

World Mission

NEWSLETTER

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God is doing great things through the ministries of our international partners among children affected by poverty. Without adequate food, health-care, and opportunities for education, these children have little hope of breaking the cycle of poverty. Covenant Kids is working with our international partners to break this cycle. This issue focuses on some of those programs and how you can become involved in helping children in Colombia, India, Congo, and Sudan.

Covenant Kids— Love in Action

Nearly three billion people in the world live on less than \$2 a day, according to the World Bank Development Indicators. Many people lack education, clean water to drink, food to eat, medical care, clothing, jobs, even a safe place to live. Millions of children exist in these impoverished situations. UNICEF calculates that 25,000 children die each day due to poverty. How can we as the church respond to this overwhelming need?

Covenant Kids is a program for impoverished children, coordinated by Covenant World Mission with support from Covenant World Relief and Paul Carlson Partnership. It began in Colombia, but has expanded to include children in India, Congo, and Sudan. And for only \$25 a month, individual Covenanters can help give these children a hopeful future.

Colombia

In 1986 Covenant missionary Gwynne Lewis and Maria Salazar, a member of the Colombia Covenant Church, launched Covenant Kids as a way to support the children of Covenant pastors and leaders in the city of Medellín. They began with fourteen sponsors helping fourteen children. The program quickly grew, and in 1992 Covenant Kids was recognized by the government, allowing it to expand even more.

Today Covenant Kids in Colombia remains a one-on-one sponsorship program, providing children education, nutrition, and medical care, and showing them God's love. In addition to the children of Medellín, it now serves children in other parts of central and northern Colombia.

The need is greater than ever as Colombia has one of



the world's highest internally displaced populations—second only to Sudan. Four decades of conflict has forced families from rural areas to seek safety in the cities.

Covenant Kids is working in partnership with Covenant churches in Colombia, many of which are in regions that include very poor neighborhoods of displaced families. The churches have established schools, as well as health, recreation, and spiritual formation programs for these children.

India

Hundreds of millions of people are impacted by the grip of poverty as they face lack of consistent employment, debt, water-borne illnesses, and discrimination against the lower castes. Often children become laborers. Covenant Kids-India supports the work of three national church partners—India for Christ Ministries, Truthseekers, and the Hindustani Covenant Church—that are reaching out to children in need.

While the Indian constitution mandates public education for children through tenth grade, tens of millions of children from the lowest caste do not have opportunities

for an education. Without proper nutrition, health-care, and educational support, they struggle to attend or remain in school.

India for Christ Ministries' Child Development Centre is a non-formal education program, providing physical, educational, social, and spiritual support for needy children in and around Bangalore. The center cares for more than 600



and PCP help support local village schools where funding is needed for the most basic supplies, including chalkboards, benches and desks, pens and paper.

A Covenant program provides technical training to young adults for a variety of trade services. Students typically participate for one year in order to develop tools necessary for their trade.

With funding from the Department of Women Ministries' Educate the Girls project, the CEUM

provides secondary education for girls who seek a high-school certificate. Scholarships now make it possible for young women to learn through the provision of teachers, curriculum, supplies, and building maintenance.

Sudan

Covenant Kids–Sudan supports the work of the Evangelical Covenant Church of Sudan (ECCS), which faces a myriad of issues relating to civil unrest, war, displacement of families, poverty, and disease. Covenant World Relief and Covenant World Mission partner with the ECCS to respond to these overwhelming needs through church leadership training, education, medical care, and community development projects.

The Good Hope Academy in Bentui is an ECCS school that provides education and a nutritious meal for children each day. Almost half the students at the academy are girls—a significant accomplishment in a country where only 18 percent of girls get an education. A \$25 Covenant Kids scholarship each month supports two children at



churches and ministries across central India. This sister church has established programs to meet the needs of the poorest of the poor—those who do not have such basic amenities as sanitation, clean drinking water, electricity, medical care, even one meal a day. HCC employs social workers, medical professionals, teachers, and pastors to carry out these programs. They work among child laborers

in the slums of Mumbai, Pune, Solapur, and Gulbarga, including children who scavenge in dumps and whose parents work in the sex trade.

Congo

Covenant Kids–Congo supports the work of the Congo Covenant Church (CEUM) alongside Covenant partners Paul Carlson Partnership (PCP) and the Department of Women Ministries. The CEUM is involved in northwest Congo in educational programs for children, youth, young adults, and women. These programs give younger participants a foundation for lifelong learning and older participants practical skills and job training.

Congolese families struggle to provide basic necessities and medical care. There is little available for education. The CEUM

children between the ages of three and fifteen. In the short term, the program seeks to address health issues, provide nutritious food, and teach Christian values. Long-term goals include developing a support system for the children and their families, providing education and career guidance, and helping the children grow spiritually. Individual scholarships provide opportunities for new children to join the program.

Truthseekers, another partner in India, developed a number of neighborhood schools dedicated to the education of otherwise forgotten boys and girls, ages three to twelve. Classes meet from August to April, providing basic schooling and one meal a day for 600 to 800 children. The schools meet in patios, courtyards, and simple dwellings; there are rarely desks, chalkboards, or school supplies. Parents of the children who attend are asked to pay about one dollar a month. While it does not cover the costs, it represents a real investment in their children's education as parents make between \$30 and \$60 a month.

The Hindustani Covenant Church (HCC), our third partner in India, has





the academy.

Through both non-formal and formal education programs, lives are being changed in each of these countries. Ministry partners in North America can participate in these ministries by providing \$25 scholarships for children, teenagers, or young adults so they may participate in programs that address educational, social, physical, and spiritual needs. By working together with our international partners, we can help children break out of the cycle of poverty. □

If you are interested in sponsoring a child through Covenant Kids or would like more information on this program, please contact Covenant World Mission at world.mission@covchurch.org or (773) 907-3316.

105 Baptized in Thailand

By Stan Friedman

A total of 105 new believers in southern Thailand who are affected by HIV/AIDS were recently baptized in a single service by staff members of the Sustainable Development Research Foundation (SDRF). The foundation is directed by Covenant missionary Jim Gustafson.

"This was no ordinary baptism (service), which are usually solemn and quiet," says Covenant missionary Bob Shim. "Children frolicked in the ocean and people stood on the beach laughing and talking, but in the water where Jim and Khun Nujon were baptizing, it was a sacred place.

"What stood out most was the joy and hope on their faces. Some of the newly baptized even broke into dance after coming out of the water," Shim says.

"Here is a group of people who have lost jobs, been marginalized by their society, and shunned by their fami-

lies—all because of their illness," he notes. "However, they felt completely accepted in this new community. Their love for one another is contagious."

This group of believers has steadily been growing over the last few years, now numbering more than 200 individuals located in various communities throughout southern Thailand.

Following the baptism on May 21, everyone gathered for communion and a Thai string-tying ceremony at the Center for HIV/AIDS Affected Communities.

Plans have been made to baptize seventy-five additional believers who were unable to attend due to the spread of a mosquito-borne viral disease that is epidemic in southern Thailand. □

Stan Friedman is staff writer for Covenant Communications. This article first appeared on the Covenant website and is used by permission of Covenant News Service.

COVENANT MISSIONARY PRAYER CALENDAR

Available July 1, 2009

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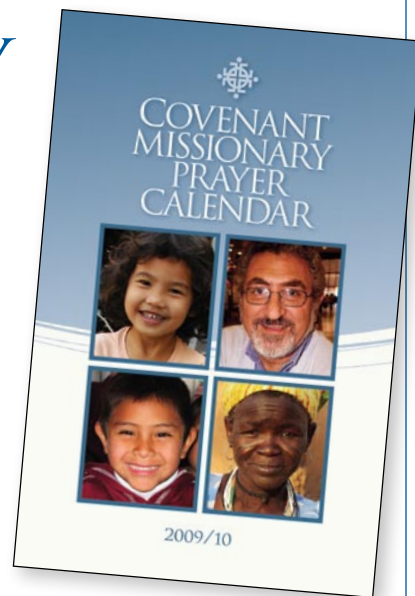
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Covenant Project and Short-term Missionaries 2009-2010

PROJECT MISSIONARIES

Project missionaries serve three to six years, are project-focused, and raise their financial support.

BRAZIL

Wainer and Magui Guimaraes

The Bridge Covenant, Riverbank, California

EAST ASIA

Dennis and Heather Choate

Life Covenant, Edmond, Oklahoma

Peter and Anna Kim

New Community Covenant, Chicago, Illinois

GUAM

Eric and Karyn Sorenson

Crossroads Covenant, Concord, California

MEXICO

Nils and Erika Clauson

Edgebrook Evangelical Covenant, Chicago, Illinois

Jo Ellen Reaves

Faith Evangelical Covenant, Wheaton, Illinois

MONGOLIA

Jim and Liz Sedore

Grace Community Covenant, Olympia, Washington

MOSAICS PROJECT

Andy Larsen

Quest, Seattle, Washington

RUSSIA

Leonid and Leanna Regheta

Quest, Seattle, Washington

COVENANT MERGE MINISTRIES

Dale Lusk

Foothill Covenant, Los Altos, California

Dolores Park, San Francisco, California

SHORT-TERM MISSIONARIES

Short-term missionaries serve one to three years in various capacities and ministries, and raise their financial support.

AFRICA

Tom Halgren

Fruitland Evangelical Covenant, Whitehall, Michigan

BELGIUM

Jared and Hannah Baker

Grace Evangelical Covenant, Chicago, Illinois

Johnna Hayward

Immanuel Evangelical Covenant, Chicago, Illinois

Decorah Covenant, Decorah, Iowa

CAMEROON

Karl and Mary Noren

Brookwood Covenant, Topeka, Kansas

Faith Evangelical Free, Manhattan, Kansas

COLOMBIA

Bud and Kara Locke

River Life Covenant, Sacramento, California

EAST ASIA

Chris and Diane Wiebe

Hillcrest Covenant, Prairie Village, Kansas

ECUADOR

Joel and Kim Delp

Northwest Covenant, Mount Prospect, Illinois

Christopher and Jennifer Hoskins

Flat Irons Community, Lafayette, Colorado

First Covenant, Omaha, Nebraska

Yonchu Song

Parkwood Community, Villa Park, Illinois

INDIA

John and Rebecca Kim

Highrock Covenant, Arlington, Massachusetts

JAPAN

Grant and Miho Buchholtz

Highrock Covenant, Arlington, Massachusetts

MEXICO

Bruce and Katy Dockter

Cornerstone Covenant, Turlock, California

Jim and Barb Mikrut

First Evangelical Covenant, Rockford, Illinois

Amy Mullin

Hillcrest Covenant, Prairie Village, Kansas

SPAIN

Steve and Rebecca Hoden

Evangelical Covenant, Kent, Washington

Edgebrook Evangelical Covenant, Chicago, Illinois

Jorge and Noris Maldonado

Redeemer Covenant, Downey, California

SUDAN

James Tang

Fridley Covenant, Fridley, Minnesota

SWEDEN

Joe Davis

Christian Vision Covenant, Northbrook, Illinois

Aaron Thompson

Karmel Evangelical Covenant, Princeton, Minnesota

COVENANT MERGE MINISTRIES

Tammi Biggs

Saranac Community, Saranac, Michigan

Ellen Hernández

Vida Internacional, Saltillo, Coahuila, Mexico

Kjel Larsen

Mercer Island Covenant, Mercer Island, Washington

Alex Velasco

Iglesia del Pacto La Trinidad, Mission, Texas

Several of these missionaries are still in the process of raising financial support in order to begin their missionary service. If you are interested in supporting any of these missionaries, please contact Covenant World Mission at (773) 907-3316 or email world.mission@covchurch.org.