

## Ideas

This section provides an opportunity to share ministry ideas that are making a difference in the lives of individuals within and around our churches. Ideas are condensed because of space restrictions, but more complete descriptions may be available from the Covenant Resource Center or directly from the church. Do you have an idea to share? It may be just what is needed to spark another possibility for ministry! Contact the Covenant Resource Center at 1-800-338-IDEA or [resource.center@covchurch.org](mailto:resource.center@covchurch.org)

## Children

### ***Adventure Club – Evangelical Covenant Church (Kinistino, Saskatchewan)***

A long-running Adventure Club at the Evangelical Covenant Church has had a positive influence on this community of 800, with the program attracting an average of 55 children during a given week and as many as 100 different children over a three-month period. Now in its 11<sup>th</sup> year, the Friday night program invites preschool to sixth grade children at an individual cost of only 25 cents. This year's theme is "Champion's Journey." Among the activities at Adventure Club are a variety of service options, including aiding a local food bank, collecting money for World Relief, and decorating and sending gift shoeboxes for needy children through a para church ministry called "Operation Christmas Child." For more information about this program contact the Covenant Resource Center. (For information regarding other curriculum options for children's weekday ministries, contact the Covenant Resource Center at 1-800-338-IDEA or [resource.center@covchurch.org](mailto:resource.center@covchurch.org))

### ***KidTrek – First Covenant Church (Spokane, WA)***

The ministry began when First Covenant Church, Spokane started saying "yes" to ministry opportunities. After much prayer and collaboration between the pastor and Grant Clay, the ministry's director, a commitment was made to pursue ministry to disadvantaged children through KidTrek. The ratio that has worked the best was three kids to one mentor. Therefore, the staff has been comprised of three mentors and numerous facilitators for the last two years working with 15 kids. The ministry at the national level provides an extremely intensive week of training on a yearly basis for a nominal fee, as well as support on a weekly basis if needed. The curriculum is holistic, including homework time, life skills, small groups, recreation, and Bible Focus. Pastor Lawrence Hudson of First Covenant Church recently attended the training himself and said, "There is no one else out there thinking about what kids need at such a deep level." Pastor Hudson welcomes inquiries and can be reached at 509-747-2818. The KidTrek National Office can be reached at 562-427-2007 or [wparker7@earthlink.net](mailto:wparker7@earthlink.net). See also Encouragement section.

### ***Van Ministry – First Covenant Church (Jamestown, NY)***

For the past two and one-half years, First Covenant Church has had a van pick up youth in the neighborhood surrounding the city-based church, an area that is socially and ethnically diverse. Young people attend both Sunday school and the morning worship service, sitting with "adopted" families who return the young people to their homes following the conclusion of activities. Some of the kids are growing in their faith and the "adopting" families are being ministered to as well. For more information on the van program ministries, contact Pastor Dan Soderberg or Marilyn Johnson at 716-483-9825.

## **Christian Education/Formation**

### ***Intergenerational Front Porch – Hope Community Covenant Church (Strathmore, AB)***

Through their educational time called “Front Porch” they are experimenting with a program called Intergenerational Front Porch. It replaces the Sunday school hour one Sunday a quarter. They experience worship together and grow in community. At this point there is no set curriculum but the result has been great. More and more families are attending the education times and are telling us that they have a moment that they can experience as a family and then refer to during the week. They continue to develop the goals and vision for this time but are encouraged that out of a simple idea like integrated learning they are seeing reward. For more information contact the church at 403-934-2424.

### ***Oakland School of Ministry – First Covenant Church (Oakland, CA)***

A School of Christian Living held in the evening provides a variety of classes that explore biblical/theological topics as well as application of God’s Word to everyday life concerns. A certificate is given after completion of a series of courses. Six persons have graduated thus far from the school that has existed now for over three years. The school was initiated to address the need for biblical/theological study for all persons (new converts as well as mature believers) and to augment existing adult Sunday school and small group involvement. For more information contact Viji Cammauf at the church, 510-531-5244.

## **Church Growth and Evangelism**

### ***Kids Doing Ministry—One Balloon At a Time – Bachelor Covenant Church (Fountain, MI)***

Joy Bringers is a service group made up of children and teens from this church. Their goal is to bring friendship evangelism to their community. Joy Bringers make balloon sculptures for people at senior adult centers, schools, and other organizations while sharing the gospel message with them. They meet once a month and practice their balloon sculpture skills before heading to local nursing care or foster care homes, or special events. For more information contact the Covenant Resource Center at 1-800-338-IDEA, [resource.center@covchurch.org](mailto:resource.center@covchurch.org).

### ***Welcome Ministry – Hillside Covenant Church (Walnut Creek, CA)***

A “Welcome” ministry has been designed to identify various entry points for persons into the congregation – these entry points include a wide variety of options that are both organized programs offered by the church as well as informal occasions outside the realm of formal church programming. Next steps are outlined for each entry point to emphasize building long-term one-on-one relationships and incorporation into the larger community. A visual display of these pathways in the church narthex provides both visitors and existing church members a sense of the pathways, but personal contact and follow-up provides the basis for implementing the process. Contact the church at 925-934-1110 for more information.

### ***Worship & Work – Riverlife Covenant Church (Sacramento, CA)***

The fifth Sunday that occurs periodically provides an opportunity for “worship and work” with the congregation spending a short-time as a gathered community for worship and then disbursement to community service projects prearranged by the staff. The ministry is designed to emphasize the importance of service as part of one’s worship and spiritual growth. Visitors on the fifth Sunday simply join in the service ministry and reports have been

shared of visitors returning and choosing to join this congregation specifically because of this evidence of “walking the talk.” For more information contact the church at 916-456-2489.

## **Compassion and Justice**

### ***The North Park Friendship Center – North Park Covenant Church (Chicago, IL)***

The mission of the North Park Friendship Center is to improve the quality of life in the neighborhood by fostering true community, by providing opportunities for the sharing of gifts, talents and resources, and by serving neighbors in their social and spiritual needs. Current ministries include: Food Pantry, Mothers’ Closet, Referral Services, Welfare to Work Program, and Community Connection. The vision is to expand to include: ESL and Literacy Programs, Mentoring, Elder Services, Computer training, and Other Services as needed in the community. For further information, contact the church at 773-463-0055 or email them at [npsc@npcovenant.org](mailto:npsc@npcovenant.org).

### ***The Saint Paul Covenant – First Covenant Church (St. Paul, MN)***

As a result of the desire and passion within the congregation to re-connect with the neighborhood, the church launched an Annual Tent Event Festival in the church parking lot and hired a Community Outreach Pastor. They also took steps to organize a 501 (c) 3 non-profit corporation in order to expand into new opportunities of Compassion and Justice. *The Saint Paul Covenant* was born and is committed to working with other organizations toward urban re-development programs on the East Side of St. Paul. First Covenant church and its partner The Saint Paul Covenant are concerned about including compassion and justice in all the plans for the East Side neighborhoods, which is an entry point for a growing number of immigrant families. *The Saint Paul Covenant* is focusing on two at-risk generations: elderly living in their own homes and elementary children of working families. One of their core values is collaboration, and they continually seek synergy from partnerships and collaborative efforts with other groups. For further information, contact The Saint Paul Covenant at 651-774-0344.

## **Mission**

### ***The Journey – First Covenant Church (Sacramento, CA)***

This church hosted more than 250 people for a one-day interactive event called *The Journey*. Special speakers (some of whom were Covenant missionaries) helped with nearly six hours of sessions pertaining to the mission experience. *The Journey* was started a few years ago to raise mission awareness and help participants understand how missionaries prepare for a mission trip. For further information about this experience, contact David Stockamp via email at [David.Stockamp@covchurch.org](mailto:David.Stockamp@covchurch.org).

### ***Let’s Go Traveling – Arvada Covenant Church (Arvada, CO)***

Kids at Arvada Covenant Church were divided into groups and had an opportunity to “travel” to five different areas in which the Covenant has mission work. They were each given a ticket that included their flight schedule that determined the order of “countries” visited. Groups rotated to each room, which was decorated to represent that specific mission area. They shared a snack that represented the particular country and did an activity (e.g., watched a video, listened to someone tell about the country and our mission work there, made a craft, etc.). After they had rotated through all of the areas, they met back together to share what they had learned. For further information contact the Covenant Resource Center

at 1-800-338-IDEA, [resource.center@covchurch.org](mailto:resource.center@covchurch.org). (Additional ideas/curriculum can be obtained from the Covenant Resource Center.)

### ***Missions Fair – Erickson Covenant Church (Erickson, BC)***

With a desire to allow their children to experience missions at home, the Erickson Covenant Church created a program using the Covenant Missions Fair curriculum among others. They have developed an experience for all ages. From getting a passport to travel on a plane to experiencing a new language, families experience missions first hand. They have been fortunate to use missionaries in their congregation to bring video, artifacts and foods to enhance the experience. So far the program has been an inspiration to other churches in the Canada conference. What a great idea for bringing mission home. For further information contact the church at 250-428-4174, for a copy of the Children's Missions Fair curriculum contact the Covenant Resource Center at 1-800-338-IDEA, [resource.center@covchurch.org](mailto:resource.center@covchurch.org). (Additional ideas/curriculum can be obtained from the Covenant Resource Center.)

### ***Prayer Posters – Mission Covenant Church (Poplar, WI)***

This church decided it was time to make missions and missionaries a more important part of the lives of their members—starting with the children. They designed posters that could fit into their Sunday school teachers' manuals. The posters said "Let's pray for the (name of missionary family) in (name of the country). There was also a picture of the family with names beside the picture. The back of the poster included 4-5 prayer requests for the family with easy-to-read words for kids. Each poster was displayed for 6-8 weeks, until they had prayed for all their missionaries. Some teachers decided to keep all of the posters up, adding a new poster every 6-8 weeks and continuing to pray for all missionaries. (You could also adapt this idea for use with adults!) For further information, contact the church at 715-364-2738. (Missionary photos and bio sketches are available for purchase from the Covenant Resource Center.)

## **Seasonal**

### ***All Church Family Christmas Workshop – Villa Park Covenant Church (Villa Park, IL)***

With a goal of bringing all persons in the church family together to celebrate the Advent season, the theme for this event was "Prepare Your Heart for Christ's Coming." It was an opportunity to enjoy companionship, creativity, as well as an opportunity to share Advent with those members of the church family who were not able to be a part of the special celebrations during the season. Each Sunday in Advent during the Sunday school time, individuals gathered in the sanctuary for carol singing and devotions. They then proceeded downstairs to make an Advent craft for themselves or to give to a neighbor or shut-in. For further information contact the Covenant Resource Center at 1-800-338-IDEA, [resource.center@covchurch.org](mailto:resource.center@covchurch.org).

### ***Christmas Town – Forest Park Covenant Church (Muskegon, MI)***

About 150 people were involved in the creation of "Christmas Town." Proceeds from sales at the general store were donated to the Kentucky Mountain Mission. A 16-member cast performed a Christmas story for the local community and a technical/lighting crew of 12 others helped behind the scenes. Other highlights of this event included storytellers, gift wrappers, photography, town criers, carolers, and two choirs that performed. For further information contact the Covenant Resource Center at 1-800-338-IDEA, [resource.center@covchurch.org](mailto:resource.center@covchurch.org).

***Easter Celebration – Caterpillars – Evangelical Covenant Church (South Bend, IN)***

Caterpillars were ordered from Earth's Birthday Project. They arrived in 8 oz. cups with lids and all the food they needed to grow and form their cocoons. Once in their cocoon and attached to the paper lid, they were moved to a house where in about 7-10 days they became butterflies. Easter Sunday is certainly an appropriate day to release them; however, this church released them on the Sunday after Easter. They read scripture, released the butterflies, and sang the chorus "He lives, He lives, Christ Jesus lives today..." All ages from 2-82 found this to be a great celebration! For further information, contact the church at 219-234-5619 or Earth's Birthday Project at [www.earthsbirthday.com](http://www.earthsbirthday.com)

***Resurrection Journey – Peninsula Covenant Church (Redwood City, CA)***

The Resurrection Journey is an experiential journey with Jesus from the time he entered Jerusalem to the resurrection (based on the Matthew passages). Eight stations were selected and various Sunday school classes were asked to prepare a 3-minute experience of that event. The children gathered at a central place and were placed into groups of 6-8 children of mixed ages. They were given a small gift bag, which contained a small booklet of the journey. One or two adults led each group on the journey by following paper footprints taped to the path. Music and activities were going on in the gathering room (i.e., the lawn) to involve the children as they waited for their turn to go on the journey and for those who returned early from the journey, which took about 45 minutes. This may become a church-wide event in the future! Contact the Covenant Resource Center for a more in-depth description. You may also contact Barbara Pettit at Pasadena Covenant Church, 626-795-9381.

***Seeing God's Big Picture – Rally Day – Beverly Covenant Church (Chicago, IL)***

The theme for this intergenerational Rally Day session was "God's Big Picture," focusing on the concept that all of the parts of God's church (and His creation) are designed according to His plan to work together. After the initial greeting, participants sang "King of Kings" as a round to illustrate that even though parts seem to be out of synch, they actually work together to make the music beautiful. An object lesson using Mr. Potato Head was shared to illustrate the theme. Participants then moved to different stations for "hands on" activities: preschoolers went to one station, while everyone else chose two or three remaining stations (mural, puzzle, and idea circle). Bookmarks reflecting the theme were handed out to each participant before they proceeded to classrooms for a brief time of orientation. For further information you may contact the church at 773-445-4319. For an outline of this intergenerational event, explanation of the stations, and master for the bookmark, contact the Covenant Resource Center at [resource.center@covchruch.org](mailto:resource.center@covchruch.org) or 1-800-338-IDEA.

***The Veil – Highland Covenant Church (Bellevue, WA)***

Many people hear about the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ during the Easter season, but Highland Covenant Church developed a 16-part journey to help people gain new insights into the Easter story. The church's gymnasium was transformed for this multi-sensory, interactive event that was presented for two days prior to Easter. The presentation was free and open to the public. Most people required around 30 minutes to progress through the stations of *The Veil*. For more information, call the church at 425-746-7676.

## Youth

### ***Break-Dancing – Mission Covenant Church (Blue Island, IL)***

An outreach to neighborhood youth is blossoming at the Mission Covenant Church through gymnastic “break-dancing.” Last summer, the ministry drew 80 youth. Contact the church at 708-385-1111 for more information.

### ***Bridge Ministries***

Our North Carolina and Georgia Covenant churches sponsor Bridge Ministries. A committee representing these churches meets regularly to plan 2-3 youth retreats per year. One retreat focuses on spiritual nurture and one retreat focuses on service. This is a valuable ministry to churches that would not be able to accomplish this type of ministry on their own. Not only does it add value to the individual church ministries, they have made incredible progress in furthering sensitivity to diversity issues. As a result, a new young adult ministry is being started and will be established on the relationships built through Bridge Ministries. For more information call 828-324-7850.

### ***Bringing Skaters to Christ – Bethesda Covenant Church (Rockford, IL)***

Bethesda Covenant Church wanted to start a skateboard ministry in its parking lot, but the church’s insurance policy wouldn’t cover liability for the activity. A secular organization, the Skate Park Association of the United States (SPAUSA), stepped in and provided insurance coverage at affordable premium rates. Revelation Skate Park is a homemade skateboard configuration assembled on the church parking lot. The outreach program has provided a good opportunity to reach a broad range of ages, especially children and young adults—and often parents. It’s a great opportunity to build relationships and invite them into the larger community of the church. For more information about Bethesda Covenant’s skateboard ministry, call the church at 815-397-4212 or email Paul Stalter at [paul.stalter@rps205.com](mailto:paul.stalter@rps205.com). The church website link is [www.bethesdacovenant.com](http://www.bethesdacovenant.com). For information about SPAUSA, visit the organization’s website at [www.spausa.org](http://www.spausa.org).