

Mission Illinois Offering & Week of Prayer
Youth mission study
Now More Than Ever

Before the study:

Check the church office for the promotion kit for the Mission Illinois Offering & Week of Prayer. Also visit missionillinois.org for additional study materials and videos.

If leading this study for younger children, start with the interactive activity below. If leading this study for older kids or teens, feel free to skip the game and begin with the opening discussion.

There are two sections in this study. Use one or both section, as time permits.

- A Heart for the City (Bryan and Marci Coble in Chicago)
- Feeding people, loving people (Derrick and Ailee Taylor in Staunton)

Introductory Activity

Supplies Needed:

- Masking tape
- Construction paper and black marker

Lesson Preparation:

- Put two lines of tape on the floor, about 15 feet apart from each other.
- Cut the paper into smaller pieces. On each piece write a short, quick task for kids to complete. Examples include: spin in a circle 3 times, do 10 jumping jacks, run in place for 5 seconds, etc.

How to play: Tell the kids they are going to play a quick game. As they wait to hear what the game is, hand a couple children the pieces of paper with tasks on them and tell them to start. They will most likely be very confused and look to you for more guidance how to play. Don't give them any instructions. Some may attempt to play and start acting out what it says to do on the papers. Let this go on for a minute or two before stepping in.

Ask them what the problem is. They will say something like, "You didn't tell us how to play!" You can respond, "That's right, I didn't tell you what to do so you just had to guess. Was that very fun?" They will most likely say that it wasn't.

Read aloud Romans 10:14:

"How, then, can they call on him they have not believed in? And how can they believe without hearing about him? And how can they hear without a preacher?" (CSB)

Explain to the kids that just as they couldn't complete the game without instructions, people around us will never hear about Jesus if we don't go tell them about him! They won't know what to do in life if they don't hear about Jesus and how he wants them to live. Tell them that's what the lesson will be about today. Then have them play the game with instructions.

Divide the children into two groups. Have half of each group stand behind the two lines of tape on the ground. Give each child behind one of the lines of tape a piece of paper with a task on it. Explain that one at a time they must run to the half of their team behind the other piece of tape, tell the first person in line to complete the task, then run back so that the next person can go. The person who just completed the task will also go to the back of their line so that the next person can have a turn.

The team to complete all of the tasks first and sit down wins.

Opening Discussion (for older kids/teens):

Read Romans 10:14 aloud to the group, then talk about the following questions:

1. Think back to when you first asked Jesus into your heart. How did that happen? Who was the person who helped you hear and understand how much God loves you? Or, if you haven't yet put your faith in Jesus, why is that? Has someone not explained it to you in a way that makes sense?
2. How would your life have turned out different if that person or people never told you about Jesus? Or, if you haven't trusted Jesus as your Savior, how do you think your life would be different if you did?
3. In your MIO materials, locate the blue map of Illinois. Find your county and see how many SBC churches are located there, or the percentage of people who identify as Southern Baptist.

Have one person in the group who has a phone look up the population of your town or county. Explain to them that out of those people, $\frac{2}{3}$ of them don't know Jesus. (If you want, have them split into two groups illustrating the $\frac{1}{3}$ of people who are Christians versus the $\frac{2}{3}$ who aren't.)

Think about that for a minute: approximately 65% of the people around you have yet to have someone reach out and tell them about how they can have a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

As you begin this study, remember Romans 10:14. And start thinking about what people in your life you can tell about Jesus.

Topic: Telling people about Jesus in Chicago

Did you know...

- Chicago is one of the biggest cities in the entire country, with almost 10 million people living in the city and surrounding areas.
- There is only one Southern Baptist Church for every 35,105 people who live there.
- Only 10% of the population is associated with an evangelical church.
- We need 184 more churches in Chicago for everyone to have a church to attend.

Watch: “A heart for the city” video (3:53) or read the summary below, and then answer the following discussion questions.

Summary: Pastor and church planter Bryan Coble grew up around St. Louis and was a lifelong Cardinals fan. *(For younger kids, stop and ask them how many Cards and Cubs fans are in the group.)* Bryan didn’t want to come to Chicago, but he and his wife Marci felt that God might want them to move there. So they started to pray about it, asking God whether or not they should move to Chicago to plant a church and tell people about Jesus.

As Bryan started praying, he felt God wanted him to wear a Chicago Cubs hat. *(Ask the Cardinals fans if they think they could wear a Cubs hat, and vice versa.)* And as he did, his heart started to change. Bryan started to love the city of Chicago more and wanted to tell the people there about Jesus. Eventually Bryan and Marci and their two sons moved to Irving Park, a Chicago neighborhood where 77,000 people live! “We want the community to know that we love them, we’re here to invest in them first and foremost,” said Marci.

Bryan and Marci’s sending church is Chatham Baptist Church—where Marci grew up, was baptized, and where she and Bryan got married. Their pastor, Milton Bost, explained that Chicago has always seemed really far away from Chatham. *(Ask younger kids how far away they think Chicago is.)* But partnering with Bryan and Marci is helping the people of Chatham Baptist Church near Springfield feel connected to what God is doing in this huge city.

Bryan and Marci have been trying to serve the people who live in the Irving Park neighborhood. When the neighborhood had a big yard sale, Bryan and Marci handed out flyers and cookies to people. But they didn’t do it alone! People from Chatham Baptist Church drove three hours north to help out, talking to people and building relationships in Independence Park, a city block in the middle of the neighborhood.

Because of the relationships they’ve been building, Bryan said they will hopefully be able to use Independence Park’s recreation building to launch a Bible study, then a church! Just as Bryan and Marci Coble are learning to love Chicago, so is Chatham Baptist Church as they continue to partner with the Cobles, visit them, and support their church planting efforts.

Discuss:

1. Before watching this video, did you know what church planting was? What do you think about it? Someone read Acts 1:8 aloud. How did Chatham Baptist Church follow what it says to do in that verse?
2. If your church were to help plant another church, do you think you would want to go help? Just like the people from Chatham went and helped at the Irving Park yard sale?
3. What do you think about meeting new people that live somewhere else? Does that make you nervous? Excited? Do you think you could tell a stranger about Jesus?

Topic: Compassion ministry

Watch: “Feeding people, loving people” video (4:16) or read the summary below, and then answer the following discussion questions.

Summary: Staunton is a small town not far from St. Louis. In such a rural area, many people might not see the need for a new church there. But Derrick and Ailee Taylor did. A local police officer, Derrick couldn't shake the feeling that he was supposed to be involved with a new church plant. "I lost sleep over it, I wrestled with it," he said, telling God that if He brought along a church planter, Derrick would be happy to help plant a new church in their small community.

But as it turned out, God wanted Derrick to be the pastor! A chance encounter with Eddie Pullen, IBSA's church planting catalyst for that region, brought some confirmation. Eddie looked Derrick straight in the eyes and said, "Derrick, you're it. There's no one else coming. It's you."

"I'm just an average Joe," Derrick said, which is exactly why he thinks God called him. So in September 2016, Net Community Church officially launched. They've since seen numerous salvations and approximately 29 baptisms. "It's just been a really, really awesome, awesome launch and first year of ministry," said Derrick. Ailee, Derrick's wife, agreed, saying, "Our heart is for the rural communities that can't often have or sustain or see a new church plant."

As bivocational leaders, though, Derrick and Ailee are also extremely passionate about reaching beyond church walls to those in their rural community who desperately need Jesus. (*Explain to younger kids what bivocational means.*) So Net Community Church led the rebuilding of the local Staunton food bank, which has become a major outreach emphasis for their congregation. (*Have a brief conversation with children about what a food bank is and who they help.*)

"The Staunton Helping Hands Center is a place where people can come and see Christ lived out," said Derrick. Led by volunteers from various churches within the community, the Center's goal is to reach the unchurched in the area who are clearly living at times without any hope—without the hope of Jesus.

Ailee explained how the Center allows them to meet and be a light to new people, and how they've even seen some of those people at their church, growing in the Lord. "[God] has confirmed my call over and over again," Derrick expressed, "When I see the addict set free, the marriage healed, people giving their life to Christ, being baptized."

Ailee agreed, "Net Community just had to step out. We just had to have the faith."

Discuss:

1. What do you think Derrick meant when he said he "wrestled with God" about becoming a pastor? Do you think he was nervous or scared? Why do you think that was?
2. Net Community Church helped get their town's food bank up and running again. Have you ever been to a food bank or volunteered at one? How could you show Jesus' love through volunteering at a place like this?
3. Are there any places in your own town where you could volunteer and show Jesus' love to people?

Concluding thoughts and prayers

As you close your time in prayer, ask the kids the following questions:

Are you telling your friends and family about Jesus? Are you showing people the love that Jesus would want you to show them? Is there someone in your life, maybe a friend or family member,

who hasn't yet asked Jesus into their heart? Make it your goal in the next week to tell that person how much Jesus loves them!

Ask volunteers to pray for the following prompts:

- Pray that people in Chicago would come to know Jesus.
- Pray that Bryan and Marci Coble would be able to start their church soon.
- Ask God to give the group the courage to tell others about Jesus, even strangers!
- Pray for Derrick and Ailee's church to reach even more people for Jesus.
- Ask God to show you any places in your town where we can volunteer as a group and show others the love of Jesus.

For additional materials for study and prayer, visit missionillinois.org.