

Illinois Missions Offering and Season of Prayer Children's Study Session

By Serena Butler and Sandy Wisdom-Martin

Introduction

This one-hour study can be used in any setting where children are gathered. Use it in GAs, RAs, Sunday School, TeamKid, or Awana. The purpose is to teach children about the work of Illinois Missions and their responsibility to pray for missions, give to the Illinois Missions Offering and do missions.

Pray for God's guidance as you prepare and teach. Read the materials related to the study. Choose activities best suited for the children you teach. Divide teaching responsibilities if you have multiple age groups or leaders. Make copies of the activities you will use. Secure a copy of the Illinois Missions Offering video. A dvd copy was sent to each church. It may also be downloaded from www.IBSA.org. Click on the Illinois Missions Offering logo (IMO).

Facts About Illinois

As children enter, hand out the Fun Facts About Illinois true/false test. After children have completed their test, share the correct answers with your group. The answers are listed below.

1. There are approximately 13 million people living in Illinois. True
2. Almost half of the people in Illinois do not know Jesus as their Savior. False: Eight million people, almost three-fourths of the population, do not know Christ.
3. The first McDonald's restaurant was in Des Plaines, Illinois. True
4. At St. Patrick's Day, the city of Chicago dyes the Chicago River green. True
5. There are 2,000 Southern Baptist Churches in Illinois. False: There are about 1,000 churches in Illinois.
6. Break dancing is the state dance of Illinois. False: It's square dancing.
7. Morton, Illinois is the "Pumpkin Capital of the World." True: Morton is home to the annual Pumpkin Festival where you can catapult pumpkins through the air.
8. Cracker Jack was invented in Chicago. True
9. After the first skyscraper was built in New York City, Chicago decided it needed one too, so the second skyscraper was built in Chicago. False: the world's first skyscraper was built in Chicago.
10. In Mount Pulaski, Illinois, it is illegal for girls to throw snowballs at trees. False: It is illegal for boys to throw snowballs at trees.
11. The ice cream sundae was invented in Evanston, Illinois. True.
12. Springfield has always been the capital of Illinois. False: Kaskaskia and Vandalia have also served as capitals of the state.
13. 16 billion Oreo cookies were made at the Nabisco Factory in Chicago in 1995. True
14. The Sears Tower in Chicago is the nation's tallest skyscraper. True
15. Metropolis, the home of Superman, really exists in southern Illinois. True.

Starting Churches in Illinois

Before the session, gather maps of Illinois as well as highlighters. Secure a television with a dvd player. Write the following locations on a chalk board or large piece of paper: Cairo, Champaign, E. St. Louis, South Loop in Chicago, Rockton, E. Moline.

Starting Hispanic Churches In Illinois Video

Say: Today we are going to learn about missions in Illinois. Let's start by watching a video showing how church planter Bob Evaul is busy starting Hispanic churches.

Map It Out

Say: There is a great need to start churches all over Illinois. The Church Planting Team of Illinois Baptist State Association has identified six critical areas in need of a Southern Baptist Church. Distribute maps and highlighters. Children may work individually or in teams.

Instruct the children to open the maps and highlight your community. Next highlight the six locations in need of a new church. Then chart a course from your community to each new church plant location. Read the map key and determine how many miles it is from your church to each new church plant location. When children have completed each assignment, ask these questions:

Which new church plant location is closest to our church?

Which new church plant location is farthest?

Select one of the maps to hang on the wall. Ask children to commit to pray for one new church plant location. Write each child's name beside the town or area for which they commit to pray.

Reaching Illinois College Students

Before the session, make copies of "Who Are They?" You will need one per child as well as pencils.

Reaching Illinois College Students Video

Say: Now let's watch a video that shows how Illinois Baptists are reaching college students.

Who Are They? Word Find

Distribute the Who Are They? Word Find and pencils. Tell the children these first names represent 24 campus ministers across the state. After children have completed the activity, ask them to be ready to voice names one at a time as you lead in prayer. Let them know it is okay to keep their eyes open during the prayer time so they may read the names.

"Dear God, we ask that you be with each campus minister who serves in Illinois. Give them wisdom to make good decisions. Give them courage to speak your truth. Give them rest when they are weary. Send them people of peace to befriend them. We pray specifically for ... (children should share names one at a time from the Word Find). Amen."

Northern Illinois

Before the session, gather paper, pencils and music.

Overwhelming Need in Northern Illinois

Invite children to watch a video highlighting the ministries of missionary J. Hail.

Plan a Block Party

Remind children that one of the ways missionary Hail tells people about Jesus is by using a block party trailer. Evangelistic block parties reach people for Christ by meeting their needs, spiritually, physically, emotionally, and socially. Divide children into three teams and invite them to prepare an activity for a block party. Kids can prepare a puppet show, list games for recreation or prepare interpretive movement to music. Allow children the opportunity to share what they have created.

Closing Activities

Before the session, make copies of *Let's Give, Let's Pray, Let's Go Choral Reading*.

Tell a Story

One way missionary J. Hail tells others about Jesus is through English as a Second Language (ESL). The ESL ministry began as a way to discover ethnic populations in Rockford who need to hear the gospel of Christ. Through training immigrants in ESL, Baptist volunteers have the opportunity to share Christ and plant a church among those ethnic populations. They started in the winter of 2007 with nine volunteers. At first, they had only a few students. Then they learned of the Karen refugees that had moved to their area from Burma and Thailand.

The refugees had come to Illinois to escape persecution. Many of them had Baptist backgrounds. They wanted to plant a church among their people group. Within two weeks after learning they were living in the area, the Karen Baptist Church was launched as a mission of FBC, Machesney Park. There are approximately 250 Karen Refugees living in the area. 150 of them are now enrolled in the ESL classes with an average of 75 attending each week.

The ESL ministry has caused missionary J. Hail to discover other needs as well. Transportation needs have been met to bring the Karen to ESL and to church each week as Lincolnwood Baptist Church donated a school bus for that purpose. Along with the ESL classes, a clothes closet ministry has been provided for the Karen and other ESL participants. In addition to teaching ESL, computer training and driving classes are offered to the more advanced students. The Karen Baptist Church has about 75 in average attendance each week. While most of the Karen speaking refugees have Baptist backgrounds, Pastor Eh Say Wah has had the opportunity to see at least three Buddhists come to faith in Christ this past year.

Pray for missionary J. Hail as he leads his association to meet needs, share Christ and start churches. Pray for more volunteers to begin ESL classes in other communities. Guide children in the *Let's Give, Let's Pray, Let's Go Choral Reading*.

Give to the IMO

Give each child an Illinois Missions Offering envelope (free from Illinois Baptist State Association). Encourage the children to give what they feel God leads them to give. Look at "What Your IMO Dollars Buy" available in the IMO Planning Guide sent to each church. This article outlines ministry supplies bought by gifts to the Illinois Missions Offering. Share these with the children. Help them know at what point they are to give their offering. The state goal for this year's Illinois Missions Offering is \$ 390,000.

Support Missions

Lead children to gather new spiral bound notebooks, pencils, and pens to be given to help the English as a Second Language ministry. Items may be sent to:

J.E. Hail
Director of Missions
North Central Baptist Association
515 N. Court Street, Suite 110
Rockford, IL 61103

Make "Ask Me" Buttons

Have a piece of poster board as well as scissors and markers available. Let children make buttons that say "Ask Me About the IMO". Ask children to wear the buttons during church services in September. Station children in the hallways before and after worship service. When people ask about the IMO, encourage children to share what they have learned about missions in Illinois.

Fun Facts About Illinois

Answer True or False to the following statements.

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Let's Give. Let's Pray. Let's Go. Choral Reading

Make one copy for each child. There are six parts. If you have more than six children, assign more than one child to each part.

1. The church can't go everywhere.
 2. It can't go to the fire stations or emergency rooms.
 3. It can't go to prisons or jails.
 4. It can't go to crime scenes or factories.
 5. But chaplains can.
 6. Let's give so chaplains in Illinois can go.
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1. Different groups do church in different ways.
 2. Culture groups need to worship in their heart language.
 3. The Cowboy Church shows those who love horses that the church cares.
 4. People might meet for church in a house or a mall or movie theater.
 5. College students need churches that relate to their needs.
 6. Let's pray that more churches are started in Illinois.
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1. Eight million people in Illinois need to know about Jesus.
 2. There is only one Southern Baptist Church for every 13,000 people in Illinois.
 3. Our community has lost people.
 4. You don't have to go around the world to be a missionary.
 5. We can make a difference right where we are.
 6. Let's go tell so people can hear about Jesus.

Who Are They? Word Find

Find out who our campus ministers are across the state. Words may be up, down, backwards, forwards, and diagonal.

M	A	R	K	C	R	Z	W	D	W	P	U	M	G	Y
I	Y	V	K	N	A	T	H	A	N	F	C	L	N	V
K	X	C	B	O	M	B	G	N	F	I	H	P	W	I
E	Q	A	Z	R	W	S	X	I	R	F	R	V	T	Z
G	T	G	B	A	O	Y	H	E	D	D	I	E	U	A
I	E	K	P	A	L	C	N	L	U	M	S	N	H	C
B	V	R	C	X	A	Q	K	D	S	L	L	E	A	H
F	D	E	G	I	A	R	C	O	D	Y	K	L	N	F
A	E	R	T	F	S	H	I	S	C	B	J	I	D	J
N	O	S	G	E	A	H	R	C	A	U	S	C	R	M
E	W	G	F	S	F	E	T	Q	I	P	X	T	E	H
R	R	P	E	C	D	L	A	V	R	E	R	D	A	G
E	O	Y	D	L	Y	L	P	N	S	E	M	A	J	E
S	V	R	T	Y	U	E	I	O	K	P	A	S	U	C
B	N	M	F	J	I	N	E	T	T	E	K	S	S	F
U	Y	T	U	O	C	U	M	S	A	F	V	H	T	G
B	H	M	E	H	R	H	F	D	P	Y	G	I	I	M
F	T	R	M	N	D	S	C	O	T	T	K	Y	N	T
D	A	N	N	Y	U	V	K	L	E	I	A	Z	O	Q
P	C	K	L	B	J	I	O	J	I	M	B	U	E	A

Aaron
Andrea
Brock
Cathy
Chase

Chris
Cody
Craig
Daniel
Danny

Eddie
Greg
James
Jim
Jinette

John
Justin
Kevin
Leah
Mark

Mike
Nathan
Patrick
Scott
Serena

Shunelle
Tim
Zach

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M	A	R	K	C	R	Z	W	D	W	P	U	M	G	Y
I	Y	V	K	N	A	T	H	A	N	F	C	L	N	V
K	X	C	B	O	M	B	G	N	F	I	H	P	W	I
E	Q	A	Z	R	W	S	X	I	R	F	R	V	T	Z
G	T	G	B	A	O	Y	H	E	D	D	I	E	U	A
I	E	K	P	A	L	C	N	L	U	M	S	N	H	C
B	V	R	C	X	A	Q	K	D	S	L	L	E	A	H
F	D	E	G	I	A	R	C	O	D	Y	K	L	N	F
A	E	R	T	F	S	H	I	S	C	B	J	I	D	J
N	O	S	G	E	A	H	R	C	A	U	S	C	R	M
E	W	G	F	S	F	E	T	Q	I	P	X	T	E	H
R	R	P	E	C	D	L	A	V	R	E	R	D	A	G
E	O	Y	D	L	Y	L	P	N	S	E	M	A	J	E
S	V	R	T	Y	U	E	I	O	K	P	A	S	U	C
B	N	M	F	J	I	N	E	T	T	E	K	S	S	F
U	Y	T	U	O	C	U	M	S	A	F	V	H	T	G
B	H	M	E	H	R	H	F	D	P	Y	G	I	I	M
F	T	R	M	N	D	S	C	O	T	T	K	Y	N	T
D	A	N	N	Y	U	V	K	L	E	I	A	Z	O	Q
P	C	K	L	B	J	I	O	J	I	M	B	U	E	A

Aaron
Andrea
Brock
Cathy
Chase

Chris
Cody
Craig
Daniel
Danny

Eddie
Greg
James
Jim
Jinette

John
Justin
Kevin
Leah
Mark

Mike
Nathan
Patrick
Scott
Serena

Shunelle
Tim
Zach