

*Covenant Mission & Ministry 2013*

*Found Faithful*

---

IMPACTING REAL PEOPLE IN REAL PLACES.



## *Found faithful.*

We see God at work in powerful ways among our more than 800 congregations and in Covenant ministries around the world – a time of greater impact and diversity than at any time in our 127-year history.

We seek to be *found faithful* to God's call to join him in his work, making a difference in the lives of real people in real places. Together, we accomplish the task of sharing the good news of Jesus Christ as we pursue five mission priorities:

- Make and Deepen Disciples
- Start and Strengthen Churches
- Develop Leaders
- Love Mercy and Do Justice
- Serve Globally

The pages that follow highlight each of these priorities and share what you are accomplishing not only in North America, but also in nearly forty countries of the world.

I am convinced that God has critically important things for us to accomplish in a world of great need. It will happen as we live into this mission together. Pray. Engage. And prayerfully consider how you and your congregation can invest in the financial opportunities that support our common mission.

On behalf of a grateful church, I thank God for your faithfulness and pray for your continued fruitfulness.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary B. Walter".

GARY B. WALTER, President  
The Evangelical Covenant Church

# MAKING & DEEPENING DISCIPLES

WE ARE COMMITTED to reaching people with new life in Christ, and then helping them grow deeper in Christ. It is a lifelong journey of faith.



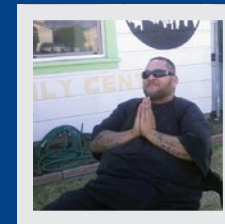
More than 5,000 students and volunteers gathered for worship every night at CHIC 2012.

- Last year more than 12,000 first-time commitments to Christ were reported by Covenant churches and ministries.
- CHIC 2012 at the University of Tennessee touched the lives of 5,278 high school students and volunteers—from 330 congregations in the U.S. and Canada and around the world.
- We have grown for 20 consecutive years, and are now impacting more lives than at any point in our 127-year history.
- *El Pacto con Dios*, possibly the most used Spanish curriculum in the world, will be available this fall in English. Developed by the Covenant, it serves children ages 3-14.
- Two new evangelism and discipleship materials are available to Covenant congregations. 72 is designed to help us more effectively share our faith. *Journeying Together* cultivates a life of prayer in the context of community.



*“At CHIC we see what happens when a denomination runs after evangelism, discipleship, compassion, mercy, and justice. My little part of the puzzle joins other parts to form a beautiful mosaic and kingdom work gets done!”*

Ben Kerns on the impact of CHIC



*“I was on drugs and running the streets. My daughter, Nana, said God loves me and would forgive me, no matter what I did. Easter Sunday I decided to follow Jesus.”*

Jiovani Cruz from Fountain of Life Covenant Church in Long Beach, CA

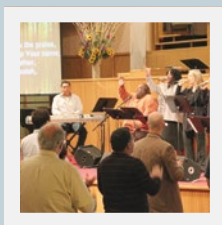
# STARTING & STRENGTHENING CHURCHES

WE ARE COMMITTED to start and strengthen healthy, missional churches, much like the Apostle Paul started and continued to strengthen churches in the New Testament. We believe the local church is God's basic strategy to carry out mission in the world.

- On average we start one new church every two to three weeks in the United States and Canada.
- An array of technology services are available at a cost savings to local churches, including online giving and website hosting.
- Currently there are more than 50 new churches in development.
- Of our 841 congregations, 28 percent are among populations of color or intentionally multiethnic, making the Covenant more reflective of the entire kingdom of God. This represents 17 percent of attendance.
- This year, more than 200 congregations benefited from targeted seminars and experiences related to such areas as prayer, disability ministries, racial righteousness, and Christian formation planning.
- Nearly half of all congregations have benefited from Covenant congregational vitality resources in recent years, which offer training, coaching, and evaluative resources to help congregations attain and sustain healthy, missional ministries.

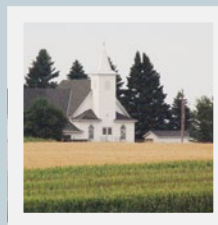


Participants share communion in celebration of the 125 years of Covenant ministry in Alaska.



*"One thing I love about the Covenant is its commitment to church planting and growing into a multiethnic family. I meet regularly with a local coach and a regional director, with lots of friends to call on at any time."*

Rich Johnson, pastor, Sanctuary Columbus Covenant Church

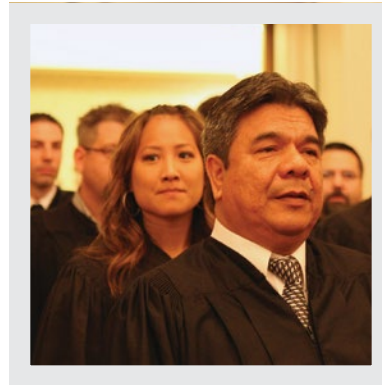
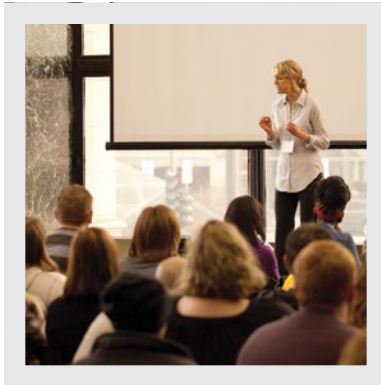


*"Because the church is full of flawed people who are called to honor Christ, the church will always have work to do along that redemptive journey—and that is a journey of revitalization."*

Kreig Gammelgard, associate superintendent and director of congregational vitality for the East Coast Conference

# DEVELOPING LEADERS

WE ARE COMMITTED to investing in leaders — pastors and laity alike — to be people who make a difference in service to God.



- The Covenant Ministerium continues to grow, with 1,830 credentialed clergy serving as lead pastors, staff ministers, missionaries, institutional chaplains, military chaplains, and in other ministry roles.
- The number of women clergy has grown from 76 to 384 in the past decade, a 505 percent increase.
- More than 1,000 young adults will receive ministry and leadership training serving as camp counselors and staff.
- North Park University has received several awards for its commitment to being a distinctively Christian university in an urban and multiethnic context.
- The CHET Hispanic center for theological education has more than 450 students enrolled through its Los Angeles campus and extension sites around the country.
- Alaska Christian College, which serves a Native Alaskan student population, received full accreditation this year.
- CovChurch.tv offers a wide variety of inspiring and informative Covenant-related videos, viewed more than 41,000 times this year by some 18,000 unique visitors.
- Youth Ministry Network promotes healthy youth ministry by helping youth workers stay connected and resourced. Networks for leaders in children, youth, intergenerational, adult, disability, and worship ministries also connect people serving in those areas.



*“This program has been amazing for me. I went in thinking that I’d learn more to help people with God at my church, but realized I needed God much more. Something deep inside of me welled out as I remembered and felt that deep longing for God.”*

Ryan Yi, pastor of Highrock Covenant Church writing about his experience with the Sustaining Pastoral Excellence program.

# WE LOVE MERCY & DO JUSTICE

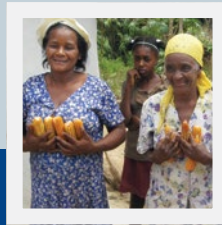
WE ARE COMMITTED to pursuing compassion and justice throughout our world. From our inception the Covenant has been concerned with helping hurting people (love mercy), and addressing the causes of that hurt (do justice). From a biblically rooted perspective, we provide tangible ways of extending the love of Jesus in deed as well as word, and speak as an advocate.

- Through our network of two hospitals, 14 retirement communities, and eight group homes for adult handicapped individuals, more than \$43 million of free care was provided last year in addition to other support.
- Twenty-six community development projects were supported through Covenant World Relief for the poorest of the poor around the world, in places like South Sudan, India, and Colombia.
- The Farmers to Market program of Paul Carlson Partnership connects small farmers to markets in DR Congo, with 1,775 farmers participating, 53 percent of whom are women.
- Forty-two women and men have been trained to advocate for victims of abuse in Colombia and Mexico through the AVA (Advocacy for Victims of Abuse) initiative, sponsored by Women Ministries.
- Hundreds of Covenant pastors and lay leaders have participated in racial righteousness experiences such as Sankofa and Invitation to Racial Righteousness seminars.
- The Covenant Disabilities Resource Committee networks and provides information to churches ministering to people with special needs.



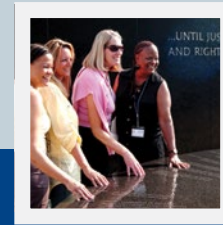
*“We walk with them, exploring what they’ve done, how they want to change their life, and how they want to seek reconciliation—especially to Christ.”*

Kelly Prudek in Prague, Czech Republic, on importance of ministry to women being released from prison



*“We have run out of words to say thank you.”*

From farmers who have been helped to grow sustainable crops through the help of a partner of Covenant World Relief in Haiti



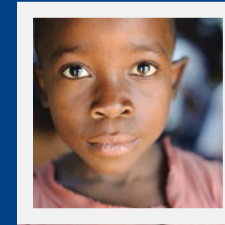
*“It was an exhausting, exhilarating, frustrating, moving, uncomfortable, and deeply poignant trip.”*

Lindsay Small, co-pastor of Harbert Community Church in Sawyer, Michigan, on her experience of Sankofa, an intentional, cross-racial tour that seeks to promote a righteous response to racism

# SERVING GLOBALLY

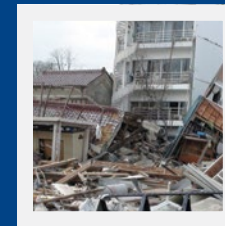
WE ARE COMMITTED to a global gospel—extending the whole gospel to the whole world. Through global partnerships and our own missionary team, we make and deepen disciples, start and strengthen churches, develop leaders, and love mercy and do justice.

- More than one million lives are being influenced through Covenant partnerships with national church leaders in 38 countries on five continents.
- This year, 130 short-term, project, and long-term missionaries will serve on behalf of our larger Covenant family.
- Last year, more than 110,000 people in Congo received medical care from hospitals and clinics supported by Paul Carlson Partnership.
- Disaster relief efforts continue in South Sudan, Ivory Coast, Somalia, Libya, Japan, Haiti, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and other places serving the poorest of the poor.
- Refugee services are provided in places like Burma, Somalia, Kenya, and Ecuador.
- A bold new initiative—*Covenant Kids Congo Powered by World Vision*—seeks to improve the lives of thousands of Congolese through child sponsorships.



*“This is a God-sized opportunity for the Covenant to stand alongside our Congolese brothers and sisters in an effort to stamp out extreme poverty in Equateur Province of the Democratic Republic of Congo.”*

Reesheda Washington, project leader and associate director of Mission Mobilization and Connection, on Covenant Kids Congo Powered by World Vision.



*“In partnership with the Japan Covenant Church, our ministries of compassion are bringing material assistance and the hope of Christ to those suffering the devastating impact of the tsunami.”*

Gary Carlson, Covenant missionary in Japan

# Together, for God's Work

The Covenant is able to undertake an ambitious mission and ministry vision because our more than 800 congregations in the United States and Canada stand together in making it happen. Since 1885, we have lived out a spirit of being "mission friends," following the heart of God into the world *together*.

Congregations often ask for practical guidelines on how to be generous and supportive in financial partnership with both the denomination as a whole and the regional conference within which they reside. The following guidelines were affirmed by both denominational and regional leadership for your consideration. It takes good personal stewardship principles and applies them to your congregation's membership in the ECC and conference.

## PERCENTAGE GIVING

Percentage giving is the biblical principle of proportionality. If your church is currently giving a fixed dollar amount, we encourage you to convert to percentage giving in your next budget year. For example, if your total church budget is \$100,000 and you give \$10,000 to the mission and ministry of the Covenant and \$5,000 to your region, your respective percentages would be 10 percent to the Covenant, and 5 percent to your conference.

## PRIORITY GIVING

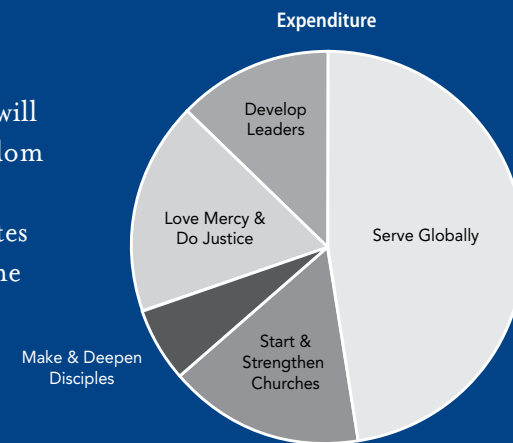
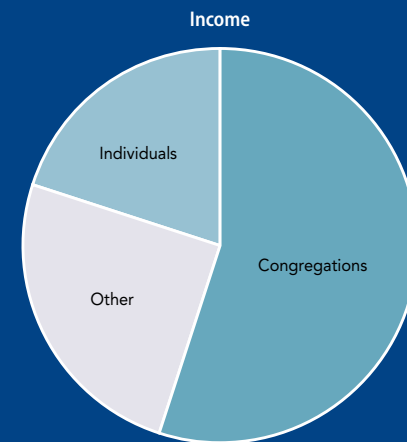
This is the biblical principle of giving of the first fruits of the harvest to God. Forward the determined percentage amount to both the Covenant and conference on a monthly basis, calculating from the previous month's budget income.

## PROGRESSIVE GIVING

This is the biblical principle of increasing faithfulness over time. Our hope is that every congregation would be able to target 10 percent to the Covenant and 5 percent to the conference. If you are not already there, we recognize this might be a multiple-step process. Until then, without cutting back on either, the combined recommended ratio is two-thirds of your giving to the Covenant, and one-third to the conference.

Adopting these guidelines will result in even greater kingdom impact in your region, throughout the United States and Canada, and all over the world.

**Mission & Ministry Budget.** Contributions from local congregations are *the most important* element to advancing our mission and ministry.



Total Budget: \$22,300,000

This chart represents Mission & Ministry budget allocations through the ministries of World Mission; Christian Formation; Church Growth & Evangelism; Compassion, Mercy, & Justice; Ordered Ministry; and allocation for North Park University and Seminary. For more information, please visit the Covenant website, keyword "budget."