one and it is not one to be taken lightly.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer once said, "When Christ calls a man, He bids him come and die." That is not an easy teaching, but it is truth. Jesus said that if we really want to be his disciple we must "deny ourselves, take up our cross daily and follow Me." I know that by my strength and my power, I am completely incapable of doing that.

What does God expect of us?

Maybe to rely on His Spirit within us to strengthen and embolden.

Maybe to put our faith into action.

Maybe to quit trusting in the processes and powers of this world and to trust His power and His plan.

"Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God." Psm 20:7

What does God expect of you?

Move Youth Ministry Leadership Conference September 19, 2009

This September 19th we will be headed down to Moody Methodist church in Galveston for the Move Student Ministry leadership conference.

This is a great opportunity for or leadership to get some excellent training and make some great contacts with other youth ministries in our area.

The keynote speaker is Jonathon McKee. Jonathon has authored several books on youth ministry and is the founder of "the Source for Youth Ministry," a non-profit group dedicated to providing cutting edge resources to youth workers.

The cost of the event is FREE! So you can't beat the price and the speakers, connections and community offered to those of us who love or maybe just like teenagers is priceless.

Call Roger if you are interested in the conference or if you are interested in getting involved with our student ministry.

Take me out to the Ballgame, part dues Astros vs. diamondbacks

Saturday, August 22 is Faith and Family night at the ballpark. We will be taking another group out to the ballgame with some added attractions. The Astros will be hosting a concert by Mercy Me and a testimony by one of your Houston Astros.

The gates open at 2 pm and everything begins at 2:45. Tickets are \$16 and money MUST be in by August 15th.

We will meet at the church at 1pm and head to the ballpark together.

CHILDREN'S

CORNER



CORNER
CHILDREN'S

Summertime and the Living is Easy

Well, maybe it's time to just relax by the pool and think about how blessed we are and how many more opportunities are coming our way.

Let's take a moment to reflect back. WOW! Is all I can say about our VBS this year. We had the Dock Rockin'. I cannot say THANK YOU enough to all of our wonderful volunteers that stepped up this year. We had over 40 adults and 20 children (that have already promoted out of VBS, which just

wanted to help.) Whether you donated funds, your time or talents, you help make VBS awesome. VBS was a blessing to me and I hope everyone involved.

You might have already seen the results of some the efforts of VBS in the newspaper. The children had donated over \$500 that helped with the surgery on a dog that had been hit by a car. The children are also going to be recognized in one of our services by the Alvin Animal League. Details will be announced in the bulletin.

Summer time never means the learning stops when it comes to knowing what God has in store for us. Our K - 5th Sunday school classes are working on learning the books of the Bible. At the end of the summer we will have a special trophy for each child that can recite the books of the Old and New Testament. We are listening to songs in the Gathering time to help us learn the books and I encourage each of you parents to help our children practice the names of the books of the Bible at home.

To all of our volunteers we are extending a special invitation to an

Appreciation Lunch

August 15th

Fellowship hall

11:30 AM

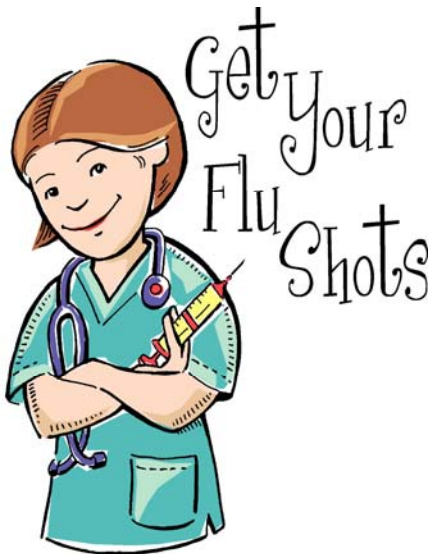
All you need to do is RSVP the church office. It's going to be a morning of good food and music celebrating YOU our most important asset.

We will have our regularly scheduled Children's Leadership Team meeting on August 20. If you are interested in helping in any area of the children's ministry, please drop in and see what opportunities are available.



Congregational care

The pastors and church hospital visitors strive to provide compassionate, caring concern through personal contact with members of the Church Family. When you are scheduled to go into the hospital or if you find yourself hospitalized for whatever reason, please remember to call or have a family member or friend call to inform us as to where you are. Thank you for helping us minister to you.



First United Methodist Church will be offering

**flu shots on
October 4th.**

Medicare is welcomed and those without Medicare will be \$24.99 and \$49.99 for pneumonia. Look for more information in the coming weeks!

Baptism



Keith Kayden Remington was baptized on July 19, 2009



Prayers and
Squares Needs
Volunteers



This ministry will start again on August 20th at 6:00pm in the fellowship hall. If you are remotely interested in helping, please come! There are a few people gathering to make those beautiful quilts that we pray over.

More people are necessary to continue this worthwhile ministry.

No need to know how to sew. If you can use a pair of scissors we need you! For more information, you may contact the office.

To the First United Methodist Church of Alvin

By Christi Scales

Thank you very much for your support with the 2009 Confirmation Class. I appreciate all the help you so graciously delivered. With the church's support, we have assisted 12 youth into our church body as full members. Thanks to the parents for bringing your children each week. It wasn't just the time you spent driving them to and from the extra curricular activities, it was the Christian example you have shown throughout your lives that matters most to your children.



A big thank you goes out to all of you who chose to be mentors...talk about an example of Faith! These members of the church really stepped up to the plate and volunteered their own time for your children, week after week. Again it is this example of how we should live, and the relationships that were built between the mentors and the youth that will live on. A special thank you goes to Sandra and Bill Ivey for opening up their home for the confirmation retreat.

The curriculum is lengthy, and could not be delivered by any one person. So at the outset it was determined that members of the church body would be asked to give time and testimony as teachers. It is a difficult task to have to find someone for that special lesson, but no single person declined when called, not a soul. This was most impressive, and again speaks to the caliber of the church body.

Finally, this program would not exist accept for the support and guidance of Reverend Ryburn and the church staff. Eric, Linda, Roxann, and Roger have done a wonderful job for the youth, and although thank you just does not suffice it is the best I can do.



Thank You,

I want to thank my church family for your thoughts, prayers, visits, calls and food. These gifts of love have helped speed my recovery from surgery. It is wonderful to be part of such a loving Christian family,
Barbara Moore

Dear FUMC,

Thank you very much for my prayer quilt. I appreciate all the prayers and the work put into the quilt. *Mickey Boff*



Dear God,

Thank you so much for giving me the means to grow in my faith and do your will. I really appreciate that you chose me to receive a scholarship from this church, and I want to thank you so much that you opened the ears and the hearts of those people that you let to choose me. I am truly blessed with music and in my faith. I also feel that I am blessed to have such a caring church family and to know that no matter where I am in my life, that they will always be there to guide me. I know that what the Lord has me doing here and now is preparing me for there and then. I love you Lord completely and I know you will be with me always, and thank you again for the hearts that opened their ears and gave me what you thought I needed. *Your Loving Disciple, Colton Necessary*

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for your loving prayers. It's made all the difference. *CarolAnn and Joe Mills*

Dear Church Family,

Words can't express the gratitude that my family and I have for the scholarships that I have received. College is so expensive and with your help with this scholarship, I will be able to continue my education without putting such a financial burden on myself or my family. I want to thank the Cross Scholarship and the Geneva Pearson Educational Award for granting these scholarships to me. Each of these scholarships will be put to good use and help out tremendously. Thank you and God bless each and every one of you, *Adam Cunningham*

Dear Scholarship Committee,

I am honored that you selected me for the Cross Scholarship and the Geneva Pearson Educational Award. I really appreciate your consideration. The monies will be put to good use as I continue my training at Texas A & M Maritime Academy. *Sincerely, Cory Fontenot*

Dear Scholarship Committee and family,

First and foremost, thank you for choosing me to be your scholarship recipient. Going to college has always been a priority of mine. The money that I received is greatly appreciated and will be used to offset my college expenses. I am very excited about moving to Austin this fall where I will attend the University of Texas. Once again, thank you for ensuring financial assistance to students like myself. *Sincerely, Kyle Gaddy*

To The Scholarship Committee,

Thank you so much for your consideration in renewing my scholarship for the next school year. It is such a blessing to know that I have a church family that loves me. It's a big help in my college tuition! Thank you so much! *In His hands, Rebekah McCravy*

Dear Church Family,

We would like to express our sincere thanks for your love and concern during these past few weeks. The cards you sent, calls you made and especially the prayers you've said.

A special thanks to Rev. Ryburn and those who furnished a meal on such short notice. Thanks also for the gifts made in honor of Misti. *God bless you all, Pat Wheeler, Kim Richter and family*

Dear Church Family,

Thank you so much for awarding me this scholarship. I greatly appreciate it! *Sincerely, Samantha Fiszer*

Dear Church Family,

Thank you so much for the beautiful prayer quilt. It was a great comfort to me during my hospital stay and my continued recovery at home. Knowing that each square was lovingly sewn, and each knot prayerfully tied, is a blessing to me and my family. *Love, Jack Myers and family*



611 West South • Alvin TX 77511

281-331-3482 • 281-585-2586 • Fax: 281-388-2655
Web site: www.alvinmethodist.org

You are welcome at the Alvin First United Methodist Church.
Our staff is here to help you!

Alvin First UMC Ministers:

The Congregation

Alvin First UMC Staff:

Pastor: Eric E. Ryburn

Associate Pastor: Linda Snow

Lay Leader: Kenny Carter

Parish Council Chairman: Bill Wharton

Director of Church Operations: Roxann Corona

Director of Music Ministries: Matt Hogan

Director of Youth Ministries: Roger Stafford

Director of Children's Ministry: Sandy Wendel

Director of Finance: Wanda Johnson

Pianist: Sheila Hernandez

Organist: Rachel Hunter

Pre-School/Mother's Day Out: Lorraine Holston

Parish Visitor: Suzanne Palmer

Audio-Visual Coordinator: Pat Singletary

Audio-Visual Technicians: Julie Matteson, John Elledge,

Andrew McCravy, Amy Metzger, Sarah Wade, Matt Singletary

Director of Nursery: Linda Carter

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PERMIT NO 13

Community Health Fair

Saturday, September 12, 2009

9:00 AM-1:00 PM

Blood Sugar Testing

Blood Pressure Screening

Alvin Police Department

Retirement/Assisted Living

Representatives

And Much More. . .

*Volunteers needed! Please contact the office or
Rachel Hunter at 281-648-6534.*

