



# NEIGHBORHOOD MINISTRIES

September 2009



## SUMMER REVIEW

**Over 800 Children Encountered Jesus!**

Dear Friends,

It's still hot here in Phoenix, but the summer of Kids Clubs, camps and ten week internships is over. We are left with our reflections of what we had hoped would be for us, a *Jesus Encounter*.

You know this about us. We are surrounded by people whose lives are difficult. The relentless pounding of trouble often leads these loved ones to helplessly accept their lot in life. One caution I held close this summer is the knowledge that despair can cause us to miss the presence of Jesus. Instead, we blame others, do not take responsibility for our situation, give up and give in, and let the way the world fixes pain be the way we do it also.

But for hundreds of us this summer, the cycle of despair and the urge to give up was interrupted by Jesus.

- The children learned to express their faith. In more ways than we can know about, they chose Jesus as protector, friend, confidant, healer, savior and giver of good gifts. Listen to them sing at <http://www.nmaz.org/kidscamp/2009.aspx>.

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### DESERT SCHOOLS PARTNERS WITH NM

This summer, Desert Schools Federal Credit Union once again partnered with Neighborhood Ministries to provide our emerging leaders with an excellent service learning opportunity. 12 emerging leaders worked as summer interns at NM, planning and executing our summer camps. Desert Schools provided a stipend match for 10 of these youth. They also came out and visited with our youth, teaching them the basics of financial planning. For many youth, this was the first time they thought about the necessity of savings. Thank you Desert Schools for investing in our youth and in our community.



**Summer Intern Team 2009**

- Our terrific young leaders worked hard all year for the chance to serve on our summer team. But even with all they have going for them, many of them limped into the summer. Tragedy had struck their young lives and grief clouded hopes and dreams. But the young ones who were following them inspired them to keep going. They discovered the paradox of strength in weakness.
- Parents of our kids are engaged in the work here, a lot of them. They lead small groups, coach soccer, drive vans and donate to whatever the need is at the time. And I know that Jesus is transforming their lives. In the wake of a scandal unloosed, I witnessed the fearlessness of parents standing for truth against the old patterns of hiding the sin.
- Volunteers showed up all summer long, most at great cost to themselves. I sat with two ceramicists who had brought clay pottery wheels and boat loads of patience. By the end of Kids Club they knew kids names and had spotted emerging artists who were taking home kiln-fired creations.
- When ALL the summer bills were paid by August 1—even though we hoped and prayed for this—it was an unexpected Jesus encounter. I know that many of you were behind this miraculous provision, and for that I thank you with overwhelming gratitude.



*“I am so happy to have been chosen to work with the little ones. Even when the devil was trying to get me down God reminded me I am here for a reason.” -Volunteer*



*“I know that God loves me and will never leave me.” -5th Grader*



*“This summer was about relationships. These students believe that God is real. They struggle with him, with his love and grace, with their life circumstances, with who they are and who they dream about becoming. It’s real. It’s messy. It’s beautiful. I am so glad that I get to be here and watch as God transforms us together.” -Summer Intern*



We truly encountered Jesus this summer at a time when it was absolutely critical. He has renewed hopes and strengths. Thank you for believing with us that we would encounter our Lord.

Sincerely,

Kit Danley  
President

### UPCOMING EVENTS

Fall Volunteer Training      September 19

Fall Programs Begin      September 21

**SAVE THE DATE      November 14**

NM Open House and Grand Opening of El Mercado de la Comunidad (aka—the thrift store) and OpportuniTees.

More details to come next month.