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Covenant  
World Relief  
and Development

# CWRDUPDATE

THE COVENANT WORLD RELIEF & DEVELOPMENT QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2025



## The Work of the Kingdom

I recently traveled with leaders from Serve Globally to Ethiopia to visit our sister Covenant denomination and long-time CWRD partner, the Evangelical Covenant Church of South Sudan and Ethiopia (ECCSSE). We were warmly welcomed with generous hospitality and exuberant celebrations of singing, dancing, and heartfelt joy.

One part of this welcome stood out as especially meaningful. As we visited churches across the countryside, each congregation upheld the same tradition: after joyful greetings and music, we were seated while deaconesses removed our shoes and washed our feet.

It was beautiful, humbling—and admittedly uncomfortable. Having someone tend to your feet is an intimate act, and I found myself restless, eager to witness the ECCSSE's remarkable community development work—the reason I had come.

I also struggled with the optics: a white Western man being served by Black women. It felt at odds with my convictions around humility and mission. Shouldn't I be the one washing their feet?

But as I reflected on these moments, I realized the women of the ECCSSE were not just offering hospitality,

they were offering Christ. Their act echoed John 13, where Jesus washes his disciples' feet and calls them to do the same in love.

The ECCSSE embodies that love daily: empowering widows to grow food and feed their families, training peacemakers in conflict zones, and opening doors to education for children.

That is the work I came to see. But to truly witness it, I had to first receive. In those moments of foot washing, they took the role of Christ, and I the role of disciple. And that is a posture I am grateful to take.



NILS CLAUSON, DIRECTOR



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Our 80th  
Anniversary  
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January 25, 2026

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We cannot wait to  
celebrate with you  
in *Chicago* at our  
anniversary *film*  
premiere and *gala*.



# Servants of Peace

## Empowering Communities through Art, Music, and Faith

In Colombia, where communities face the challenges of poverty, violence, and displacement, young leaders are creating pathways of peace. Through Covenant World Relief and Development's partnership with Jóvenes del Pacto en Colombia, three impactful ministries—SEHPAZ, ART-PAZ, and Shalomusic—are putting faith into action, demonstrating servant leadership that uplifts the vulnerable and brings lasting peace.



### SEHPAZ

In El Bagre, SEHPAZ is nurturing a generation of peacebuilders. The ministry engages children, youth, and families through education, arts, and spiritual formation, offering training in conflict resolution, community gardening, music, and Christian values. By empowering participants to become agents of reconciliation, SEHPAZ is addressing the roots of injustice as well as sowing hope in one of Colombia's most vulnerable regions.



### SHALOMUSIC

In the neighborhood of Ciudad Bolívar, Shalomusic brings together music, sports, and psychosocial support to restore dignity and inspire youth. The project hosts instrumental training, vocal classes, peace workshops, and community sports events, all within a nurturing Christian environment. The young leaders have dreams of launching a local music store as well as reading initiatives, investing in the long-term transformation of its community—body, mind, and spirit.



**By empowering local leaders and restoring broken communities through creative, faith-rooted development, these leaders are embodying Christ's example of loving and serving the people around them.**

**Your prayers and support help make this work possible. Join us in praying, giving, and advocating for peace in Colombia!**

### ART-PAZ

In neighborhoods like Kennedy and Puerto López, ART-PAZ uses creativity as a tool for social change. This ministry fosters dialogue, emotional healing, and leadership development. Children and teens produce stories through photography and film, and mothers gain tools to launch small businesses. ART-PAZ reflects Christ's love in tangible ways that meet both emotional and physical needs.



## A Global Legacy

**Gather 2025 celebrated 140 years of Covenant mission and ministry in Orlando, Florida, June 26-28.**

Covenant World Relief and Development (CWRD) joined in honoring this legacy. Under the theme "Follow Me," delegates encountered Jesus's invitation to discipleship across boundaries of

race, ethnicity, and nationality. Global leaders of Covenant denominations from 17 countries joined the gathering. We heard from leaders from Japan, Ecuador, DR Congo, Norway, and more—all sharing encouraging and prophetic words of working together for the kingdom. One highlight was Jyoti Deep from Hindustani Covenant Church, a CWRD partner, participating in a meaningful communion service with wafers made by women from the Home of Hope in Pune, India. We also showed a mini-documentary as a sneak peek to the CWRD 80th anniversary film to be released next January. We were honored to participate in this Revelation 7:9 gathering!

