

Attendance Up 53% Over Last Decade

The Evangelical Covenant Church (ECC) reports record attendance following a 15th consecutive year of growth.

Local church attendance on any given Sunday now averages nearly 166,000 individuals in the 785 congregations of the ECC, up 3.1 percent over the previous year. During the past decade, attendance has increased 53 percent, making the Covenant one of the fastest-growing denominations.

Gary Walter, executive minister of Church Growth and Evangelism, identifies four components contributing to the Covenant's momentum:

The strength of the base of established churches. "Year in and year out, our established churches faithfully reach out. We have a missional heart."

To insure that established churches have state-of-the-art planning, evaluation, and coaching resources available, the ECC has established a new position focusing on congregational health and momentum. John Wenrich heads this new initiative working closely with other departments and regional conferences. Visit the church growth area of the Covenant website for more information.



John Wenrich

Church planting. This remains a critical component of the Covenant's mission at home. "New churches allow us to reach into new populations," says Dave Olson, director of church planting. At any given time, 40 to 50 new churches are under development. More than 55,000 people attend churches new to the Covenant during the past 10 years. Associate director Don Davenport focuses on the transition phase of a church plant moving into more established congregational life.

The rapid growth of ethnic ministries. This is a third factor in the overall growth of the Covenant family in the United States and Canada. The ECC now ministers among

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Blue Nominated to Lead CMJ

Debbie Blue has been selected as the candidate for the position of executive minister of the newly formed Department of Compassion, Mercy, and Justice of the Evangelical Covenant Church.

Blue, who currently serves as director of adult ministries in the Department of Christian Formation, will begin her new duties September 1, if elected during the June Covenant Annual Meeting in Portland, Oregon.

"I am deeply pleased with the nomination of Debbie Blue to lead this new Department of Compassion, Mercy, and Justice," says President Glenn Palmberg of her selection. "Her pastoral experience, her role as director of adult education, and her significant part in the creation and use of the Invitation to Racial Righteousness will all be important in this new work. Debbie will be a good leader of people, as well as an administrator."

In her current role, she develops resources, facilitates retreats and workshops on adult spiritual formation and leader development, and trains facilitators for the racial righteousness initiative. She also serves as an adjunct professor at North Park Theological Seminary.

Blue received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Bioengineering from the University of Illinois at Chicago and a Master of Arts Degree in Christian Education from North Park Theological Seminary. She is pursuing a certificate in spiritual direction through the Center for Spiritual Direction.

"There is something that I have



Debbie Blue (left) chats with two participants during one of her many Sankofa Journeys that retrace milestones during the civil rights movement.

thought of in processing the call that is very significant for me," Blue said in describing how she reached the decision to accept the nomination.

"Earlier this year I stayed in a friend's home," she recalls. "On her wall was this plaque given to her by a friend that read: 'Every experience God gives us, every person He puts in our lives, is the perfect preparation for the future that only He can see' (author unknown). How profoundly true this is for me as well!"

"From the wisdom figures of my grandmother, mother and father, to include my siblings, children and grandchildren, extended family and my African American community, my faith journey has been replete with sacred/soul friends and mentors, instructors and classmates,

pastors and colleagues, and a host of sisters and brothers in the many local churches that I've visited over these past 10 years. They have all been used by God to help shape and prepare me for this call."

Recalling the words of one of her college professors during her discerning process, she says, "He consistently reminded the class that spiritual formation doesn't happen in isolation. We need the community. So for me, this is unquestionably a communal call, and not something of my own doing."

She was commissioned by the Covenant in 1998 and was ordained to specialized ministry in 2003. She has three adult children, five grandchildren, and is a member of Community Covenant Church in Calumet Park, a suburb of Chicago.

Attendance

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

African American, Hispanic, Native Alaskan, Asian American, Korean, South Sudanese, Chinese, Haitian, Mien, Filipino, Laotian, and Vietnamese populations. Twenty-two percent of all congregations in the Covenant are ethnic or multiethnic.

The trend of large churches growing larger. There are now 17 churches with an average attendance of 1,000 or more people (seven of which are over 2,000). There are 43 churches with an average attendance of more than 600 people.



Lisa Orris

Evangelism is the driving motivation for all of this activity, Walter says. Approximately 12,500 commitments to Christ were reported by ECC churches last year. Covenant congregations benefit from resources such as “Bringing My World to Christ” materials and seminars, as well as evangelism training courses. Ed Delgado gives leadership in this area. Lisa Orris consults with congregations looking to be more effective in this dimension of congregational mission.

Growth creates additional demands on facilities. Steve Dawson, director of technical services, along with associate director Rob Hall, are working with congregations to address land and facility issues. Dawson reports an unprecedented \$100 million of activity in the pipeline. Don Fensterman is available to help coach churches through fund-raising campaigns for land and facilities.

This demand has led to restructuring and expanding the technical services area to better serve the needs of churches. These services will move from the umbrella of Church Growth to National Covenant Properties (NCP), the lending arm of the Covenant, which will become a “one-stop center” for all real estate functions. Dawson will become the president of NCP, replacing David Johnson, who is retiring.

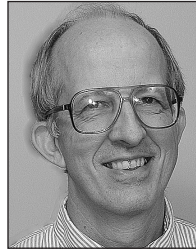
For more information about resources available to assist local congregations, contact the Department of Church Growth and Evangelism by telephone at 773-784-3000 or by email at cge@covchurch.org.

Dawson to Head National Covenant Properties

Stephen R. Dawson will become the new president of National Covenant Properties (NCP) when current President David W. Johnson retires next year.

Dawson currently serves as director of technical services, working with local Evangelical Covenant churches on real estate acquisition and sale matters as part of the Department of Church Growth and Evangelism.

The change in leadership will



Stephen R. Dawson

coincide with a structural change as well, with the technical services unit relocating from the Department of Church Growth and Evangelism and in the future coming under NCP’s umbrella. The technical services function assists congregations in land acquisition, facility planning, and preparing for the loan application process with NCP.

Dawson also has served as president of Covenant Development Corporation for 16 of his 17 years with the Department of Church Growth

and Evangelism.

Prior to his association with the Evangelical Covenant Church, Dawson worked in the banking industry in Colorado where he was president of two banks.

“The National Covenant Properties board is appreciative of Steve’s willingness to serve in this key position,” says Marshall Dahlstrom, NCP board chair. “We look forward to continued growth and service to our member churches and investors.”

Dawson is married with two sons and lives in the Chicago area.

CBC to Cease Operations Effective May 31

COVENANT BIBLE COLLEGE (CBC) will close on May 31 following the completion of the current academic year, according to a decision announced by the CBC Board of Directors in February. Contributing factors include increased operating expenses, a continued decline in enrollment, and fewer donations. The school closed its Windsor, Colorado, campus last year and cut additional staff as part of an effort to improve its financial condition. The school continued to operate campuses in Canada and Ecuador, however. CBC has an operating deficit of \$1.2 million and is carrying another \$4 million in building-related debt. By selling the properties in Canada and Colorado, the school hopes to retire all debt and pay creditors. Disposition of the property in Ecuador also is being pursued. Leadership evaluated several options in an effort to keep some portion of the CBC program operating, including maintenance of just one campus, but concluded that would not be economically feasible.

The college, originally known as Covenant Bible Institute, was started by the Evangelical Covenant Church of Canada in 1941. The first students met in a church building. The school gradually transitioned from a three-year institution for discipling students to an eight-month program. The name was changed to Covenant Bible College in 1962.

Faith-Driven Ministry Depends on Generosity

What if your church had unlimited resources to fund its ministry? What if the Covenant had more money than it knew what to do with?

Neither of these scenarios is likely to occur, nor would it be healthy if they did, says Bill Clark, director of strategic giving for the Evangelical Covenant Church. “Ministry is a faith-driven enterprise, dependent on the grace of God and the generosity of God’s people,” he believes.

It is likewise true that with additional resources, we could accomplish ministries now only on the theoretical drawing board, Clark adds. “Ministry requires money. That sounds unspiritual, but it’s an unvarnished fact.”

With new revenues, local churches could support a compelling community cause or extend a call to another servant-leader. Even small amounts could be spent to commu-

nicate the good news to unchurched neighbors, he notes. Larger gifts could start a church plant, bringing new life to others and adding value to the life of the Covenant.

The work of strategic giving is to connect Covenant donors with the ministries that most motivate and inspire their own hearts, Clark observes. Individuals desiring to see more activity in church planting,

missions, or other programs through targeted donations are encouraged to call either Clark at 918-688-5276 or Liz Heintz at 773-907-3375.

“Whether through current giving, or through the expertise of Covenant Estate Planning Services, the Covenant strongly desires an opportunity to engage with you in the joyful task of enhancing the ministry of God’s church,” Clark says.

Our Growing Covenant: Attendance and Giving, 2000-2006

	Attendance	Giving*	Footnote: Since 2000, church attendance has increased by 29%, while local church giving to the coordinated budget has increased 14%—slightly less than half the church attendance increase.
2000	128,542	\$ 7,624,377	
2001	135,343	7,912,060	
2002	140,617	8,187,547	
2003	148,296	8,266,256	
2004	156,794	8,475,323	
2005	161,019	8,615,102	
2006	165,977	8,679,397	

*Local church giving to the denomination.

Covenant Hospitals Address Urgent Need for Emergency Care

On Chicago's north side and in California's central valley, the two full-service medical centers of the Evangelical Covenant Church are responding to the urgent needs of their communities with expansions of their front doors—the emergency departments.

California. At Emanuel Medical Center in Turlock, the \$30 million project consists of a three-story building with a first-floor emergency department, second-floor critical care department, and a third floor of private patient rooms. A rooftop helipad will enable the hospital to receive patients by helicopter and transport them by elevator directly to the emergency department or critical care unit.

When the new emergency department opened January 3, the hospital had been serving approximately 120 patients daily. Within weeks of the opening, that number jumped to 188 patients per day.

Patients are benefiting from 17 private patient treatment rooms, four acute private treatment rooms that are larger to accommodate trauma-related medical equipment and a larger care team, a decontamination room for patients exposed to hazardous materials, a room dedicated to patients waiting for test results or hospital admission, and two triage stations with private rooms for patient confidentiality. Patients and families have their own private entrance. A 2,200-square-foot waiting area is designed to provide a comfortable environment for patients and families. Following emergency

care, most patients who need to remain in the hospital will be admitted at their bedside by admitting staff equipped with laptop computers.

The Critical Care Center's second floor houses coronary, post-operative, surgical and medical intensive care. Designed for computerized medical documentation and automated/computerized medication dispensing, the floor includes 12 critical care private rooms, 20 progressive care private rooms, and intermediate care rooms that can accommodate additional critical care patients if needed. All patient rooms are oversized, providing space for family-centered care and a sleeper/recliner, reading light and other amenities for the patient's support person.

The building's third floor, scheduled to open in April, will have 36 private patient rooms equipped for computerized medical documentation and automated medication dispensing. Every room will accommodate dialysis and telemetry.

The addition of the Critical Care Center is the largest expansion of the 347-bed, multi-level medical campus since the hospital was built in 1966.

Chicago. Thanks to a fast-tracked construction process, Swedish Covenant Hospital's 11,000-square-foot emergency department expansion opened in March, just a year after groundbreaking.

Due in part to the closing of two neighboring hospitals, Swedish Covenant has faced an "astounding" increase in the community's need for



A \$30 million three-story expansion of Emanuel Hospital in Turlock includes a new first-floor emergency department offering convenient patient parking and easy access.

emergency department services over the past several years. In 2000, the department treated 29,577 patients. Last year, 41,615 patients were treated.

The expansion added 10 examination rooms to reduce patient wait times, as well as an enlarged air treatment system that will strengthen the hospital's ability to respond to various public health threats. An enlarged patient triage area ensures privacy, with an enhanced visitors' lounge offering patients and family members added comfort in their time of stress. The homelike décor of the new setting is designed to nurture both patients and their loved ones.

The project was made possible in

part by a \$1 million federal grant that allowed construction to get under way quickly. The McCormick Tribune Foundation granted \$750,000 toward the effort, and during the ribbon-cutting in March, a \$4 million gift from the Yelda family in Chicago was announced, with the new emergency center named in honor of that gift.

For more information on Emanuel Medical Center or Swedish Covenant Hospital, both ministries of Covenant Ministries of Benevolence, contact the following: John Gilbert, Emanuel Medical Center, 209-664-5920 or john.gilbert@emanuelmed.org; or Timothy A. Nelson, Swedish Covenant Hospital, 773-989-3812 or TNelson@schosp.org.

Pastoral Excellence Project Seeks to Enhance Pastors' Lives

The statistics are impressive. In the last two years, 249 Sustaining Pastoral Excellence (SPE) grants were given to Evangelical Covenant Church pastors. Another 100 pastors participated in seminars, but did not request grants.

The results are equally compelling as pastors have repeatedly expressed the power of SPE in their personal and professional lives.

A pastor participating in the Center for Spiritual Direction said, "I met Jesus from the first day."

Another shared that the center was helping him through hard times, noting, "I still have a deep longing for the Lord. This longing has been

clouded by some difficult years in ministry, but it is starting to resurface again."

Following a seminar on preaching, one pastor declared, "I'm inspired to hit the trenches, encouraged by what I am doing right, and challenged to incorporate new tools."

A pastor who attended a revisioning retreat expressed his gratitude for the opportunity: "I am truly grateful to belong to a denomination that genuinely cares enough about its ministers to put its money where its mouth is, and take care of its own in this very valuable way."

A solitude retreat helped some ministers deepen their relationship

with God. "I found I needed the solitude to unwind from the stress of ministry," said one pastor. "I need the solitude to rejuvenate my energy. The extended time alone gave me the opportunity to commune with God."

Another C.S. Lewis Institute inspired a pastor to say, "I was challenged and refreshed. I return to my ministry with fresh ideas and new directions that will sustain me and my ministry for some time to come."

After attending a youth conference, an attendee said, "This experience helped me reflect on what it means to be a youth worker. It enabled me to reflect upon my goals

for ministry. Usually my focus in ministry has been on helping the youth to deepen their spiritual lives. The conference gave me space to nurture my own relationship with God and to draw from this relationship as I returned to our youth group."

The SPE initiative works in three areas: character development, core competency development, and constancy (sustained development). The Department of the Ordered Ministry welcomes individual inquiries and/or contributions to any or all of these programs.

More information on the program will be found at the SPE website at www.covchurch.org/spe.

World Mission Initiatives Seek to Reach the World for Christ

Covenant World Mission continues to be involved in many ministries around the world. Praise God for the opportunities we have to partner in mission in so many different ways.

AFRICA

Burkina Faso. There are now two new graduate families of the Fulani Bible School of northern Benin. Joodoma and his wife, Odile, plan to work in a parish support ministry in east central Burkina Faso. Eli and Fatimata are in the capital, Ouagadougou, to unify the Fulani believers there and to begin further translation on Chronological Bible lessons for use on radio. A radio broadcast permit request for Djibo was filed in February—two competing requests also were filed. We believe our request is the most rounded plan of the three—pray that God will support this request through the bureaucratic and, at times, corrupt proceedings. The Johnsons will return to Burkina Faso to resume their activities in August.

Cameroon. The Covenant continues to partner with the Evan-

gelical Free Church and two other mission groups in the education of missionary children at the Rain Forest International School in Cameroon.

at 773-907-3350 or by email at lana.heinrich@covchurch.org.

Central African Republic. Karen Benson who lives in Bangui, visits different Fulani villages. Ron and Janet Ziegelbaur have had a busy year—Janet working part time in the office and home schooling three children, with Ron working in the garage to keep the drilling teams busy. They have returned to home assignment in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Roy and Aleta Danforth have conducted agricultural seminars and encouraged the development of agricultural cooperatives in 45 new villages, including planting nearly 12,500 fruit trees. They also have translated lessons about health and God into the Fulani's written language, Arabic script, and Fulfulde.

Congo. It is hoped a democratically elected government will bring peace and encourage aid from other nations to rebuild the country following six years of civil war. The Congo Covenant Church (CEUM) has more than 190,000 members. The medical program has continued in four hospitals and 86 clinics. With the help of the Paul Carlson



Galen Johnson confers with Fulani believers concerning the radio station in Djibo, Burkina Faso.

gelical Free Church and two other mission groups in the education of missionary children at the Rain Forest International School in Cameroon. At the recent annual spiritual retreat, leaders challenged students to resist sin and temptation and commit to more accountability. Short-term missionaries are needed at the school to serve in several areas. To learn more, contact Lana Heinrich, short-term missionary program manager, by telephone

Partnership, the U.S. government, local donors and U.S. churches, 21 bridges have been rebuilt, 10 schools are receiving new roofs, and more than 50,000 students are studying in Covenant primary and secondary schools. The Educate the Girls initiative has been a big encouragement to young women seeking to graduate from high school.

Equatorial Guinea. Three young lay leaders graduated from the one-year discipleship school in



A Chinese student reviews the equivalent of her ABC's.

February and will begin their practical leadership training in April. Missionaries Tim and Helen Smith are working with a congregation in Evinayong that dedicated their first church building on Easter Sunday. The Smiths hosted Bible clubs for 35 kids each week and facilitated a pastors and spouse retreat.

Kenya. During 2006, the Pastor's Book Set Project for Kenya, Uganda, Sudan, and Tanzania distributed almost 6,000 book sets of 60 books each to individual pastors. These book sets include several theological reference books as well as books on counseling, Christian living, devotionals, and topics such as stewardship, leadership, and discipleship. Eighteen four-day teaching conferences were held in Kenya, two in Uganda and Tanzania, and three in Sudan. An additional 6,000 book sets were distributed by the end of March at 10 other conferences.

Sudan. CHIC 2006 funds are hard at work building a new school in Bentiu, despite difficulties getting materials and goods transported. More than 2,000 children attend the school. Short-term missionary James Tang recently completed a three-week trip to Sudan, completing arrangements for implementation of Covenant World Relief (CWR) assistance and development projects. His visits are viewed as an important encouragement to the Evangelical Covenant Church of Sudan and its 53,000 members.

ASIA

Bangladesh. The political situation in Bangladesh has remained tense since early last fall. National elections were scheduled for Janu-

ary, but were postponed due to the violence and tension. Believers in the movement to Christ among Muslims continue to face persecution—several were jailed, though most have now been released. This movement has spread throughout most of the 64 provinces in Bangladesh.

Central Asia. With the help of a CWR grant, a project was established two years ago to lend goats to poor village families. This year, the project was expanded to include 180 goats serving more than 30 young families. Not only are the families given resources to start their own herds, the program also serves as a platform for development training and holistic sharing of the gospel.

India. The Hindustani Covenant Church (HCC) in Pune, with roots in the Covenant Church of Sweden, is doing community development and church planting in several states of India. Truth Seekers in Delhi is ministering to the oppressed lower castes. CWR has helped to start several small English language schools for children in the lower castes. The HCC is assisting India For Christ Ministries Covenant Church (IFCM) with "organizational development." Leaders from HCC traveled to IFCM headquarters in November to gather data on its ministries and organizational structure, later offering suggestions for improvement. HCC will provide training and capacity building for IFCM throughout the coming year.

Japan. Covenant missionaries in Japan work with the NSKK (Japan Covenant Church) in areas of church planting, evangelism, theological education, and holistic ministries. One missionary is a faculty mem-

ber at Covenant Seminary, a school for training Japanese pastors, with career and short-term missionaries also involved in the ministries of the Odawara Christian Center. Those ministries include evangelism through English and Bible classes, outreach to the local homeless, providing shelter for victims of domestic violence, a coffee shop that provides employment, and occupational therapy for people with mental illnesses. Missionaries are involved in camping ministries of the NSKK as well as the ministries of local NSKK churches.

Micronesia/Guam. The ECC works in partnership with the Liebenzell Mission and Pacific Islands Bible College (PIBC) to develop leaders for ministry on the Western Pacific Islands and along the Pacific Rim. Project missionaries Brad and Cheryl Boydston arrived in Guam in last August. Brad teaches theology and practical ministry courses at PIBC and is the director of distance education. Cheryl works in the financial aid office at the college. Both are involved with student-led discipleship groups—the students come from the Marshall Islands, Yap, Palau, Pohnpei, Chuuk, and Guam.

Philippines. The Jesus Covenant Church has secured improved rental space and is exploring purchase of the building to include a community center and rental space for other businesses. JCC also is placing increased emphasis on expansion through house churches.

Thailand. The Chaiyaphon church hosted a seminar for believers from throughout the Isaan region in February. The fish hatchery

in northern Thailand has expanded production in the past year through the purchase of additional land and the digging of more ponds. Having outgrown their current rental facility, the Cornerstone Counseling Center in Chiang Mai has purchased land to build a new counseling center.

CHINESE MINISTRIES

Mainland China. Contributions to the “China: The Great Open Door” project have been combined with VBS offerings from 2006 and offerings from the Taiwan Evangelical Covenant Church to assist needy students in the mountainous areas of Hubei Province. Funds have provided school registration fees, medical assistance, and nutritional supplements. Ruby, sent out from the Taiwan Church, has been living in the area to make sure funds are used as intended. Two couples from North American Covenant churches will be commissioned at the June Covenant Annual Meeting in Portland for work in China. There are short and long-term opportunities to teach English and computer in northwest China. For more information, contact Dave and Judy Dolan by email at davejudy.dolan@comcast.net.

Taiwan. The Taiwan Evangelical Covenant Church encourages North Americans to join the 2007 Taiwan English Summer Program and teach English to children from communities surrounding the churches. Information and an application form can be found on the Covenant website under the link to World Mission/Taiwan. The Taiwan Church continues to be involved in mission not only in China, but also in India and other Southeast Asian

countries. The Taiwan leadership recently invited church leaders in the Japan Evangelical Covenant Church to join them for a spiritual retreat in Taiwan in the near future.

South Africa. Did you know there are more than 100,000 Chinese people from China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong living in Johannesburg,

International Baptist Theological Seminary in Prague and assists the Evangelical Theological Seminary.

France. An overall sentiment that the church is irrelevant for today is coupled with increased interest in faith and spirituality, missionaries report. Other ministries include discipleship, the training of lay lead-



Mark Westlind (far left) leads a Bible study in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

ers, and arts ministry. Francisco and Stephanie Ramos work in Paris.

Russia. Over the last year, the Covenant helped facilitate: a women’s conference in Magadan, summer camp in Vologda, a youth retreat at a children’s shelter in St. Petersburg, teaching at a missionary school in Moscow, and building relationships with Russian Christian leaders and St. Petersburg Christian University. Covenanters hosted a historic four-country meeting with denominational leaders of Estonian and Swedish Covenant Churches, as well as Russian and evangelical churches. Leonid Regheta, Covenant project missionary to Russia, was part of the Younger Leaders Gathering 2006 in Malaysia. With 500 younger leaders from more than 110 countries present, this conference provided an updated perspective on God’s work around the world.

Spain. Covenant career missionaries Eugenio and Pia Restrepo, Roberto and Nancy Reed, and project missionaries Andy and Carol Larsen serve in Spain along with numerous Covenant short-term missionaries. The Larsens serve with the Mosaics Project, residing in Barcelona. The Reeds work in church planting with the newly formed Covenant Church in La Coruña. The Restrepos work

South Africa? Another 100,000 Chinese people live throughout the rest of the country. Most come for business purposes and hope to gain resident status in the country. The multicultural staff and congregation of the South Africa Chinese Covenant Church continue to reach out to residents in two main locations: Edenvale and Cyrildene. They also hold Bible studies in several other locations such as Port Elizabeth, Midrand, and Limpopo. The church also is planning a mission trip in 2007 to Gaborone, Botswana, where 5,000 Chinese immigrants are living. To learn more, visit www.sacc.org.za.

EUROPE

Czech Republic. Covenant missionary Kelly Prudek continues to participate in monthly prison visits to a women’s prison where they sing, pray, and share Scripture. She is also part of Project Hope, a weekly ministry outreach to women and men working on the streets in Prague, as well as other evangelistic and discipleship ministries. Fred Prudek travels weekly to Milovice to help start a church in that area. He taught two weeks of intensive classes on discipleship and a small group Bible study in Armenian. Fred also teaches practical theology classes at the

ers, and arts ministry. Francisco and Stephanie Ramos work in Paris.

Russia. Over the last year, the Covenant helped facilitate: a women’s conference in Magadan, summer camp in Vologda, a youth retreat at a children’s shelter in St. Petersburg, teaching at a missionary school in Moscow, and building relationships with Russian Christian leaders and St. Petersburg Christian University. Covenanters hosted a historic four-country meeting with denominational leaders of Estonian and Swedish Covenant Churches, as well as Russian and evangelical churches. Leonid Regheta, Covenant project missionary to Russia, was part of the Younger Leaders Gathering 2006 in Malaysia. With 500 younger leaders from more than 110 countries present, this conference provided an updated perspective on God’s work around the world.

Spain. Covenant career missionaries Eugenio and Pia Restrepo, Roberto and Nancy Reed, and project missionaries Andy and Carol Larsen serve in Spain along with numerous Covenant short-term missionaries. The Larsens serve with the Mosaics Project, residing in Barcelona. The Reeds work in church planting with the newly formed Covenant Church in La Coruña. The Restrepos work

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6



A woman receives an eye exam during a visit to Medellín, Colombia, by the Health Brigade from Kingsburg, California.

World Mission

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

with the FIEIDE denomination in the Málaga area. Ministry includes working with Spaniards including the Roma (gypsies) as well as diverse immigrant populations from Northern Africa and Latin America.

Other Europe. We have several new locations where our missionaries are serving in Europe. Short-term missionary Brian Turnbow is working with Scotts International Church in Rotterdam, Holland. Aaron Thompson, another short-term missionary, is in Gothenburg, Sweden, where he arrived February 1. Short-term missionary Johnna Hayward is working in a Congolese Church in Waterloo, Belgium. She will take two months of language school before moving to Waterloo.

LATIN AMERICA

Argentina. Argentine Covenant Church missionaries in Uruguay are working with two churches about two hours outside of Montevideo. The churches also continue reaching out to both the extreme north and south in the Argentina. Two churches in the Patagonian province of Chubut have received leadership training from Mark Westlind and national President Patricio Valenzuela. Alice and Mark Westlind assist in the mission training of a Buenos Aires Covenant church and will visit the northern town of Reconquista with their own mission team in July.

Colombia. "Living lives of purity" was the focus of the mission team's visit from Kingsburg, California, to Medellín, Colombia, in 2006. "It is exciting to see young people studying the Bible and books that encourage lives of purity," missionaries report. Separate retreats for young women and men are planned for the end of the year. This mission team also helped with health brigades and the construction of a basic prayer house in the neighborhood of displaced people in the hills above the Thirst of Justice Covenant Church. The church has now finished the house.

Ecuador. Cheryl Anderson Clark co-pastors a church in Guayaquil with her husband, Moises, and teaches piano and assists the development of Christian formation. Baxter and Margie Swenson have been involved in teaching, mentoring, and discipling students at Covenant Bible College—Ecuador

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

CHIC Students Give Over \$100,000 for Sudan

Students attending CHIC 2006 donated more money for the impoverished people of Bentiu, Sudan, than Covenant World Relief (CWR) Director Jim Sundholm ever imagined or hoped for.

"I was hoping for \$75,000," he said following the final worship service on Thursday evening during the CHIC event in Knoxville, Tennessee. Sundholm conceded that his faith had been too small.

Moments earlier during the service, he learned that Covenant youth had given \$100,373. "It was just absolutely awesome," said Sundholm. "Incredible."

Glenn Palmberg, president of the Evangelical Covenant Church, told the gathering that the offering taken during a special CWR offering the previous Tuesday evening had reached \$99,266, which brought cheers. But there was more. Worship leader Matt Lundgren walked onstage to announce that the "Click for CHIC" Internet-based program raised an additional \$1,107 to put the total over the \$100,000 mark.

The money will fund the construction and operation of a new school, health clinic and food program, Palmberg said. "This would not have happened if you had not done it," Palmberg said.



Students participating in CHIC 2006 packed more than half a million meals—an estimated 2.5 tons of food—to feed starving children in Sudan.

"It would not have been done."

The only school currently in Bentiu is operated by Islamic militants, Palmberg noted, declaring that "2,200 Covenant students will now have a school where Christ can be honored."

And the generosity continues. Young people in numerous Covenant churches are still demonstrating radical obedience to Christ's teachings, Sundholm observes. "They desire to let their hearts be broken by what breaks the heart of God," he says.

Youth at Salem Covenant in New Brighton, Minnesota, for example, have expanded the Feed My Starving Children project to involve the entire church. "They've set the commendable goal of matching the number of meals packed at CHIC 2006."

"Is your church continuing on this journey toward greater compassion and justice?" Sundholm asks. "We'd love to hear about it."

To keep updated on this area of ministry and other local Covenant church and conference ministry initiatives, sign up for the free Covenant Newswire news headline email service at www.covchurch.org.

Relief Efforts: Rebuilding Lives and Property

On a Sunday morning in February, Charlie came to the front of St. Joseph's Baptist Church and recommitted his life to God in Christ.

Charlie was being "rebuilt," just as St. Joseph's had been following the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. "The same Holy Spirit that prompted Evangelical Covenant Church volunteers to rebuild the church and community as a Covenant World Relief (CWR) project, was prompting the rebuilding of Charlie's life," says Jim Sundholm, CWR director.

In Pune, India, the girls stood proudly in their new classroom at a Christian school that also had become their home. A month earlier, along with their younger brothers, these orphaned children had been collecting and selling rags to try and

earn enough money to pay for even a small amount of food, destined to live out their days and nights as child laborers.

Instead, a program that was financially assisted by CWR had welcomed them and in turn found them a scholarship provision and a new home. "One younger sister said to me, 'we are safe now.'" recalls Sundholm.

An 11-year-old Sudanese refugee was thrilled to receive a new bed after sleeping several months on the floor. The morning after sleeping on the bed for the first time, the refugee exclaimed, "If I told CWR a thousand times 'thank you' for my new bed, it would not be enough times to say how happy I am!"

During 2006, CWR received donations of \$941,000 in general funds, \$175,000 through all CHIC

projects, and about \$250,000 in designated contributions.

"In Christ's name, CWR is using your generosity to care for the poorest of the poor through relief, rehabilitation, and development," Sundholm says. CWR continues to be deeply involved in home reconstruction and new construction along the Gulf Coast. Those interested in learning more about volunteering to help rebuild homes can visit the CWR web area at www.covchurch.org/cwr.

This summer, CWR will conclude the distribution of funds provided by the generous response of Covenanters to the December 2004 tsunami disaster. Staff also are reviewing a broad list of projects to pursue during 2007, many in partnership with other relief organizations and ministries.

THE COVENANT REPORTER

Increased Focus on Worship Arts, Leadership

The present day church worships in a rich, varied landscape. While 30 years ago the worship leadership tasks and roles were straightforward, today local churches employ a plethora of people and a myriad of approaches in the ministry area often referred to as the worship arts.

Many who bear significant responsibility for planning and leading worship are part-time staff or volunteers. Others are trained pastors seeking resources and support in a strange new world.

Worship Connection (WC) is a concept, and also serves as the banner under which the Evangelical Covenant Church advocates for worship arts leaders in local churches. It is a collaborative venture involving several ministries such as Christian Formation, the Covenant Commission on Church Music and Worship,

North Park University, North Park Theological Seminary, Covenant Communications, and the conferences and local churches, among others.

Worship Connection is guiding several initiatives for 2007:

- *Interactive web space.* The WC blog is a place for conversations on the theology and practice of worship. It features a collection of posts and articles from pastors, leaders, scholars, and artists. Beyond the blog, this space hosts message boards, event information, links, and resources.
- *Conference cohorts.* A cohort is a group of worship arts leaders who connect through periodic meetings for conversation and prayer, resource sharing, and other avenues of personal and professional friendship.
- *Listening to the local church.*

How do we advocate for leaders in a diverse worship landscape? The WC team will conduct a study of worship leadership and practice in local churches and develop fresh initiatives for 2008.

• *Formation and learning.* The WC team coordinates events such as workshops and retreats. It also helps seminary students find qualified field experiences in the worship arts.

• *Events.* The WC team helps plan and lead gathered worship at national and regional events such as the Midwinter Pastors Conference, CHIC, Triennial, and denominational and conference annual meetings.

To learn more about this expanding area of ministry, visit the Worship Connection section of the Covenant website at www.covchurch.org/formation/worship.

Covenant Campers Help Finance Russian Camp

Children in Vologda, Russia, will get a new camp because of offerings given last year by children participating in Evangelical Covenant Church camps across North America.

The Association for Covenant Camps and Conference Centers (ACCCC) recently presented \$55,000 to the Department of World Mission to help build the new camp.

The money will cover the purchase of property and construction of a building to house the campers, says Byron Amundsen, the department's coordinator for missionary services. He is excited that the camp will be a place for Covenant children, but also for children in local orphanages.

In the past, the association has given \$15,000 to Christian Camping International/Russia to train future camping leaders. Leaders at the new camp also received training at Covenant camps in the United States.

The ACCCC chooses a special project each year and has given more than \$700,000 over the past 14 years, according to David Auker, executive director of Covenant Harbor Camp and Conference Center. "That's really amazing," he said. "When you work together, you can change things."

This year, the association hopes to raise \$50,000 for needed improvements at the Covenant Bible Camp in Unalakleet, Alaska. Proposed improvements include:

- \$10,000 to rebuild the access road, on which even four-wheel-drive vehicles often get stuck
 - \$15,000 to remodel the "temple," the kitchen, and a meeting and dining facility
 - \$5,000 for a satellite telephone to replace current phones, which often cannot dial places beyond the camp due to environmental conditions
 - \$10,000 for scholarships
 - \$10,000 for a storage building
- Leonid and Leanna Regheta, Covenant missionaries in St. Petersburg, Russia, will help coordinate the project.

Exploring Childcare, Preschool Networking

ABOUT 150 EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCHES operate childcare and preschool ministries, and many other Covenant churches are seeking "connections" with experienced friends to help them begin such a ministry. "Imagine the benefit to each ministry if we begin relationships with one another and are willing to share areas of expertise with each another," notes the Childcare/Preschool Network Advisory Committee, part of the Department of Christian Formation.

A few possibilities: a center seeking to work on accreditation can be helped by another that has recently gone through the process; a director with questions about personnel management/training can be connected to another director with great suggestions; sharing of curriculum and programming ideas based on excellent early childhood practice can be easily accomplished; a desire to focus more effectively on the spiritual formation of children can be encouraged by the suggestions of others who have effective ideas to share.

The Internet and modern telephone systems are important connecting tools, helping ministries in different locations build relationships for mutual encouragement and help.

There also are a number of resources available on the Covenant website—enter "childcare and preschool" in the search engine on the home page to learn more about the vision for this ministry network.

For more information, contact Katie Isaza by telephone at 773-583-0220 or by email at katie.isaza@covchurch.org.

New Resources Focus on Spiritual Growth

I need you, you need me. We're all a part of God's body." These are the words sung by Hezekiah Walker from the gospel song, "I Need You to Survive." These words are particularly realized in small group ministry settings as group members companion together to share their spiritual formation journeys in deeper ways, notes Debbie Blue, director of adult ministries in the Department of Christian Formation.

Healthy and effective spiritual

growth takes place in the context of relationships, both within peer groups and across generations, Blue notes. "We encourage people to be in discipling, mentoring or small-group relationships that produce growth, and to foster relationships both within and outside of the church, all for the purpose of being transformed into the likeness of Christ," she says.

To help develop such relationships, a slim brochure has been developed, designed to tuck inside

a Bible or to easily pass along to a friend. The brochure outlines a process by which one can engage in spiritual companionship.

"What have you found to be helpful in the development of small groups or other avenues of spiritual companionship?" Blue asks. "Let us know, and we'll add your advice to the tips and resources offered on our website for creating and maintaining healthy discipleship ministries. We really do need each other to grow."

New Prayer Walking Initiative One of Triennial XII Highlights

Plans for Triennial XII, the four-day international women's conference in Chicago August 9-12, are nearly complete. The event, sponsored by Women Ministries, will be hosted at the Hyatt Regency McCormick, utilizing both the hotel and the convention center for its programming.

"Once again, interest is high," says Ruth Hill, executive minister of Women Ministries. "More than 600 people took advantage of early registration. We already have met two-thirds of our hotel rooms contract."

Keynote speakers include Alise Barrymore, who served as North Park University chaplain for five years before leaving to co-pastor a church plant in Chicago, and Evelyn Johnson, Pacific Southwest Conference superintendent and the first woman in the Covenant to lead a conference. She previously served

as executive minister of the Department of Christian Education (now Formation).

Fourteen international guests will represent some of the Covenant's partners in mission, an increase over the 2004 number. To help cover the increased cost of bringing the international guests, Women Ministries is suggesting that those in a position to donate frequent-flyer miles contact the Women Ministries office.

Rev. Lily Yakote, one of the first two women ordained in the CEUM (Covenant Church of Congo), will represent the Democratic Republic of Congo. Lily serves as director of the "Educate the Girls" initiative and will travel in the East Coast Conference, which is sponsoring her. The Educate the Girls project, which has raised \$125,000, has been extended for 2007.

Local advocate training also will be offered. Aleese Moore-Or-



Attendees at Triennial XI in Portland, Oregon, enjoy an early morning walk.

bih, Advocacy for Victims of Abuse (AVA) project manager, will lead the training. This is one of the last goals of the three-year initiative, which concludes this August. Another initiative in its final stages is the 14-hour curriculum for clergy.

"We are hearing heart-warming stories of efforts to be at Triennial XII," says Hill. "One woman in her 70s got a job at a McDonalds to cover her expenses; women in Minnesota reserved seats on a train and sent out an invitation; the North Pacific Conference Women Ministries had a drawing for five free registrations; and one church is sponsoring young women to experience their first triennial. Momentum is building! Pray that the same support for sending our young people to CHIC will send our women to Triennial XII."

New Prayer Walking Initiative. A Prayer Walking initiative is part

of Triennial XII with a goal of collectively walking 24,000 miles—the distance around the world. "When the total of miles walked reaches a country from which we will have an international representative, she and her country will be featured on the Prayer Walking website," says Hill.

The initiative, which is designed to encourage prayer support for Triennial XII in addition to physical fitness, is the result of a meeting of representatives from Galter LifeCenter, the Center for Faith and Health at North Park Theological Seminary, Prayer Ministries from Church Growth & Evangelism and the Women Ministries prayer team.

People who register will receive a kit with resources and tips and access to an Internet site tallying the miles walked. Registration is \$10.



Women from around the world gathered together at Triennial XI in Portland, Oregon.

Covenant Estate Planning Expands Online Resources

Covenant Estate Planning Services and Covenant Trust Company experienced many milestones in 2006.

The website for Covenant Estate Planning Services and Covenant Trust Company (www.covenanttrust.com) was redesigned and expanded, providing a gateway to a broad range of information, including financial planning, retirement planning, charitable giving, and asset management tools and resources.

At the end of 2006, future expectancies designated for Evangelical Covenant churches, camps, confer-

ences and conference ministries totaled \$30,666,415, representing an increase of 64.9 percent compared to total expectancies as of the end of 2000.

Churches, camps, and other local and/or conference ministries were designated to receive 33.8 percent of all Covenant charitable expectancies realized last year.

In 2006, more than \$11.8 million was distributed to all Covenant ministries from estates and trusts. "We are humbled by the stewardship and generosity of those whose estates have made it possible for the

kingdom to move forward at both local and denominational levels," a spokesperson says.

New charitable agreements written during 2006 represent a total of nearly \$24 million in future dollars for a broad range of Covenant ministries. As of November 2006, fiduciary assets under management by Covenant Trust Company exceeded \$400 million.

"People make it all happen," says Chuck Walles, president of estate planning and the trust company. "We want to thank all those who have included one or more Cov-

enant ministries in their estate plans, and encourage those who haven't yet done so. Everyone has a charitable dream. What's yours? Everyone leaves a legacy. What's yours?"

To schedule a workshop for a particular ministry or to receive estate and financial planning information, call Covenant Estate Planning Services at 800-483-2177. A Covenant Estate Planning officer also is located in each of the Covenant's 11 conferences or regions. Contact information for these individuals will be found at www.covenantestateplanning.org.

NPTS Welcomes New Faculty, Seeks Closer Ties to Churches

This fall, North Park Theological Seminary (NPTS) welcomed not only the annual group of new and returning students, but an unusual number of highly qualified new faculty members and an abundance of rich programming designed to reinforce important relationships with Evangelical Covenant Church ministries and local churches.

Stephen Chester comes to North Park from Glasgow, Scotland, where he served as lecturer in New Testament and Greek at International Christian College. Ordained in the Church of Scotland, Chester has been active in urban ministry throughout his career in addition to scholarly pursuits.

Michelle Clifton-Soderstrom, a 1995 NPTS graduate and a graduate of Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary and Loyola University Chicago, was named assistant professor of theology and ethics last fall. She has extensive experience in the healthcare field, speaking often in areas of politics, medicine, and justice. She is a member of North Park Covenant Church.

Since 1989, Max J. Lee has served in widely diverse capacities: short-term missionary in Tokyo, Japan; staff member in campus ministries at the University of California, Berkeley-UCLA, and other West Coast institutions; and

as youth pastor, preacher, and professor at Westmont College, Fuller Theological Seminary, and Wheaton College. Ordained in the Southern Baptist Convention, Lee is the new assistant professor of New Testament.

Soong-Chan Rah is the Milton B. Engebretson Assistant Professor of Church Growth and Evangelism. With degrees from Columbia University, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, and Harvard University, Rah is a dynamic church planter with experience in numerous East

Coast urban centers.

Assistant Professor of Theology and Worship Michael A. Van Horn moved to Chicago this fall from Livonia, Michigan, where he had served since 1995 as senior pastor at Trinity Evangelical Covenant Church. He has taught at Cornerstone University, Grand Rapids Theological Seminary, William Tyndale College, and Ashland Theological Seminary.

The Making Connections Initiative, made possible through a \$2 million grant from the Lilly Endow-

ment, continues to fulfill its mission of reinforcing relationships between the seminary and numerous Covenant ministries, particularly local churches and regional conferences. Those relationships have been strengthened through training in Covenant Affirmations and through Youth Nexus experiences, internships within University Ministries at North Park, a Pastor-in-Residence program, and a Professor-in-Residence program.

CHET Sets Enrollment Record in 2006

THE HISPANIC CENTER FOR THEOLOGICAL STUDIES, more popularly known as CHET, enrolled a record number of students during 2006—430 individuals representing more than 20 denominations and 18 countries of origin.

The widespread reputation of excellence earned by this Evangelical Covenant Church school has led other denominations and churches to seek training for their leaders at CHET.

During last December's graduation ceremony, 62 students were honored with certificates, diplomas and degrees from four CHET programs—basic, ministerial, Bachelor in Christian Ministry, and lay family counseling. The event was the 13th graduation in the school's history. The first occurred in 1994, when Javier and Connie Carrillo were among the first group of those completing the ministerial program. They later graduated from North Park Theological Seminary (NPTS) with master's degrees and are currently planting a new Hispanic church in Monticello, Minnesota.

Besides the Carrillos, there are more than a dozen CHET graduates who are ordained by the Covenant and other churches. Six Hispanic Covenant ministers have completed the Spanish-language version of the Covenant External Orientation program (CEOP) at CHET. Also, 24 students have finished their Bachelor (Licenciatura) in Christian Ministry degrees at CHET. Some of them are now completing graduate work in an accredited seminary.

Record Enrollment Greeted New NPU President

Along with a new all-time high enrollment of 3,051 students in August, the past year saw a number of other positive changes at North Park University. This figure includes 1,736 traditional undergraduates (472 of whom are Covenant), 291 traditional seminarians, and 1,024 graduate and non-traditional undergraduate students.

The student body was welcomed back to campus by the university's new president, David L. Parkyn, who was affirmed by the June 2006 Evangelical Covenant Church Annual Meeting in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Bruce Bickner, chair of the Presidential Search Committee, noted "Dr. Parkyn was chosen because he has the desired combination of extensive administrative experience in Christian higher education and a deep personal faith in Jesus Christ—faith he clearly articulates and

naturally shares with others. He embodies the intentional integration of faith and learning, for which North Park is widely known."

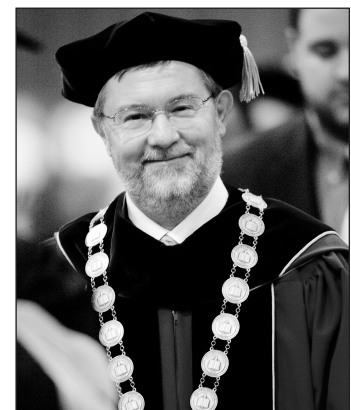
The school also added Sawyer Court, a new student residence on the corner of Argyle and Sawyer avenues, that provides 100 beds in 28 separate condo-like units. Residents participate in directed "transformational leadership activities, creating a living and learning environment," according to Andrea Nevels, vice president of student development.

Shortly after classes and fall sports resumed, the campus community gathered last September 15 to celebrate the grand opening of the Helwig Recreation Center at the corner of Kedzie and Carmen avenues. Lead donors and alumni David and Nancy Helwig, along with other members of their family, were present to cut the ribbon for the

68,000-square-foot facility housing a two-lane track, two basketball and four volleyball courts, a weight room, fitness center, climbing wall, offices, and classrooms.

According to Athletic Director Jack SurrIDGE, the Helwig Center already is strengthening student recruitment. "Prospective students walk away impressed with North Park's offerings, and current students use the facility constantly for intramurals, personal fitness, and recreation. The excitement around here is palpable."

The campus continued to buzz throughout the fall, with record-breaking attendance at Homecoming 2006 and the inauguration of President Parkyn on November 12, which culminated a weekend of events that included an academic symposium, a student celebration, and an inaugural gala.



President David L. Parkyn

In his inaugural address, President Parkyn stressed the role of North Park as an "edge habitat" where faith, academia, and the world convene. "This is a place where many communities meet—a place where borders touch. Because so many borders meet at North Park, this is a place that teems with life, color, and complexity."

Live Broadcasts of AM Worship Services Set

The Communications news team will again be on hand in Portland, Oregon, reporting on the 122nd Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Covenant Church. More detail on that meeting will be found on the Covenant website at www.covchurch.org. Coverage will include live broadcasts of the Thursday and Friday evening worship services, as well as the Sunday morning ordination worship service. The live broadcasts can be viewed on the Covenant website.

Most of the free resources formerly distributed through the Covenant Resource Center may now be ordered through the online Covenant Bookstore at www.covenantbookstore.com, where a wide range of other resources may be purchased using a credit card or PayPal account.

We also are pleased that *The Covenant Companion* will now enjoy full-color reproduction on all of its pages as the result of a new printing relationship. *The Com-*

panion continually seeks story ideas, with a special interest in stories originating from our many ethnic ministries throughout the denomination. Do you have a story idea to suggest? Simply email it to newsdesk@covchurch.org or write the *Companion* staff at 5101 N. Francisco Avenue, Chicago, IL, 60625.

Want a fresh experience in your daily devotional life? *Covenant Home Altar* is the daily devotional guide written by Covenanters, for Covenanters, offering unique insights coming from a wide range of faith journeys. To learn more or subscribe online, visit the Home Altar link on the Covenant home page.

Want to follow what's going on each day in the online Covenant news report? Sign up for Covenant Newswire—the free daily Covenant news headline service. To join, go to the Covenant website, select the Newswire link, provide your email address, and submit the form.

Blogs. Email. Baud rates. Band-

width. It's the language of technology—a vocabulary that is becoming increasingly familiar in ministry settings.

The Internet has forever changed the ways in which we connect with one another, seek information, and obtain resources. A major overhaul of the Covenant website last year provided new tools that allow content to be more timely and relevant than ever—individual ministry areas now update the content in their respective web pages as often as needed.

Important news developments can be shared quickly, as in the March military conflict in Congo that unexpectedly trapped a veteran Covenant medical missionary and the head of our Covenant World Mission in an extremely dangerous situation, allowing Covenanters worldwide to immediately be in prayer for their safety.

More resources are being made available online, allowing local churches and other ministries to download them at their convenience and avoid ordering and waiting for shipments. Online-based discussion groups have reduced the need—and expense—of sending people to central locations to discuss matters of common interest.

The Covenant website is a full-service ministry, committed to serving local churches, conferences, and affiliated ministries in three critical areas: informing, connecting, and resourcing. Visit www.covchurch.org today and “Get Connected.”

DID YOU KNOW? The newly updated Discipleship/Confirmation material, *The Journey*, helps teachers and students develop relationships, something that teachers say is one of their greatest joys.

The Journey presents an overview of the Bible and church beliefs, offering participants the opportunity to make or strengthen their personal commitment to follow Christ. It presents the story of God from beginning to end, encouraging learners to read their Bibles daily using passages that expand on the material presented in the two student journals. To order the material online, visit Covenant Bookstore at www.covenantbookstore.com.

Resource Center Offers Consulting Services

May 2007 marks the 20th anniversary of the Covenant Resource Center, which partners with just about every department and entity of the Covenant.

The center offers consultation for all kinds of ministry settings. The center describes itself as a “high touch” ministry, connecting individuals with resources and information, as well as consulting with churches on appropriate resources as they establish new programs and ministries. “It also is a great place to call when you're not sure where to call!” notes Millie Lungren, its director.

While all Covenant-produced materials are now available from the online Covenant Bookstore at www.covenantbookstore.com,

staff continue to respond to questions regarding various Covenant publications and resources: “What's the publication that includes that tree of denominations?” Or, “How can I download a copy of Discipleship Encounters?” Or, “When will the new curriculum for new member classes be available?”

New initiatives for 2007 will include an online “Resource Repository” where original resources and ideas from Covenanters around the country can be compiled and shared, instant messaging, and a free subscription-based service to better communicate updates on new and

exciting ministry resources.

“The ministry of the Covenant Resource Center continues as a service to you and your church, and we want to hear from you!” Lungren says. “Do you have a question regarding resources within a particular ministry area? Do you have an idea or resource to share? How can we better serve you and your church?”

To contact members of the Covenant Resource Center, call them at 800-338-4332 or email them at resource.center@covchurch.org. More information also is available online at www.covchurch.org/resource-center.

World Mission

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

(CBC-E). Along with their students, they sponsored weekly Bible clubs for about 200 very needy children in La Merced. Margie was the academic dean at CBC-E and teaches Bible studies in local church settings and homes. Andy and Jenell Plum also worked at CBC-E in areas of administration, finances, and discipleship. Kurt and Lisa Peterson are short-term missionaries serving in Quito, where Kurt is the high school principal at Alliance Academy and Lisa is involved in women's ministries. Yonchu Song, another short-term missionary, teaches ESL and Bible at Alliance Academy. She also is involved in youth ministries and local church projects. Paul and Joan Spjut are currently serving as short-term missionaries, working with the Covenant Church of Ecuador as coordinators of work teams to local congregations. They also are continuing their language studies, and teaching English in a rural elementary school in La Merced.

Mexico. In Monterrey, the Foundation for Family Development offers parenting classes, marriage enrichment classes, and the Downs Project. In Oaxaca, missionaries work with Semillas de Salud, offering community health programs, health screenings in pre-schools, elementary schools, and prisons. The Fuentes Libres project provides micro-enterprise loans to marginalized women in Oaxaca. Missionaries also continue in more traditional ministries such as preaching, advising, discipling, and teaching at the local and district levels. Covenant missionaries in all parts of Mexico host and facilitate mission groups and individuals, thereby continuing the mission staff's commitment to strengthening ministry partnerships between churches in the United States, Canada, and national Covenant churches. The Mexican Covenant church plans to start 100 churches in the next 10 years, and missionaries are assisting in making this dream a reality by facilitating symposiums, pastors retreats, and church planting workshops.

Other Latin America. Project missionaries Wainer, Magui, and Peter Guimaraes are now settling into a home and school in Brazil where they will establish new Covenant ministries.