

# **2009 Illinois Missions Offering and Season of Prayer Preschool Study Session By Sandy Wisdom-Martin**

## **Introduction**

This one-hour study can be used in any setting where preschoolers are gathered. Preschoolers will gain awareness of the needs of those around them. They will experience fun activities that will lead them to discover how they can be helpers, show kindness and work together.

Pray for God's guidance as you prepare and teach. Read the entire study. Choose activities best suited for the children you teach. Gather materials for activities and group time. The following schedule is a suggestion of how to divide the time you will have.

45 minutes – Activity Time

5 minutes – Cleanup Time

10 minutes – Group Time

## **Art**

Activity: Painting with Q-Tips

Materials Needed: Empty egg cartons, paper, paint, Q-tips.

Pour a small amount of paint into each small section of an empty egg carton. Invite children to use Q-tips as paint brushes and create a picture of their church or community. Say: We want everyone to know about Jesus. For that to happen, we need a church in every community.

Activity: Hands Folded in Prayer

Materials Needed: Pencils, scissors, construction paper, glue, stickers, sequins, glitters, crayons.

Fold construction paper in half and give to each child. Ask the preschooler to put their "pinky" finger up against the fold. Use a pencil to trace each child's hand. Help the children cut out their paper hand. Make sure they are cutting through both pieces of paper. Be careful to leave the two "pinky" fingers connected. Allow the children to decorate their hand cards using crayons, stickers, glue, sequins, and glitter. Write on the card. "I can pray for others." Open the Bible and read: "Pray for one another" (see James 5:16).

## **Homeliving**

Activity: Barber and Beauty Shop

Materials Needed: Unbreakable mirror, comb, brush, barrettes, small stool.

Place the items in the homeliving center. Encourage the preschoolers to pretend to be fixing each other's hair. Say: At one church in Illinois, barbers and beauticians are volunteering their time to give poor children haircuts. They want to help the children and let them know that God loves them.

Activity: What's in the Bag?

Materials needed: Two apples, two oranges, two cans of soup, pair of mittens, two hats, pair of shoes, pair of socks, shopping bag.

Put the items in a shopping bag. Guide preschoolers to take turns removing one object at a time from the bag. As they match the pairs of objects, place them together. Say: Many people in Illinois do not have enough food or warm clothes to wear. By giving to the Illinois Missions Offering, we can help people in need.

### **Blocks**

Activity: Build a Church

Materials Needed: Hard hats (real or play), safety vests, carpenter aprons, poster board, markers, tape, pictures of construction sites.

Make posters that say “Hard Hat Area” and “Construction Zone.” Hang pictures of construction sites in the block area. Invite the children to put on the hard hats and safety vests and build churches from the blocks. Ask the preschoolers to share what they like about their church.

Activity: Map of Illinois

Materials Needed: Large map of Illinois, highlighters.

Spread out a large map of Illinois. Find your town or area on the map. Point out Rockford and Cairo. Say: Our state is large. If a person drove from Rockford to Cairo, it would take seven hours. That’s more than 400 miles. There are many places in our state without churches. Everywhere in our state, there are people who have never heard about Jesus. We must tell them about Jesus. Show the children the interstates and roads on the map. Allow the preschoolers to use the highlighters and trace the roads and highways on the map. Ask them to place a church (block) at their final destination. Say: When we work together, we can tell people about Jesus and build more churches in Illinois.

### **Books**

Activity: Read a Missions Book

Materials Needed: *I’m a Part of God’s Plan* (available at [www.wmystore.com](http://www.wmystore.com) or 1-800-968-7301)

Sit with interested children and read the book. At the end, say: We are all part of God’s plan to help people in Illinois learn about Jesus.

Activity: Make a Book

Materials Needed: Poster board (cut in quarters), stapler, markers, glue, magazines, scissors.

Provide magazines for preschoolers to cut out pictures of people. Encourage them to look for people of all ages and ethnicities. Lead the preschoolers to glue to pictures to the poster board. Title the book, *God Loves all People*. Say: God loves all people. By giving to the Illinois Missions Offering, we can show love to many people in Illinois.

### **Music**

Activity: Break the Bubbles

Materials Needed: Music, bottles of bubbles with wands.

Designate some children to blow bubbles. Play music. Invite the other children to pop bubbles as they move to the music. Switch and let other children blow bubbles. Say: Sometimes in Illinois we use creative ways like bubbles or puppets to gather children and tell them about Jesus.

Activity: The Wheels on the Van

Say: We want everyone in Illinois to go to church. Sometimes we pick people up and give them a ride to church. Invite children to sing with you. The tune is “The Wheels On the Bus.”

The wheels on the van go  
 Round and round  
 Round and round  
 Round and round  
 The wheels on the van go  
 Round and round  
 Up and down the roads.

The people on the van say,  
 Come to church  
 Come to church  
 Come to church  
 The people on the van say,  
 Come to church  
 We will pick you up.

The people at the church say,  
 Jesus loves you  
 Jesus loves you  
 Jesus loves you  
 The people at the church say,  
 Jesus loves you  
 We are glad you came.

### **Games and Manipulative**

Activity: Church Puzzle

Materials Needed: Picture of a church, clear self-adhesive plastic, magnetic tape, cookie sheet.

Cover a picture of a church with clear self-adhesive plastic. Cut the picture into many pieces and apply magnetic tape to the back of each piece. Lay a cookie sheet on the floor in the games area. Place the puzzle pieces near the cookie sheet. Encourage the preschoolers to see what placing the pieces together will make. Say: It takes many long hours and days to build a new church. We should give thanks for people who help build churches.

Activity: What Is It?

Materials Needed: Variety of small items that represent Illinois (such as kernels of corn, Lincoln pennies, toy skyscraper, quarter with Illinois on back, a toy tractor, soy beans, a small Ziploc bag with water to represent the great lakes, and plastic animals of cows, sheep, pigs), dark-colored children’s socks.

Show the assorted items to the children and describe how they relate to Illinois. Without the children seeing, put the items into the socks. Encourage the children to feel the items through the socks and try to identify them without peeking inside.

### **Cleanup Time (5 minutes)**

Preschoolers have difficulty ending an activity they enjoy. Give them five minutes warning before cleanup time so they can complete their activities without stopping abruptly.

### **Group Time (10 minutes)**

Thank each child for doing his or her part in cleaning the room. As the preschoolers come to group time, sing a song to the tune of “Fre’re Jacques.”

Illinois  
 Illinois  
 That’s our state  
 That’s our state  
 Many different people  
 Many different people  
 God loves them  
 God loves them

Tell the Story: Even I Can Do Missions!

Early one Saturday morning, Megan and her mom got up and put their clothes on to go. “Where do we get to go today, Mom?” Megan asked. She loved being able to go on special trips. “Today, Megan, we are going on a mission trip in Illinois,” Megan’s Mom replied. “That’s great!” said Megan. What are we going to get to do on our mission trip, Mom?”

“Well, Megan, we have many choices. Some people will be prayerwalking in the city and small communities. Some will be doing activities with children. Others will be providing a free lunch to some residents. Just down the street from a church, people will be working in a food pantry and clothes closet. There will be volunteers doing construction and clean-up projects for needy families. People will be mowing grass and painting as well.”

“Oh, wow, Mom. That sounds cool. What will we be doing?” asked Megan. “I have signed us up to take inner city children on a field trip to St. Louis” said Mom. On that special day of missions, Megan had fun and helped others.

The money we give to the Illinois Missions Offering makes it possible for mission trips like the one that Megan went to in E. St. Louis. It makes it possible for missionaries to go across the state of Illinois to tell people about Jesus and to help people who are in need.

### **Prayer time**

Open the Bible and read, “Help one another” (see Galatians 5:13) and “We work together” (see 1 Corinthians 3:9). Ask the preschoolers to think of ways they could work together in their community. This can include giving to the Illinois Missions Offering. Lead the preschoolers in praying for their community and for missionaries who tell others about Jesus.