



# STORIES OF HOPE

COVENANT MERCIES 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

COVENANT  
— *mercies* —

Covenant Mercies  
exists to serve orphans  
in collaboration  
with indigenous local churches  
in the developing world.

Lighthouse Christian School  
Campus, Zambia





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# A Letter from the Executive Director



As I reflect on nearly fifteen years of Covenant Mercies' ministry to orphans in Sub-Saharan Africa, I am amazed at the kindness of God. We began with a vision to collaborate with indigenous local churches, and break orphaned children out of cycles of poverty. We prayed that they would be restored to everything God has created them to be as His image-bearers. Today, over 1,200 children in three nations are currently enrolled in our Orphan Sponsorship Program. That's 1,200 children becoming positive stewards of their gifts and resources, to the glory of God.

This level of impact has been made possible through the prayers, giving, and labors of sponsors, donors, churches, volunteers, and ministry partners around the world. Because of this family—spanning from North America, to Europe, to Sub-Saharan Africa— 2016 was an incredible year of growth and progress. Thank you.

On behalf of the Covenant Mercies staff and Board, I am pleased to share with you the following 2016 Annual Report. I pray these stories, updates, and highlights of what we have accomplished together this year are an encouragement to you. May God bless you.

Warm regards,

**Doug Hayes**  
Executive Director

# OUR MISSION

Covenant Mercies exists to serve orphans in collaboration with indigenous local churches in the developing world.

# OUR VISION

To see orphaned children rise above poverty, and become positive stewards of their gifts and resources to the glory of God.

# OUR VALUES

1. We believe the gospel should be central to all we do; its effect on us is the primary motivator for our ministry, and its effect on others the desired result.
2. We believe every child is made in the image of God and given gifts by Him that should be cultivated for His glory.
3. We believe that the family is a gift of God's grace, and that we are called to nurture and promote safe, healthy family environments for our children.
4. We believe the poor should be served in a personal manner, honoring their dignity and recognizing their potential as individuals created in the image and likeness of God.
5. We believe compassionate action toward suffering people is a vital facet of the Christian life that must somehow find expression in the life of every believer and local church.
6. We believe collaboration with indigenous staff, churches, and communities fosters culturally appropriate and sustainable solutions to the challenges facing the children we serve.
7. We believe we have a responsibility to God, our donors, and the children we serve to be faithful stewards of our financial resources, and to maintain excellence, integrity, transparency, and accountability in all our financial practices.

# Orphan Sponsorship Program

Covenant Mercies **serves four program locations** in three African nations: Maundo, Uganda; Kiburara, Uganda; Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; Ndola, Zambia.

Over **1,200 sponsored children** receive an education, healthcare, nutritional support, mentorship, career counseling, life and vocational skill training, and basic living supplies.

In 2016, we added **240 new children** to our program and celebrated the **graduation of 110 children** from secondary school.

ETHIOPIA

UGANDA

ZAMBIA

# Covenant Mercies' mission and vision is best exemplified in the stories of our children.



Bridget, 2016

In 2008, 11-year-old Bridget became one of our first sponsored children in Kiburara, Western Uganda. Her father had recently died of AIDS. Her mother, now the sole provider for Bridget and her brother, was HIV positive. Bridget described that period of her life in this way: *I felt hopeless... I started to feel self-hatred and no hope for the future.*

Thanks to the generosity of her sponsors, today Bridget has a different story. She thrived in the Orphan Sponsorship Program and worked hard in school. Today, she is enrolled in her first year at Kyambogo University in Kampala, pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Education. She says:


*This once "hopeless girl" can't express the kind of happiness I feel whenever I wake up and remember that I am now in a good school and recognized university in the nation. On the receipt of the news that Covenant Mercies was to pay all my tuition and scholastic materials, I was so glad and felt grateful to my God—Jehovah Jireh, my Provider, through Covenant Mercies...*

*My special thanks go to Pastor Moses [Kiburara Program Coordinator] for having shared the gospel of Jesus Christ and led me to salvation on Wednesday, December 16th, 2015, that I will never forget. Thank you for leading my life into long lasting joy... [I have] seen God's great hand at work as my Protector, Provider, Hope... day by day.*

# Education

Education is at the core of the Orphan Sponsorship Program. It is essential in order to break the cycle of poverty. Covenant Mercies invests in the development of schools to ensure that every child in our program has access to a quality education. This includes small classroom sizes, well-trained instructors, and access to essential resources and supplies.

**Lighthouse Christian School in Zambia is a model for what we want to see in each of our program areas. Today, the school provides a Christ-centered education for over 250 students in pre-K to 7th Grade. In 2016, we celebrated the 10th Anniversary of Lighthouse Christian School.** Through the generosity of our donors, we put the finishing touches on a brand new classroom building; completed a small kitchen, infirmary, and security wall for the campus; renovated our kindergarten classrooms; and built a traditional Zambian shelter for shade during outdoor assemblies and recess.



In the coming years, we intend to expand the Lighthouse campus to include an assembly hall, science labs, computer labs, and a library. We also plan to invest in the development of schools in our Uganda programs.



## DID YOU KNOW?

Covenant Mercies staff members review every sponsored child's report card and meet with teachers and guardians throughout the year to discuss the child's skills and interests. Each child has a tailored learning plan and receives career counseling.



*Regal by David Sacks*



## MAPALO SCHOLARSHIP FUND

In Sub-Saharan Africa, many children do not expect to graduate primary school, let alone secondary school or college. Because of the success of the Covenant Mercies Orphan Sponsorship Program, we have students who are equipped and envisioned for higher education. **Between now and 2018, over 250 children will graduate from our K-12 and vocational programs.**

In 2016, we created the Mapalo Scholarship Fund for eligible Program Graduates pursuing higher education. We will receive the first official scholarship applicants in the 2017 school year.

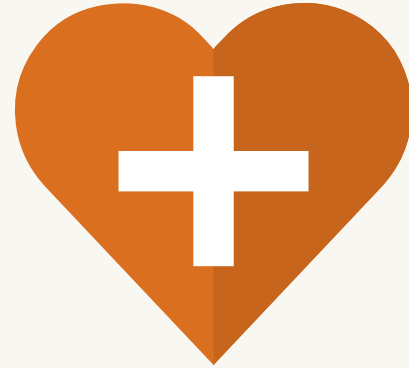
*Mapalo* is a Bemba word that means "blessing." Mapalo was also the African name given to the late world-renowned photographer, David Sacks. David traveled with Covenant Mercies to Africa five times, capturing treasured "Portraits of Hope" images that now appear in the photography book, ***True Africa***. The Mapalo Scholarship Fund honors David's legacy, and will bless the lives of thousands of children to come.



*Executive Director Doug Hayes and Photographer David Sacks in Uganda with friend Joshua Kemba, 2003*

# Healthcare

In 2016, we renovated and launched a brand new medical clinic in Western Uganda.



*New Covenant Mercies Medical Clinic in Kiburara, Uganda*



*Covenant Mercies Nurse Lillian Kyarikunda at the Kiburara clinic.*

In Sub-Saharan Africa, the lives of many children are disrupted or even lost due to preventable, treatable, and curable diseases. Local clinics can be distant, understaffed and ill-equipped, creating an obstacle to the health and wellness of our children, especially in our rural programs.

To address this situation, Covenant Mercies launched a clinic in 2008 in Eastern Uganda. As a result, we saw a 37% reduction in disease occurrence among our sponsored kids. In 2016, we renovated and launched a brand new medical clinic in Western Uganda.



**Now, 350 children and their guardians can receive immediate access to in- and out-patient care, disease prevention education, wellness checkups, lab and pharmacy services, nutritional assessments, and testing and treatment for HIV and malaria.**

# Sustainability

Since Covenant Mercies' inception, sustainability has been a goal in all our endeavors. We want to minimize the long-term need for foreign donations, while modeling self-sufficiency and productivity for our children. To that end, we launched a sustainable farm project on our 40+ acre property in Eastern Uganda. We planted watermelon, maize, pineapples, ground nuts, rice, and a eucalyptus grove. We project a continued increase in revenue, as we seek to expand the project in 2017. The next phase of our sustainability efforts includes a chicken-farming project.

Sustainability is much more than being able to fund our programs with local revenue streams. It also reflects a critically important value for our children. We want our children to live out the truth that God has made them to be productive, creative workers, and positive agents of change in their communities as His image-bearers in His world.

“I would like to serve God with the fruits of my hand by extending love, mercy, and kindness to other needy children.”

—Maria, Sponsored Child, Eastern Uganda Program



**Patrick Epuret**

Covenant Mercies Program  
Graduate and Farm Manager.

*Photo by D.Martin Photography*



**Mesay Ayele and her family**

*Photo by D.Martin Photography*



# A COVENANT MERCIES STORY

Meet Mesay  
from Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

**I**t was 2012, and Mesay Ayele was a young teenager in the capital city of Ethiopia. Her father had passed away, and her mother struggled to find employment that would provide for Mesay and her younger siblings. With nowhere to turn and no money for rent, they left their home for a life on the street. “That’s when Covenant Mercies found us. They helped me attend school and got us to where we are now,” Mesay reflects.

Because of her sponsors, Mesay and her siblings once again had a roof over their head and exciting educational opportunities before them. Sadly, under the influence of new friends, Mesay’s heart rebelled. Minor conflicts with her mother became bitter arguments. Turning from her family, Mesay ran away from home and the Orphan Sponsorship Program.



*Hilina and Mesay, June 2016*

Hilina Atlabachew (Program Coordinator, Ethiopia) and Mesay’s mother searched the city for weeks. Her mother finally found Mesay begging on the street, but she refused to return home. Hilina persevered, and eventually, Mesay agreed to meet with her one last time.

“She was so stubborn,” Hilina shares. “She said there was no need to talk to us. She simply came to say she didn’t want to be a part of the Program.”

**“I run out of words when I think about them. May God repay them. May God give them all kinds of good gifts.”**

Hilina counseled Mesay, and asked her if she would pray with her before she left. Mesay consented, and during the prayer, her heart changed. Hilina recounts: “Surprisingly, after the prayer she was a different person. And then when I asked her to write her goals, the goals she was writing were completely different. She was saying she wanted to go back



to school, make peace with her mother... start new friendships with healthy friends, and then start studying hairstyling, which is her dream.”

God restored Mesay to her family that day, and she returned to Covenant Mercies. Through these circumstances, He also reconciled her to Himself. Mesay responded to the gospel, and gave her life to Jesus Christ.



*Mesay works at a local hair salon, using the vocational skills she learned through the Orphan Sponsorship Program. She plans to open her own hair salon in the future.*

Since that incredible moment, Mesay returned to school, graduated, and was hired by a local hair salon. With the peace of Christ dwelling in her heart and home, she enjoys a wonderful relationship with her family and Hilina to this day.

When asked what she would like to say to her sponsors, Mesay responded, “I run out of words when I think about them. May God repay them. May God give them all kinds of good gifts.”

You can watch a special video interview with Mesay by visiting [COVENANTMERCIES.ORG/BLOG/MESAY](https://covenantmercies.org/blog/mesay).

*Mesay receives a letter from her Covenant Mercies sponsor.*



# Board and Staff Listing

## Board of Directors

### OFFICERS

Jim Donohue, President

Marty Machowski, Vice President

Tim Ashford, Secretary

### MEMBERS

Chiji Akoma

Doug Hayes

Day Fogarty

Kevin Michalczewski

Adam Sacks

David Sharp

## Staff & Partners

### USA

Doug Hayes, Executive Director

David Mayinja, Director of International Development

Joanne Burak, Director of Development

Kelsey Shenk, Sponsorship and Finance Administrator

Carlos Garcia, Finance Manager

Michelle Young, Child Profile Editor

### ETHIOPIA

Hilina Atlabachew, Program Coordinator

Sabina Digrande, Caseworker/Administrative Assistant

Selome Tiruneh, Accountant

### EASTERN UGANDA

Hellen Ofwono, Program Coordinator

Moses Etyang, Office Administrator

Patrick Epuret, Farm Manager

Robert Sanya, Accountant

Andrew Amodoi, Lead Caseworker

Arthur Oburu, Caseworker

Harriet Wabule, Caseworker

Amos Odongo, Program Nurse

Christine Achieng, Administrative Assistant

### WESTERN UGANDA

Moses Nkwatsibwe, Program Coordinator

Lillian Kyarikunda, Program Nurse

Denis Lumumba, Accountant/Office Administrator

Geoffrey Ndegyeya, Caseworker

Samuel Twinamatsiko, Caseworker

### ZAMBIA

Zicky Chanda, Director, Lighthouse Christian School

Pasha Magaba, Caseworker

Aggie Kamba, Accountant

Berlia Nanyinza Mwansa, Administrative Assistant

# Special Thanks

**Thank you to the Condit Trust, the Huston Foundation, the MDRT Foundation, and the Sterling Pig restaurant for your generosity in 2016.**

The Covenant Mercies Staff and Board of Directors would like to express our special gratitude to all the individuals and churches in our worldwide family of sponsors and donors, and the many volunteers who make our work possible. We thank God for you.



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