

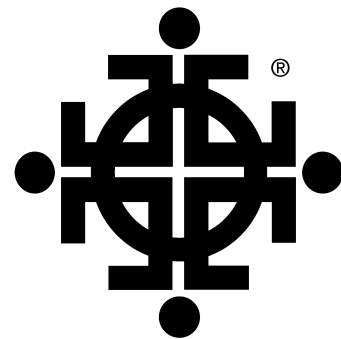
Covenant World Mission



Mission Moment for VBS



The Santiago Partnership: Providing medical care and
safe community in the name of Christ for children in
Ecuador



May 2015

Dear Partners in Ministry,

We are pleased to be able to send you the 2015 Mission Moment for Vacation Bible School mission project. Last year, children throughout North America raised funds to assist children in Colombia learn about Jesus. This year, VBS participants will get to partner with the Ecuadorian Covenant Church and the Santiago Project by helping to build a safe home for at-risk kids. By supporting the Santiago Partnership you and your VBS crew join in God's transformative work which provides safe housing and medical care for at risk children in underprivileged communities. By focusing on this mission moment during your Vacation Bible School the partnership comes to life, because at the heart of it is children helping children for the sake of the gospel of Jesus.

Covenant World Mission currently has six missionaries serving in Ecuador: Cheryll Clark, Kim and Joel Delp, Mandy Hjelm, and Naomi and Joshua Swenson. During your VBS week, we encourage you to pray for our missionaries, their work, and all the lives that will be impacted by your generous support.

The materials in this packet are meant to be supplemental aids to your VBS program and can be used in whatever way you feel is most appropriate. The packet includes:

- a list of how your offering will be used with approximate itemized goals and costs
- background information and activities you can do with the children in your VBS program

These materials can be found at CovChurch.org/mission, in the "Projects" section under "VBS Project", along with pictures found in the booklet, video clips, and other resources you can use in your VBS program.

By supporting this project, the children participating in your VBS program will make a tremendous impact on the lives of children Ecuador. We are excited to make this project a reality!

In Christ,

Sarah Buki

Covenant World Mission

The Evangelical Covenant Church

*Gifts raised to support this project
can be mailed to:*

The Evangelical Covenant Church

Attn: VBS 2015

8303 W. Higgins Rd.

Chicago, IL 60631

Greetings!

Covenant World Mission is pleased to present the Mission Moment for your 2015 Vacation Bible School. This year we are offering an opportunity to support the Santiago Partnership, which is a collaborative effort with the Evangelical Covenant Church of Ecuador (IPEE). The material in this guide is designed to educate VBS participants about the Santiago Partnership and engage them in the mission of the wider church. This guide is intended to supplement your VBS curriculum, so please choose whatever portions and activities best fit your schedule.

By supporting the Santiago Partnership you and your VBS join in God's transformative work which provides safe housing and medical care for at risk children in underprivileged communities. By focusing on this mission moment during your Vacation Bible School the partnership comes to life, because at the heart of it is children helping children for the sake of the gospel of Jesus.

More information on the Santiago Partnership can be found at <https://www.santiagopartnership.org>.

Thank you for your participation in this mission moment and partnering with the Santiago Partnership and the Evangelical Covenant Church of Ecuador to help ensure sustainable care for children at risk.

Background and Partnership

The Evangelical Covenant Church first sent missionaries to Ecuador in 1947 and Ecuador was the first mission field for the Covenant in Latin America. IPEE (*ee-pay*), the Covenant National Church of Ecuador, was formed in 1961. Today, IPEE consists of 88 churches and small groups, in the process of becoming a church, located in the highland areas around Quito, Cayambe and Ibarra, as well as the coast, including the areas in and surrounding the cities of Guayaquil and Manta. There are also churches in the area of Santo Domingo and in the jungle. IPEE consists of 6 districts, or conferences.

IPEE currently has an in-depth plan and initiative to grow, organize, and provide quality education for its pastors and laity. This plan is called PESCA, which stands for Proclamation-Education-Service-Communion-Administration. Along with this organizational planning, IPEE has set a goal of planting 50 new small groups (with the hope of being formed into churches) in 5 years. IPEE is also known for its strong youth programs and schools. Another strength is the partnership with FACE (*fa-say*), an organization that, for forty years, has developed social projects around the country. FACE is a key partner in the success of the Santiago Partnership.

The Santiago Partnership

The vision of the Santiago Partnership is to partner with the local and national Covenant church of Ecuador to establish and maintain two homes for at risk children and two medical clinics. Children may be considered “at risk” for various reasons including abandonment, abuse, separated families, human trafficking, or forced labor. The court system of Ecuador would determine when children are at risk and in need of safe housing and reliable care. IPEE, along with The Santiago Partnership seek to provide both of these. The first home and clinic will be located in the area of Cayambe and the second in that of Ibarra. In order to best serve the children and their families, the homes will be organized around four key components:

- well supported
- high quality care
- community focused
- long-term sustainable

To help bring this vision to bear, local IPEE congregations will provide ministry support to the children in each home. These congregations will view the home as a ministry and the house parents and children who live in the home will be a part of a congregation. The homes will be a part of project administered by FACE and will have all of the support and expertise that FACE provides, which include social work, legal, and psychological services.

The fundraising goals of the project include items needed for the construction of the children’s homes as well as supplies the children will need. Please consider how your Vacation Bible School program can best help meet some of these funding goals:

- \$1 – 1 meal for a child
- \$5 – 20 cement blocks for construction
- \$10 – 1 pair of shoes for a child
- \$25 – 1 backpack full of supplies for a child
- \$50 – 1 set of bedding for a child's bed (sheets, blankets and pillows)
- \$100 – 1 child's bed
- \$250 – furnishings for a bathroom
- \$500 – all of the walls for a child's bedroom



Meet Domenica

Domenica is six years old and lives with her mother and two sisters. Her favorite activity is jump rope. She lives in Cayambe, a town high in the mountains in Ecuador. Since her mother does not have a job, Domenica and her sisters are considered at risk of falling into deep poverty. The Santiago Partnership would help Domenica and children like her get the support they need. This means she could go to school, get good medical care, and have a safe home.

Hear God's Story

There is a story in the Bible where Jesus is teaching a large crowd and some parents want to bring children to Jesus so that he can pray for them. Some of Jesus' followers don't want them to bother Jesus, but he says, "Let the little children come to me," and he tells us to receive God's kingdom like children (Mark 10:13–16). We know God cares for all children, but not all children get the care they need when they are growing up. Because Jesus loves all children, it is important for us to welcome and love the children who may be left out or who might not be getting the food, medical care, or loving family they need for a healthy life.

Questions and Reflection

Younger Children: How does God take care of you?

Older Children: What are some things we can do to make sure other children are included? What about children who are far away and live in another country?

God takes care of us by giving us friends and family. God also gives us community in the church. The church is a community of people called to care for our neighbors, those who leave near us and those who live far away. By raising money to help make sure children in Ecuador have a loving community, we show them that God cares for them and they are part of our family too.

Offering

During our Mission Moment this week we will learn more about the children of Ecuador and the Santiago Partnership. Let's set a goal to raise \$_____ to support healthy lives and homes for our brothers and sisters in Ecuador as a sign of God's love for them.

Pray

Lord God, you care about our every need. And you provide ways for us to respond to the needs of one another. Thank you for the partnership we share with the church in Ecuador. Teach us how to better love one another, especially the most vulnerable in our community.

Craft

Weaving is a popular skill in Ecuador. Construction paper place-mats are a simple craft. You may wish to pre-cut the strips of paper for the younger children. If possible try to use colors that are in Ecuador's flag (yellow, blue, red).

You will need:

*2 colors of construction paper per child
scissors
ruler
pencil*

Snack

Banana chips

1 bunch bananas

1-2 lemons, juiced

Pre-heat oven to 200 degrees.

Slice bananas 1/4 inch thick

Lay slices of banana on baking sheet, careful not to overlap the slices

Brush top and bottom with lemon juice

Bake for 1.5 hours

Hear God's Story

There is a story in the Bible where Jesus, tired from a journey, meets a woman at well and asks her for a drink of water (John 4). After talking with Jesus she learns that he is the Messiah, the one her people have been waiting for! She hurries to tell her neighbors and after spending time with Jesus they too learn that Jesus has come for them. The gifts that God gives us are not intended to be kept for just ourselves, but are meant to be shared with others.

Questions

Younger Children: How has a friend helped you recently? How did that make you feel? How have you helped someone else?

Older Children: How do the woman and her neighbors in the village respond to Jesus? (They spend time talking with him). What are some things we can do to spend time with Jesus? How do you think Jesus wants us to use our time?

Helping others is important. It is also important to receive help. Jesus reminds us that God's help is not just for us to keep, but it is for us to share. One sign that we receive God's love is that we are able to share that love with others.

Offering

During offering this week we are raising money for the Santiago Partnership to help children in Ecuador. It is also important for us to give more than our money. What something you can offer someone else today?

Pray

O God, we thank you for what you have given us. We pray that as we receive your love and many gifts, we may have the strength not to keep them for ourselves but to share them with others. Amen.

Craft

Make cards for members of your community who help to raise you. It is more than just your parents. Make thank you cards for your teachers, doctors, neighbors, babysitters, pastors, grandparents and others in your community who help to make sure you are taken care of.

Snack

Try some Tango cookies! These sandwich cookies are a favorite of children in Ecuador.



Meet Juan Andres

Juan Andres is five years old and has one brother and sister. His favorite activities are drawing and painting. His mother passed away and Juan Andres lives with his father, but since his father can't get regular work, his brother and sister live with their grandparents. One of the goals of the Santiago Partnership is to provide community focused care. This means the program is designed to not only care for children like Juan, but for their families as well. It takes a healthy, supportive community to grow healthy, happy children.



Hear God's Story

There is a story in the Bible where Jesus is teaching a large crowd and some parents want to bring children to Jesus so that he can pray for them. Some of Jesus' followers don't want them to bother Jesus, but he says, "Let the little children come to me," and he tells us to receive God's kingdom like children (Mark 10:13–16). We know God cares for all children, but not all children get the care they need when they are growing up. Because Jesus loves all children, it is important for us to welcome and love the children who may be left out or who might not be getting the food, medical care, or loving family they need for a healthy life.

Questions and Reflection

Younger Children: How does God take care of you?

Older Children: What are some things we can do to make sure other children are included? What about children who are far away and live in another country?

God takes care of us by giving us friends and family. God also gives us community in the church. The church is a community of people called to care for our neighbors, those who leave near us and those who live far away. By raising money to help make sure children in Ecuador have a loving community, we show them that God cares for them and they are part of our family too.

Offering

During our Mission Moment this week we will learn more about the children of Ecuador and the Santiago Partnership. Let's set a goal to raise \$_____ to support healthy lives and homes for our brothers and sisters in Ecuador as a sign of God's love for them.

Pray

Lord God, you care about our every need. And you provide ways for us to respond to the needs of one another. Thank you for the partnership we share with the church in Ecuador. Teach us how to better love one another, especially the most vulnerable in our community. Amen.

Craft

Bead Bracelets

There are many different kinds of bead bracelets, and lots of ways to make them. Look for supplies you may already have around, or search for a style that may be fun for your children

Snack

Mixed fruit

Ecuador has a lot of fruit. Some of the most popular include bananas, mangoes, pineapples. Cut some fruit into chunks and mix it together for a nice fruit salad..

Meet The Canada Conference

In March 2015 a team of volunteers from three congregations in the Canada Conference travelled to Cayambe, Ecuador to build relationships and help with the construction of one of the children's homes. The team worked side by side the people of Ecuador. In addition to building, they also spent time playing games with the children, talking with families, listening to their stories and praying with them. This is one way a partnership begins. A trip to Ecuador may not be possible for every congregation, but contributing to the building efforts and praying for the children and people involved in the Santiago Partnership is something we can all do.

Hear God's Story

There is a story in the book of Acts (Acts 6:1–7) about when the church was just getting started. Some women complained to the apostles (that's another word for Jesus' disciples) that they were getting left out of the daily food distribution. They couldn't get any food! So Jesus' followers met and selected some people to be deacons, who would make sure that everyone got what they needed.

Questions and Reflection

What does it mean to be fair? Can you think of something that isn't fair? Why is it important to be fair? How can we make sure people are treated fairly?

The Bible uses the word justice to talk about fairness. Justice doesn't mean that everyone gets the same thing, but justice means everyone gets a chance. Not all children grow up in the same environment, so it is important to help make sure everyone gets a chance to live well. We do this by taking care of one another's needs. When a system is in place to make sure children and families have basic needs, they can better help themselves and one another.

Offering

When we give our money so that other children have a chance to grow up in safe and healthy environments, we aren't just doing something nice. We are acknowledging that their lives are important too. They are important to us because they are important to God.

Pray

Dear God, you love all your people. But we know that not all people have the same chance to have a good life. Help us to better see how we can act and care for one another, because we are all your children and you care for us.

Amen.

*Craft**Paper flowers*

Ecuador is known for growing many varieties of flowers. Tissue paper flowers are easy and fun to make. You will need:

- Sheets of tissue paper in different colors*
- Pipe cleaners or bendable wire*
- Scissors*

*Snack**Cornnuts*

*These roasted or fried corn kernels are a favorite snack in South America. It is also known as *cancha*.*

**Meet Greis**

Greis is nine years old and she has two sisters and one brother. They all live with their parents and her father is a carpenter and her mother works on a rose plantation. Greis loves painting, and she lives in a beautiful place to do it. The town where she lives, Cayambe, is near an old volcano and there are many flower plantations nearby. One goal of the Santiago Partnership is to provide long-term, sustainable care for children like Greis. To do this, it will be important for the children to develop skills that will help them earn money for themselves. This will help bring in money so that the homes can continue to help other children.



Meet Natalie and Nestor

Nataly and Nestor are both 8 years old. They have one sister and live with their parents. Natalie and Nestor both love playing soccer. Their mother isn't able to work and their father works on a farm. There are many farms in the high mountains around Cayambe but many families may not have a lot of food to eat, so many children may not have the chance for a good, healthy childhood. The Santiago Partnership works with local congregations to help make sure as many children as possible get a chance to have a healthy, happy childhood.

Hear God's Story

In the Bible, Jesus tells us that he is the good shepherd (John 10:11). As the good shepherd, he wants the sheep (that's us), to have a good life— an abundant life. Because he is the good shepherd, this means that Jesus cares for those who don't have enough, and for those who are in danger. He wants us to care for one another too. When we support the work of the Santiago Partnership, we are making sure others know about the abundant life Jesus offers.

Questions

What do shepherds do? What do sheep do? What does it mean that Jesus is the good shepherd? What does it mean to have an abundant life? How can we make sure our neighbors have an abundant life?

Jesus is like a good shepherd because he leads us to God and wants us to have a good life. Jesus wants us to have a full life and relationship with God. One of the ways we can have a relationship with God is by spending time in prayer, reading scripture and worshiping with God's people. We need others to help us understand our relationship with God. This is part of what it means to have an abundant life. When we care for one another, especially those who are most vulnerable, we are showing them that we want them to have an abundant life too, just as Jesus promises.

Offering

So far this VBS has raised \$_____ this week for the Santiago Partnership! This means that we have enough for _____ (to celebrate the offering, refer to funding goals at the beginning of this resource. For example, 5 backpacks! Beds for two children! etc.)

Pray

Lord God, thank you for creating us as your family. Thank you for Jesus, our good shepherd. We thank you for the opportunity to learn more about our brothers and sisters in Ecuador. We ask for your blessing on the Santiago Partnership. Please give its leaders strength and encouragement, and your children hope and safety. Amen.

Craft

Make a soccer ball! Sometimes when kids do not have enough money to buy a ball, they make one on their own! Take a bunch of old plastic grocery bags and wrap them around each other really tight. Keep adding plastic bags until your ball has reached your desired size. You can use bits of yarn or string to help wrap around the top of the bags to keep them secure.

Snack

Popcorn

Use an air popper or stovetop to pop some popcorn kernels. Serve plain, or with a little salt.