



Offering & Week of Prayer | Sept. 8-15

MIO 2019 Mission Study for Children

For leaders:

Thank you for sharing the 2019 Mission Illinois Offering and Week of Prayer with children at your church!

This year's MIO focus includes a story about young people in Atwood, Ill., which is the basis for this missions study. Before you lead the study at your church, read "Give them the gospel" at missionillinois.org and watch the video. You may also find it helpful to show the video to the children you're teaching.

This missions study also includes time to share the gospel with the children you're teaching. At First Baptist in Atwood, kids recite a 30-second gospel summary at the start of their Wednesday night worship service every week. Consider reading the summary below (or something similar) with your group to start your study:

The Good News

In spite of the fact that we have all sinned against HIM, God loves us and sent HIS Son Jesus to pay for our sins on the cross. If we will turn away from our sins and trust Jesus as our Savior and LORD, God will forgive our sins, change our life, and take us to heaven when we die.

Blessed
to bless
others

► Intro Activity #1

Map your neighborhood

First Baptist Church in Atwood uses a bus to pick up kids for church on Wednesday night. That's where they go to hear the gospel. Find a map of your community or town and pinpoint (in general) where each child in your study group lives. Using pushpins and string or a marker, connect the dots to create a "bus route" for your group. Share about how grown-ups at First Baptist Atwood, and at your church, invest their time so that kids can hear the gospel. It's that important!

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► Intro Activity #2

Get on the bus

Ask children to stand in a large circle, with an arm's length between each child on either side. Hand a ball (Nerf or other soft type) to one child and ask him or her to throw it to someone across the circle. When a pass is completed, the child who threw the ball lines up behind the catcher, who then throws it to someone else. The "bus" grows each time another child catches the ball and joins the line, until you catch the last pass and the teacher gets on the bus.

"Drive" the bus around the room several times, then "arrive" at church for teaching time. You may wish to take the bus past the baptistry, and point it out for discussion later.

Another version of this activity is to draw on large butcher paper or poster paper several streets and buildings. Make one of them your church. Cut out rectangles from construction paper or use wood blocks as buses, and allow the children to "drive" their vehicles around the neighborhood.

Ask: "Who lives in our neighborhood?"

Watch the Video

Gather the group to watch the video "Give them the gospel" (available at missionillinois.org or on the 2019 MIO DVD). After the video, show a map of Illinois, then point out your town. Talk about the population of Illinois:

- There are **13 million people** who live in Illinois.
- Approximately **10 million people** live in Chicago and the areas surrounding it.
- At least **8 million people** in Illinois do not know Jesus Christ as their savior.

You may wish to illustrate this point using 13 paper dolls or cartoon figures. Draw red hearts on 5 of them to show the presence of Jesus, and leave 8 of them blank.

Next, locate the town of Atwood on the map. Look between Decatur and Champaign.

Ask:

1. How far away is the town of Atwood from our town?
2. What did you learn about the town of Atwood from the video?
3. How is Atwood like or different from our town?

At First Baptist Church in Atwood, kids like you are learning about Jesus. They're telling their friends at school about him too—how he died on the cross for our sins, and how he wants us to know him and trust him.

When Jesus was here on earth, he wanted kids like you to know him and trust him. One time, his disciples tried to keep children away, so that Jesus could do the work he had to do. But Jesus wanted to talk to the kids and spend time with them.

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Read: Matthew 19:13-15 (ESV)

“Then children were brought to him that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples rebuked the people, but Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven.”

Jesus wanted children to feel comfortable talking to him and getting to know him. Even more importantly, he wanted to know them. He wants to know you too. Everyone needs Jesus, because everyone has done things that separate them from God—we call these things “sin.” When you trust Jesus to rescue you, even though you’ve sinned, you get to know him while you’re here on earth, and also in heaven.

If your “bus” visited the baptistry, discuss what happens there, especially for children who may not be familiar with baptism. Ask about their own testimonies:

1. Have you ever been baptized? What do you remember about it?
2. Have you ever told someone about Jesus?
3. If someone asked you today, “Who is Jesus?” how would you answer?
4. Why is it important to tell people about Jesus?

Prayer: God, thank you for sending Jesus to save us from our sins. Thank you for loving kids like us. Help us share your good news with other people who need to know you.

► Optional Activity #1: Testimony Time

Break into small groups or pairs and share brief testimonies about who Jesus is and what he has done for you. This is a good time for adults to model what sharing your faith looks like, and for kids to practice talking about Jesus.

► Optional Activity #2: Pen Pals

Make cards to send to kids in Atwood, Ill. Encourage children to write short notes inside. Commit to pray for the young people at the Atwood church as they share the gospel. Thank them for telling others about Jesus. Decorate the cards and/or envelopes, and send to:

First Baptist Church
Attn: Ignite Children’s Ministry
231 North Illinois
P.O. Box 797
Atwood, IL 61913

► Optional Activity #3: Jesus and the Children

Download a free coloring page (there are many available online) of Jesus talking to children from the account in Matthew 19. As they color, remind kids that Jesus loves them and wants them to trust him as their savior.