

# Project Blue: Walk for Water

A HOW-TO GUIDE



**PROJECT BLUE**  
COVENANT WORLD RELIEF





## INTRODUCTION

# Why Project Blue and the Walk for Water?

Through Project Blue we will have the chance to do three things:

- 1) Become aware of the need for clean water and sanitation in India and around the world.
- 2) Engage with issues of injustice that exist due to the lack of clean water and sanitation.
- 3) Work together to raise funds for the work that Covenant World Relief is doing in India and throughout the world to provide clean water and sanitation for poor, marginalized communities.

Though the need is great, we find hope as we join the work that God is doing. As “partners in transformation,” Covenant World Relief hopes for transformation in both the communal and personal aspects of Project Blue. We are working for transformation in communities that will now have access to clean water, and we also hope for transformation in each of us, that we would become like Christ and come to see others as our brothers and sisters worthy of dignity and respect as we develop new understandings of poverty, injustice, and access to clean water.

On a big picture level, we see several hopes and opportunities:

- **Clean water saves lives.** This is the bottom line: bringing clean water to communities who don’t have it is a fast way to save lives.

- **Clean water makes people healthier.** By eliminating waterborne diseases and promoting better sanitation, people lead healthier lives.
- **Clean water gives people more time.** When people no longer have to walk miles to access water for household tasks like cooking, cleaning, and washing, they are freed to attend school, enter the workforce, and help their families and communities.
- **Clean water improves the economy.** As more healthy people are able to enter the workforce, the economy of the country grows.
- **Clean water promotes equity.** Women are disproportionately affected by the lack of clean water. They are the ones who typically spend hours gathering water, traveling to wash clothing, and caring for children who are sick because of waterborne illness. But when women have access to clean water, they can spend their time doing other things to improve their family and communities. Girls can go to school instead of spending their days carrying water. In addition, women often become the leaders of their community water committees. When women are seen as having leadership ability and skill, family dynamics and community structures are strengthened.

Through Project Blue, we can work together to raise money to help this important work continue through Covenant World Relief.





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## WALK FOR WATER HOW-TO GUIDE

# Hosting Instructions

### BEFORE YOU GET STARTED

Contact Covenant World Relief to start the process. This packet gives the overview of how to host the walk, but we are glad to help in the planning and customization for your context. All materials are available to download at [CovChurch.org/projectblue](http://CovChurch.org/projectblue)

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### INTRODUCTION FOR LEADERS

The CWR Project Blue Walk for Water was introduced at CHIC 2015. It is an opportunity for you and your church to experience firsthand what it is like to carry a five-gallon jerry can (40 pounds) in a simulated water collection experience. The project gives each person or team the opportunity to follow one of four stories from around the world highlighting some of the struggles of those who walk for water.

In this packet of materials you will find:

- Instructions on how to plan, promote, and host a CWR Project Blue Walk for Water
- Stories and a material list
- Ideas for how to customize the CWR Project Blue Walk for Water
- Next steps after you have completed the experience

### PREPARING FOR THE WALK

#### *Before the Walk*

Talk with your congregation in the weeks preceding the walk. Help them anticipate the walk and begin to prepare. Here is some sample language you can put in your bulletin, on a screen ad, or on social media:

On [day of month] at [time], we will be participating in the Covenant World Relief Walk for Water. Join us to learn what it is like for those who have to walk miles carrying a 40-pound jerry can just to get clean water.

Join us for the Covenant World Relief Walk for Water. We will experience the stories of people around the world like Lata, Manuel, and Juana who have to walk for water every day.

Use the graphics found on [CovChurch.org/projectblue](http://CovChurch.org/projectblue) to advertise the water walk.

#### **Time Needed**

The walk was done at CHIC in one hour, but that took place within the context of a larger justice experience. If you plan to do the walk as it is printed here, we suggest allowing about an hour and a half.

#### **Materials Needed**

There are two ways to gather the necessary materials for this project. The first is to request a box from Covenant World Relief that includes all of the material for your water walk. CWR will invoice you for the shipping costs, and you are responsible for sending the contents back to CWR at the end of your walk. The second option is to host your own walk and download or find the items on your own.



Option 1—Covenant World Relief sends all items to you:

- Blue jerry cans (we suggest one jerry can for every five participants. Shipping for one jerry can costs about \$15, so please plan accordingly; purchasing a jerry can locally will cost at least \$15) Include photo of blue jerry can
- Variety of signs and photos
- Storyline cards
- Pill bottles
- Red and black bandages (torn pieces of fabric)
- Puzzles

Option 2—You print and gather materials:

- Empty milk jugs or other gallon-sized containers
- Print signs and photos from [CovChurch.org/projectblue](http://CovChurch.org/projectblue)
- Empty prescription bottles
- Red and black bandanas or strips of fabric
- Puzzles (we suggest a word search or something that can be completed in about than five minutes)

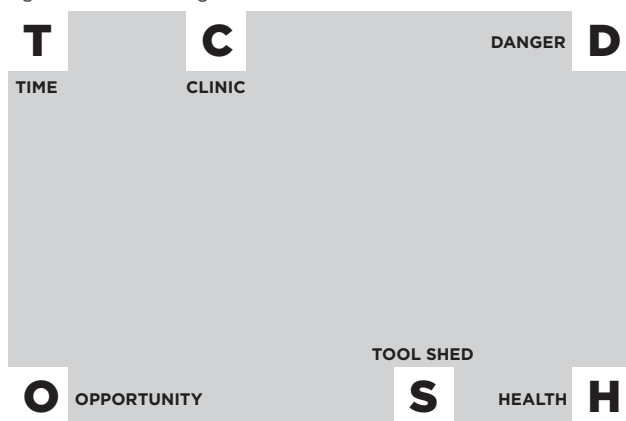
Regardless of which option you select, you will need baskets (or some sort of container) at each of the stations to hold the storyline cards and supplies.

And don't forget your camera! Please take pictures of your event. Share them with CWR on social media or via email.

## DAY-OF-WALK SETUP

This experience can be done in a variety of physical spaces. You can host it outside, in one large room, throughout your church building, or even in your home. Be creative!

Figure 1: Room Configuration



Set up your walk to include four main stations (Time, Health, Opportunity, and Danger) and two sub-stations (Tool Shed and Clinic). At the four main stations, include each of the four storyline cards. At the Clinic, place a basket of pill bottles. At the Tool Shed, place a basket of tools. You will want to place the stations at a distance so that people have to walk, but the walk can all be hosted in one large room, like a fellowship hall.

Place the full jerry cans (or milk jugs) wherever you will host the gathering and introduction. Hang photos and statistics strategically around your space.

## GATHER

(15 minutes)

Welcome people to the Covenant World Relief Project Blue Water Walk. Invite them to take time to look around the room at the photos and statistics you have posted.

## INTRODUCE THE WALK

(15 minutes)

This section gives instructions and prepares participants for what they are going to experience. We suggest that participants do the walk in groups. The jerry cans are quite heavy when full, and it is helpful to share the experience with a team. We suggest groups of about five people, but feel free to adjust the group size as needed to fit your context.

If you are not using jerry cans, replace the jerry can language in the introduction with "milk jugs." (You may choose to show a picture of what a jerry can looks like.) If you are using groups of five, assign each team six or more milk jugs for the entire walk. They will have to be creative in how they carry all of them.

Here is sample text for your introduction:

*Welcome to the Covenant World Relief Project Blue Walk for Water. Today we will be exploring issues surrounding access to clean water around the world and in our own backyard. Imagine what it would be like if you had to walk miles to collect water, or you had to spend one-fifth of your family's income on water. This experience simulates different water collecting trips; the water you collect is the water your family will use for all of your drinking, cooking, and cleaning needs.*

*As you participate in this walk today, please keep these questions in mind:*

- 1) *What are you feeling as you walk for water?*
- 2) *What is difficult about your experience?*
- 3) *What impact does this water walk have on your life?*

*Before we begin the walk we are going to divide into groups. Each group should be made up of five people, and you should have both males and females in your group. Once you have your group, introduce yourselves to one another. This will be your team for the entire water walk.*

*Now that you have your group, you will start by selecting a random jerry can. Each jerry can has a piece of paper with a story and more instructions taped onto the can. It will also tell you in what order you should visit each of the stations. When you get to each station, you will retrieve a story card that matches the color of duct tape on your jerry can. Have one member of your team read the card aloud.*

*You must not let your jerry can touch the ground during the entire experience. You can take turns carrying the can, but it must not ever touch the ground. Be creative in how you carry the can.*

*At each station you will do three things: Read the card, do what the card says, and carry the jerry can.*

*This is not a race. There is no prize for completing the walk first or fastest. Be present and immerse yourself in the story. We will give you a time warning when you have five minutes left.*

*You have 30 minutes to complete this part of the experience. When you are done, please return to this area for the next stage of our walk.*

## **THE WALK**

(30 minutes)

You can take longer if you would like, but we suggest taking no less than 30 minutes to participate in the stories.

While everyone is walking, be available to answer any questions. Take photos of people as they participate. When teams finish their fourth station, invite them to the area where you will debrief. If they finish early, invite them to discuss the questions you gave at the beginning of the walk:

- 1) *What were you feeling as you walked for water?*
- 2) *What was difficult about your experience?*
- 3) *What impact does this water walk have on your life?*

## **DEBRIEF**

(30 minutes)

This section allows participants to debrief what they experienced and to explore next steps. The goal is not to leave people feeling guilty about their access to water or overwhelmed by the need and unable to respond. We all want to be better stewards of what we have and to use the power and privilege we do have to fight for access to clean water for others.

### **Ask, Part One**

Turn to one person and share what was most powerful for you during the walk.

### **Ask, Part Two**

Ask one person from each color of jerry can to come to the front and review their story with the group.

### **Read**

Read John 4:4-26 together. Reflect together and answer the following questions:

- 1) *Who do you identify with in this passage? Who do you not identify with?*
- 2) *What sticks out to you in this passage?*
- 3) *What questions do you have after reading this passage?*

### **Engage**

Engage the passage together. Read the following:

*One of the amazing things about this story is that Jesus is interacting with a Samaritan woman. She is confused as to why Jesus, a Jew, is speaking with her and why he was at the well in the first place. Normally, Jews of that day would have taken a different route to avoid the Samaritan villages. The Samaritans were of a different ethnic group, and the Jews saw them as unclean. Naturally, she was shocked when he spoke to her and asked her for water.*

*One of the most amazing things about Jesus was that he crossed lines that others wouldn't cross. He cared for others regardless of whether they were Greeks or Jews, slaves or free, men or women, or Jews or Samaritans! In a patriarchal, male-driven world he communed with women and recruited them as leaders. He broke the norm and made clear that he, as "living water," is available to everyone.*

*When Jesus died, the veil in the temple that separated the general public from the holy space of God was torn in two. No longer was God to be confined to a particular space. He lived within and among all people, and he is for all people.*

*God loves all people. Do we love all people as Jesus did? Is that evident in our actions?*

*We are consumers, and we need to be aware that our actions affect the world. Chips in our cell phones and our laptops are made from a mineral called coltan that can be found in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In that country people are fighting over this resource—it has led to civil war.*

*If you look at the tags on your clothing, you might realize that it was made in a country where child labor is the norm.*

*In other words, the things we do and the way we use resources matters.*

### **Discuss**

Discuss the passage together.

- 1) What can we learn from how Jesus interacted with the Samaritan woman?
- 2) As global citizens and as Jesus's representatives in this world, what are our responsibilities?
- 3) How do our actions affect others? How do they affect the world?
- 4) What are some practical things we can change in our lives to more responsibly use the world's resources?

Show the CWR "Imagine" video available at [CovChurch.tv/water-1st-imagine/](http://CovChurch.tv/water-1st-imagine/). Imagine together how you will fight for clean water.

### **Useful Tips**

Some other helpful questions and conversation starters after the experience:

- What was surprising or difficult about the experience?
- Think about your daily schedule. What things in your daily life would you need to give up if you had to take time to collect water for your family every day?
- Lives would be changed if access to clean, safe drinking water was improved. It would mean not only healthier families, but children would have access to education and women would be better able to work or care for their children.

- It takes piping, water collection and treatment facilities, and pumping stations to provide clean water to a community. The clean, running water in our homes is made possible by a greater system of plumbing, sanitation, and distribution facilities that support our daily water needs. Think about how different our day would be if we turned on the faucet and nothing came out, or if we had to walk miles before brushing our teeth or washing an apple for breakfast. Access to clean water, including the infrastructure to deliver the water, is a justice issue and a key part of the solution to the global water crisis.

### **SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS**

Choose among these options and share them with the group. Brainstorm together how you will each respond and how you will respond as a group.

#### **Educate Yourself**

- Use the Project Blue Pre-CHIC curriculum to learn more about what the Bible has to say about clean water and justice.
- Research clean water. Even a quick Internet search can provide a wealth of information.
- Explore Covenant World Relief's blog (blogs.covchurch.org/cwr) and website (CovChurch.org/relief).

#### **Pray and Fast**

- Engage in the spiritual disciplines of prayer, fasting, simplicity, and stewardship.
- Pray with and for those who do not have access to clean water.

#### **Speak Up**

- Tell the story you experienced today to at least two other people. Also tell them what you are going to do differently now that you have experienced this story.
- Advocate for change politically and within your spheres of influence. Sign political letters pushing for change. Write and call your politicians.
- Clean water is fundamental to the Millennium Development Goals established by the United Nations. Hold politicians accountable to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Though the MDG specific to clean drinking water was met five years



ahead of schedule, several other goals have not been met, and access to clean, safe water is crucial to those goals.

### **Steward Well**

- While conservation does not address the problem of access to clean water, it is still important. Some simple ways to conserve and be a good steward when it comes to water:
- Use a reusable water bottle instead of a disposable plastic water bottle.
- Turn the tap off while you brush your teeth.
- Have at least one meat-free dinner per week (It takes more than 2,400 gallons of water to produce one pound of beef.)

### **Give**

- Give to Covenant World Relief Project Blue.
  - Give online or by mailing a check to the following

address: Covenant World Relief, 8303 W Higgins Rd., Chicago, IL 60631. Designate your check to CWR Project Blue.

- Use an old disposable plastic water bottle that you were going to recycle. Fill it with change. Filling a 20-ounce soda bottle with dimes will save \$130. Download the new label to put on the bottle at [CovChurch.org/projectblue](http://CovChurch.org/projectblue)
- Be a fundraiser for Covenant World Relief Project Blue.
- Be creative and share your ideas with us at [CovenantWorldRelief@covchurch.org](mailto:CovenantWorldRelief@covchurch.org)

### **Follow Up**

- Share your walk experience on social media. Tag Covenant World Relief in your posts (we are on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram). Send us your posts and we will share them as well.
- If you borrowed any of the items from Covenant World Relief, please return them.





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# Resources

### POSTERS

Post the following statistics on signs around the room. These signs are also available for download at [CovChurch.org/ProjectBlue](http://CovChurch.org/ProjectBlue).

- A five-minute shower uses three times the amount of water than what fits into one five-gallon jerry can.
- Children spend millions of hours each year fetching water, a task that diverts or prohibits them from attending school.
- 70 percent of the world's 130 million children who are not in school are girls.
- Among 13- to 24-year-old girls in the developing world, 33 percent said household chores were the main reason they were not in school.
- Women spend millions of hours each year fetching water. This chore diverts their time from other important activities such as caring for children, participating in the economy, and relaxing.
- When women and girls earn income, they reinvest 90 percent of it into their families, whereas men reinvest only 30 to 40 percent.
- 783 million people in the world do not have access to safe water. This is roughly 11 percent of the world's population.
- Globally, diarrhea is the leading cause of illness and death. 88 percent of these deaths are due to a lack of access to sanitation facilities, inadequate water supply for hygiene, and unsafe drinking water.
- Chrissy, do we need the urls of these websites?
- 2.5 billion people (35 percent of the world's population), including almost one billion children, live without basic sanitation. Every 20 seconds, a child dies as a result of poor sanitation. That's 1.5 million preventable deaths each year.
- In developing countries, 70 percent of industrial waste is dumped untreated into waters where they pollute the usable water supply.
- 827.6 million people live in slums, often lacking adequate drinking water and sanitation services.
- One billion people practice open defecation as of 2011.
- In Sub-Saharan Africa, treating diarrhea consumes 12 percent of the health budget.
- Every 20 seconds, a child dies as a result of poor sanitation.
- A person needs 20 to 50 liters of water per day for basic needs. (That's one to two and a half jerry cans.)
- It takes an average of 3,000 liters of water to produce one person's daily food.
- Every \$1 spent on water and sanitation generates at least \$4 in increased economic opportunity.

### MODIFICATIONS

- If you have a small group (i.e., less than ten) participating, do one story at a time together. Journey together for a longer event, or over the course of multiple gatherings.
- Use a jerry can to collect an offering. Checks and bills will be hard to get out of the can, so tape a large envelope to the back to collect these, but fill the inside with coins. How much can you fill it before no one is able to lift the can?
- Create additional obstacles for the walk. For example, host the walk outside and make the stations far apart and the walk physically challenging.
- Show other CWR videos:
  - The Can for Change ([CovChurch.tv/cwr-can-for-change/](http://CovChurch.tv/cwr-can-for-change/))

- CWR Spoken Word ([CovChurch.tv/cwr-spoken-word/](http://CovChurch.tv/cwr-spoken-word/))
- CWR Overview ([CovChurch.tv/cwr-overview/](http://CovChurch.tv/cwr-overview/))
- Show CWR videos about clean water:
  - Clean water in Ethiopia ([Covchurch.tv/cwr-waterfirst-ethiopia/](http://Covchurch.tv/cwr-waterfirst-ethiopia/))
  - HCC drought in India ([CovChurch.tv/hcc-drought/](http://CovChurch.tv/hcc-drought/))
  - Honduras Water First ([CovChurch.tv/honduras-water-first/](http://CovChurch.tv/honduras-water-first/))



## **OTHER RESOURCES**

More resources available at [CovChurch.org/ProjectBlue](http://CovChurch.org/ProjectBlue):

- Project Blue: Biblical Reflection
- Resolution on Clean Water
- Kids Helping Kids: Clean Water
- SHIFT: The Curriculum