Youth Teaching Guide

Writer: Cindy Bradley, Lakeland Baptist Church, Carbondale, Illinois

This one hour study can be used in any setting where youth are gathered. Use it in Sunday School, Youth Small Group Bible Studies, Acteens, Challengers, Youth on Mission, etc. The purpose is to teach youth about the work of State Missions and their responsibility to pray for missions; give to the Illinois Missions Offering; and do missions.

Opening Activity

Before the session, write Illinois Missions Offering on a large roadmap of Illinois* or on a piece of poster and hang it in the room. When youth arrive, ask: "What is the purpose of the Illinois Missions Offering?" (Answer: To pray for our nearly 100 Illinois missionaries, and to give specifically to support our cooperative efforts to reach Illinois for Christ.) Say: "There are approximately 8.2 million people in Illinois who do not know Jesus personally as Savior and Lord. As Christians, or followers of Christ, our desire is that everyone in our state will come to know Jesus as Savior and Lord. That's why we pray for our missionaries, give to the Illinois Missions Offering, work hard to start new churches and do ministries."

* Illinois roadmaps are available from the Department of Transportation.

Learn a Bible Verse

The Bible verse to learn is Acts 1:8. Provide youth with index cards, pens or pencils and Bibles. Have youth look up Acts 1:8 and write the verse on their index card. Divide youth into four teams. Assign each team a portion of the verse as follows:

Team 1	You shall be witnesses to Me … in Jerusalem
Team 2	You shall be witnesses to Me … in Judea
Team 3	You shall be witnesses to Me … in Samaria
Team 4	You shall be witnesses to Me … to the ends of the earth

Provide each team with a piece of copy paper and a marker. Ask each team to discuss and write on their paper where they think their "Jerusalem" or "Judea," etc. is located. (Answer: Jerusalem – their local city or town; Judea – their state-Illinois; Samaria – North America; ends of the earth – the rest of the world.) Remind youth that the focus of today's lesson will be learning about being witnesses for Christ in Illinois.

Missions Stories Activity: Amazing Race to Illinois – Crisscrossing the state with the gospel.

If possible, set up stations at various locations throughout your church or meeting area. Each station will feature a missions story and questions/activities related to that story. At the completion of the activity each team will be given directions to the next station. Also, if possible, display an Illinois roadmap at each station. Prepare four sets of the Mission Story handouts (handouts are located at the end of this study guide). Have youth remain in their four Bible verse teams.

Station 1: Instructions

Before you can begin your race throughout Illinois you need to know why you are going. One member from each team will look up and read Matthew 28:19-20 to their team. Then each team will locate their city on the Illinois map. After locating their city on the map each team may proceed to Station 2.

Station 2: Dave Arnold, Church Planter, Chicago

First, locate Chicago on the Illinois map. Second, one team member will read out loud the story of Dave Arnold. Third, write down the answers to the questions at the bottom of the handout. After answering the questions correctly each team may proceed to Station 3.

Station 3: Duane Davis, Associational Missionary, East Central Illinois (living in Mahomet)

First, locate Mahomet on the Illinois map. Second, one team member will read out loud the story of Duane Davis. Third, write down the answers to the questions at the bottom of handout. After answering the questions correctly each team may proceed to Station 4.

Station 4: Tony Munoz, Hispanic Church Planter, Effingham

First, locate Effingham on the Illinois map. Second, one team member will read out loud the story of Tony Munoz. Third, each team will learn and sing together the chorus of "Jesus Loves Me" in Spanish. Fourth, write down the answers to the questions at the bottom of handout. After answering the questions correctly each team may proceed to Station 5.

Station 5: Edwin and Rozina Coleman, Lead the Way Church, Alton

First, locate Alton on the Illinois map. Second, one team member will read out loud the story of Edwin and Rozina Coleman. Third, write down the answers to the questions at the bottom of handout. After answering the questions correctly each team may proceed to Station 6.

Station 6: Wrap-Up

All teams meet together. Ask, "Approximately, how many people in Illinois do not know Jesus personally as Savior and Lord?" (Answer: approximately 8.2 million) Ask, "Can one person make a difference?" (Answer: Yes) Ask youth to name the five missionaries in Illinois (from today's study) who are making a difference.

Give to State Missions

Locate "With Your Gift to the Illinois Missions Offering" in the Illinois Missions Offering Planning Guide. Locate "With Your Gift to the Illinois Missions Offering" handout at the end of this guide – make a copy to give to each youth. Provide Illinois Missions Offering Envelopes for each youth. Have play money available in denominations of $1, $5, $10, $20 and $50. Tell youth what can be done with gifts of $1, $5, $10, $20, $50.00, $100.00, etc.

Instruct youth to think about what they can give to the Illinois Missions Offering. They should write the amount on the back of their handout. Remind youth that if everyone can give to the Illinois Missions Offering -- even if it is just a little bit. Let youth take the handouts and envelopes home as reminders to bring their offering.

Close by Praying for Missions

Lead youth to pray for each of the five ministries and/or pastor/leaders in today's study:

- Dave Arnold, Church Planter, Chicago
- Duane Davis, Associational Missionary, East Central Illinois (living in Mahomet)
- Tony Munoz, Hispanic church planter, Effingham
- Edwin and Rozina Coleman, Lead the Way Church, Alton

Mission Story Handout 1

Dave Arnold, Church Planter, Chicago

Dave Arnold is an Illinois Missionary serving as a bivocational church planter in the Albany Park neighborhood on the northwest side of Chicago. It's the third most ethnically diverse zip code in the U.S. with 70 different languages spoken in the public schools.

Dave says, "We're working with 15 to 18 different people groups in a two square mile area that some people call the crossroads of the world. God has brought us people from some of the most persecuted, corrupt and restricted countries in the world including the Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, India, Cuba, Burma and even Russia. I feel like I live overseas," he says.

He calls the church The Bridge Church because "we want to build bridges into the lives of these people who are Muslims, Hindus, Mormons, atheists, and agnostics who have little familiarity with Christianity. One of the ways we reach out is to eat together, to fellowship and look for chance to share our story about who God is."

Dave says he and his core group are working to see families begin to follow Jesus and begin to walk with the Lord. "Then," he says, "we want to send disciples out into the harvest, so our hope is to plant other churches in the neighborhood and to send missionaries out from here to other parts of Chicago and the world." A former member of the church is teaching English in Thailand and discipling believers there.

"Albany Park is extremely lost and it's a hard place to live and work," Dave says. "We're praying that God will show us where he is working in our neighborhood so we can be a part of that."

Questions:

1. How many different languages are spoken in the pubic schools in Albany Park?

2. What is the name of the church where Dave ministers?

3. How many different people groups live in the Albany Park area?

4. What is one way Dave reaches out to the people of Albany Park?

Mission Story Handout 2

Duane Davis, Associational Missionary, East Central Illinois (living in Mahomet)

East Central Baptist Association encompasses eight counties with good sized metropolitan areas as well as thousands of acres of corn and soybeans, world class universities, more than half a million residents, and 23 Southern Baptist congregations to tell them about Jesus Christ.

Associational Missionary Duane Davis says “there are a number of communities here that not only don’t have a Baptist church or even an evangelical church, there’s not a church of any kind. So the only picture people get of Jesus is what they see on TV.”

He says it’s exciting to be an associational missionary. “I spend a lot of time on the road between my churches visiting with pastors, doing training and helping in many different ways.” His biggest challenges are collegiate ministries and starting new churches.

“Two-thirds of our associational ministry budget is involved in working with college campuses. We have students from all over the world so instead of having to send missionaries overseas to reach them, they’re coming here to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I recently attended the baptism of a visiting Chinese professor who accepted Christ while he was here on one of our campuses. Now he is returning home to deal with his family, coworkers, the Communist Party and his new faith.”

Duane said, “We have a goal of starting at least one church a year. One of our new churches was started by a church with 15 people, and another one that was started four years ago has already started three other congregations. But we need so many more churches to reach people from 122 different countries who live here now and need to hear about Jesus.”

Duane said he wants to thank Illinois Baptists for their support of East Central Association. “My position would not be here if it was not for the support of Illinois Baptists who partner with us by giving to Illinois Missions, praying for us and serving on mission teams in our association.”

Questions:

1. How many counties does East Central Baptist Association encompass?

2. How many Southern Baptist congregations are in East Central Baptist Association?

3. What are Duane’s two biggest challenges?

4. How many new churches does Duane want to see started each year?

Mission Story Handout 3

Tony Munoz, Hispanic church planter, Effingham

Three Baptist associations are partnering with the Illinois Baptist State Association to sponsor the Calvary Christian Community Church, a Spanish-speaking church start in Effingham. Tony Munoz (prounounced moon'-yos) says the Hispanic community needs to hear the Gospel in their own language.

"98 percent of Hispanics here don't speak English well," he says. "Effingham is not a big city with lots of Spanish-speaking services and resources, so they are lost. They don't know how to behave or what to do so my wife teaches ESL, English as a Second Language." Tony tells of one man who recently came to Christ because he wanted to learn English.

"Elisad just wanted to learn English but when he saw the fellowship that we had as Christians, he said he was looking for that, he just didn't know where to find it. But he had lived a very rough life back in Mexico and said he never thought God could forgive him. We kept visiting him to explain about forgiveness and Jesus. Finally the message was clear to him, he got the Gospel and was born again! And, I later I had the joy to baptize him."

Tony said the support of Illinois Baptists is crucial to him and his family. "We are serving full time here and the support gives us the resources we need as a family and a church. It helped us reach out to the Hispanic community with a soccer tournament and a Hispanic festival as well as support our worship services and Bible studies."

The chorus of "Jesus Loves Me" in Spanish:

Sí, Cristo me ama.
[see CREES-toh meh AH-mah]
Sí, Cristo me ama.
[see CREES-toh meh AH-mah]
Sí, Cristo me ama.
[see CREES-toh meh AH-mah]
La Biblia dice así.
[lah bee-BLEE-ah DEE-ceh ah-SEE]

Questions:

1. What percent of Hispanics in Effingham don't speak English well?

2. Name two events that have helped Tony reach out to the Hispanic community.

Mission Story Handout 4

Edwin and Rozina Coleman, Lead the Way Church, Alton, IL

Ed and Rozina Coleman started a church in Alton, Illinois with 12 people. They believed the new church would lead the way to bringing cultures together and people to Christ, so they named the church, Lead the Way Church.

"God has just burdened and broken my heart for us to have a multi-ethnic church here in Alton," Pastor Coleman says. "There is too much separation, too much lack of cooperation for the Kingdom of God. There is tremendous potential here and that's why our mission here is to lead other to Christ."

As a basketball and football coach, Pastor Coleman brings Christ to the kids he coaches. "The guys now ask him to pray for them before a game. So many young people have accepted Christ and joined our church, and that gives us inroads to reach their families as well. As the children come, the parents and grandparents come," Mrs. Coleman says.

Pastor Coleman says "We have seen gang bangers put down their guns. We have seen murderers accept Jesus Christ. We've had the biggest drug dealer in Alton join our church. And it's nothing but us showing ourselves friendly and setting an example of love of Jesus Christ."

The Coleman's grieve over the number of broken homes in Alton. "We feel like when these homes and these families have Christ at the center, they can be changed, and transformed."

Questions:

1. Why is the Coleman's church named Lead the Way Church?
2. How many people started Lead the Way Church?
3. What does Pastor Coleman do besides pastor a church?
4. What do the Coleman's believe is needed for broken homes in to be changed and transformed?

Handout 5

With Your Gift to the Illinois Missions Offering

Much of the Offering provides salary support for missionaries throughout the state, but some is used for ministry supplies such as the following:

$1 provide pencils, scissors, tape or other school supplies for a children's Sunday School class

$3 buys a children's New Testament

$5 pays for a fast food meal for a church planter visiting in his community.

$10 provides a JESUS video available in different languages

$25 purchases three new hymnals for a new church

$50 buys water bottles imprinted with the plan of salvation for a county fair or community parade

$100 prints fliers to advertise a mission Vacation Bible School

$300 underwrites the cost of a church block party

$500 buys a video projector for a new church's worship service