

2009 NORTH AMERICAN MISSION STUDY FOR CHILDREN

LIVE WITH URGENCY

SOWING TOGETHER FOR HARVEST

JOHN 4:35-37

THIS PAGE AND A VIDEO SEGMENT FROM “LIVE WITH URGENCY: SOWING TOGETHER FOR HARVEST,” THE 2009 NORTH AMERICAN MISSIONS EMPHASIS VIDEO, ARE THE PRIMARY RESOURCES NEEDED TO CONDUCT THE NORTH AMERICAN MISSION STUDY FOR CHILDREN. SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS AND IDEAS ARE AVAILABLE TO DOWNLOAD AND DUPLICATE AT www.AnnieArmstrong.com/study. THE VIDEO SEGMENT, “RACING TO THE FINISH,” FEATURES THE WORK OF BRENDA CRIM, SERVING IN ANCHORAGE, ALASKA.

The objectives of this study are for children to learn how one person, sowing together with others, can influence an entire community—even state—for Christ. Children will be motivated to pray for the work of Southern Baptist missionaries and participate in a mission project.

Pray for insight to know how to present the study material to your church's children. Pray that God will use the study to spark in children the desire to share Jesus with others. Pray for God to abundantly provide for our missionaries' needs.

Brenda Crim is the Baptist Campus Ministry collegiate missionary at the University of Alaska, Anchorage. She also serves as coordinator for ministry to spectators and participants of one of the world's premier sporting events, the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race. Her ministry is representative of the work of more than 5,500 missionaries serving through the North American Mission Board (NAMB) in the United States, Canada, and their territories. Brenda is supported by our gifts through the Cooperative Program and to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering® for North American Missions.

PREPARE

- Determine the best place to conduct the study, keeping in mind that you will need a TV and DVD player to show a video, an area to do activities, and a board or flip chart with chalk or markers. You will also need access to a microwave oven.
- If possible, from www.AnnieArmstrong.com/study, download and print copies of “Flurry of Friends,” a review sheet for children covering information from the study. You can also download photos of Brenda and a sled dog, reproducible sled dog drawings, snack ideas, review questions, and more.
- If possible, display an Alaska state flag and map during the study.
- Order Missionary Prayer Cards by calling 1 866 407-6262, and plan to distribute at least one card or one card set to each child.
- Gather (or print out and cut apart) “dogs” and boxes for a review game.
- Check with parents concerning food allergies. Gather supplies to make the snack: criss-cross cereal (such as Crispix or Rice Chex), chocolate chips, butter, peanut butter, powdered sugar, large microwaveable bowl, large spoon, 1-cup measuring cup, zip-top sandwich-size baggies, disposable cups, pitcher of ice water, hand sanitizer, paper or tablecloth to line the work surface.
- Prepare index cards with words of the Bible verse, and secure packing peanuts for a memory game. (You will reuse boxes from the review game.)
- For the mission project, purchase several tubes of lip balm (stick-type, not pot or squeeze-tube) and bubble-padded mailing envelope for the balm. During the mission project, add encouraging notes to the package. Mail to Brenda Crim, 8310 Summerset Dr., Anchorage, AK 99518-2926. (Please include a postage-paid postcard or envelope if you would like acknowledgment that your package arrived. Please understand that Brenda may not be able to reply personally to each package.)

2009 NORTH AMERICAN MISSION STUDY FOR CHILDREN

1-HOUR LESSON PLAN

INTRODUCTION (10 MIN.)

If possible, print a photo of a sled dog and Brenda Crim. As you begin, show the children the photos and map. Explain that in this session, they will be learning how Southern Baptists are telling people in Alaska about Jesus. Ask, “When you hear the word Alaska, what do you think of?” (Pause for responses. Then continue introducing Alaska.)

Alaska is known for being cold. The winters are very long. It is dark most of the time in the winter—even during the day. There is sunlight only a couple of hours. But during Alaska’s short summer, it is light even at night, and the weather is beautiful.

Many people who live in Alaska are Native Indian or Eskimo. Some of the elders still speak tribal languages. They live far away from conveniences, eating things from the land and thriving in the freezing temperatures, when others of us might freeze to death.

Outsiders originally rushed into Alaska hunting riches during the Gold Rush. Now, in big cities like Anchorage and Juneau, people from all over the world live, work, and attend universities. Tourists like to visit Alaska to see the abundant wildlife like moose and bears, to fish, and to see the glorious views of snowy mountains and pristine lakes.

One of the most extreme sporting events in the world is held every March in Alaska. It is called the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race. The Iditarod trail was originally used to transport mail, packages, and supplies to Nome, a city in far west Alaska. In 1925, a sickness threatened to kill many people in Nome. The doctor had no medicine to help. Brave sled dogs fought blizzards and injury and carried medicine across the tundra at an unbelievable speed, saving the entire town. Today, the Iditarod is a race across more than 1,000 miles of frozen wilderness. The race celebrates the bravery and strength of Alaskans and the thrill of beating the elements.

Teach some words used in the Iditarod (write these on a board or flip chart for reference):

HIKE!	GO
WHOA!	STOP
ON BY!	GO BY ANOTHER TEAM OR DISTRACTION
HAW!	TURN LEFT
GEE!	TURN RIGHT
EASY!	SLOW DOWN

Have children stand at one end of the room. After reviewing the commands and meanings, see if the children can follow what you say and make it to the other end of the room.

MEET THE MISSIONARY (10 MIN. WITH VIDEO VIEWING)

Share with the children that people in Alaska need to hear about Jesus. There aren’t many churches, and most Alaskans don’t attend church. So Christians must think of creative ways to share the gospel.

Brenda Crim is the Baptist Collegiate Ministry campus minister at the University of Alaska, Anchorage. She has worked on college campuses telling students about Jesus for almost 30 years. She worked on campuses in Louisiana and Texas.

Brenda has been in Alaska for four years. She loves volleyball and basketball. She uses her interest in sports to make connections with students. She watches their games, befriends them, and often becomes a “life coach” to them. Many people in Alaska struggle with drug and alcohol addiction and depression. The love of Jesus Christ that Brenda shares helps the people have better lives.

Brenda realized Southern Baptists could make a difference at the Iditarod race. For the race to happen, hundreds of volunteers from across the world help take care of dogs, monitor the safety of participants, and staff the race headquarters and checkpoints. Brenda knew that if Southern Baptists served as race volunteers, people would notice how different they were and start asking about Jesus.

Short-term missions volunteers do jobs no one else wants, like cleaning bathrooms, feeding dogs, and taking the late-night shifts. And enough Southern Baptists visit during the two weeks of celebration surrounding the race to do other evangelistic events, such as giving free coffee, cocoa, and tracts.

2009 NORTH AMERICAN MISSION STUDY FOR CHILDREN

Brenda helps coordinate this broad-reaching ministry. She determines where groups will stay and what they will do while they are there. Short-term mission groups travel from churches like ours to Alaska. Short-term mission volunteers have prayed with many people at the Iditarod race to receive Jesus as Savior and Lord. Missions volunteers have also given a strong witness of the kindness and peace Jesus can bring into people's lives. All God's people working together have made a harvest happen!

Alaska is isolated from the rest of the United States because of geography and frigid temperatures most of the year. It is expensive to live and travel there. So anytime people come to befriend and encourage pastors, missionaries, and Alaskan Natives with the love of Jesus, lives are touched. (Show the video segment, "Racing to the Finish.")

DOG IN BASKET: VIDEO REVIEW GAME (5-10 MIN.)

After watching the video segment, "Racing to the Finish," play a review game. Divide the group into teams of four to six players. Give each team a box or basket and six "sled dogs." These can be stuffed animals, dog photos cut out of magazines, or drawings of dogs (you can download and print off a sheet of sled dog drawings at www.AnnieArmstrong.com/study). Tell the children that teams that participate in the Iditarod have 12 to 16 dogs, but we will play our game with only six.

Explain that during the Iditarod, if a dog gets hurt, the dog team driver (musher) places the dog in his or her sled until reaching a checkpoint. This is called "dog in basket." At the checkpoint, race volunteers help crate the dog and fly it back to Anchorage to receive veterinary care.

During this game, each team tries to keep all their dogs in the race and not in basket by correctly answering review questions. If a team gives an incorrect answer, they have to place one of their dogs in the basket. Ask the teams several questions, reviewing the material presented in the introduction, video, and "Meet the Missionary" above. Congratulate the team with the most dogs remaining at the end of the game, and thank all the children for listening and participating.

SNOWFLAKE SNACK (10 MIN.)

Check with parents concerning food allergies. This snack contains a nut product. Other snack ideas can be found at www.AnnieArmstrong.com/study.

Cover the work surface with clean paper or a disposable tablecloth. Give each child hand sanitizer, or wash hands before preparing and eating the snack. Explain to children that they will be making "giant snowflakes" to eat.

Have children help you measure the following into a bowl: 1 cup chocolate chips, ½ cup (1 stick) butter, ½ cup peanut butter. Heat this mixture in a microwave for 30 seconds. Stir. Repeat until the mixture is melted and smooth. (Do not overheat the mixture or forget to stir, as burnt spots can result.) Have the children help you measure 8 cups of criss-cross cereal into the chocolate mixture. Let children take turns stirring until the cereal is coated evenly.

Have each child hold open his or her zip-top bag. Place a spoonful (about 2/3 cup) of the cereal mix in each bag. Help each child measure 1/8 cup powdered sugar and pour it into the bag with the cereal mix. (You may want to put the powdered sugar in a big bowl to make scooping the sugar easier.) Help each child zip the bag tightly closed. Have the children shake the bag gently so the sugar coats the cereal pieces, turning them white.

Allow children to enjoy their giant snowflakes with cups of ice water. (If you have more than 12 children, make 2 batches of the cereal mix.)

BIBLE VERSE BLIZZARD (5-10 MIN.)

Open your eyes and look at the fields, for they are ready for harvest. John 4:35 (HCSB)

Write the words to John 4:35 on index cards, one word per card and the verse reference on one card. Place the cards in the bottom of a box filled with foam packing peanuts (if these are not available, you could use half-size index cards in a large bowl of rice, popcorn, or something that resembles snow). Have each child take a turn trying to "search in the blizzard" for a word card. After all the word cards (15) have been pulled out of the blizzard, have students work together to arrange them in order. Say the verse several times, removing one word card at a time. (If you have a large group and not everyone gets a turn searching, play again after

2009 NORTH AMERICAN MISSION STUDY FOR CHILDREN

assembling the verse and reviewing it the first time.) Explain the meaning of the verse to the children, helping them to understand that the harvest cannot be ready until there is a planting or sowing of seeds. Brenda Crim is sowing seeds in Alaska.

“BLUSTERY BALM” MISSION PROJECT (10-15 MIN.)

Tell the children that one of the ways Brenda is reaching Alaskan Natives is to provide “Bibles in a Bucket.” Buckets are used for harvesting seals, fishing, and other daily work in rural villages. The buckets are used heavily, but new buckets are hard to find. So Brenda had an idea. She takes new buckets stuffed with Bibles and other goodies when she visits Natives. The buckets have been a good way for her to show that she cares about the people’s needs. They have helped her build friendships.

Brenda wondered what kind of supplies mushers (dog racers) might need in a bucket or bin as they cross the finish line of the Iditarod, cold and exhausted. So she asked them. “Lip balm!” was the answer. The air is dry, and the wind whips, so mushers’ hands and faces are sometimes cracked and sore.

Before the session, purchase tubes of stick-type lip balm and/or small tubes of extra-emollient hand cream. Have sandwich baggies and index cards, one for each tube. Have crayons or markers available. Write, “We’re cheering for you as you run the race of life!” and your church name on one side of each index card. Let the children sign the back of the card and draw smiley faces or stars. Place one index card and one tube of lip balm and/or hand cream in each baggie.

Have the children help you package the baggies, writing Brenda’s name and address on the envelope. She will distribute them to mushers. Pray that God will use the balm packets to help her build friendships.

Visit www.AnnieArmstrong.com/study for additional mission project, game, or craft ideas to add or substitute here.

SNOWY PRAYER TIME (5-10 MIN.)

Ask the children to form a circle. Place the box of packing peanuts in the center of the circle. Instruct each child to take from 1-5 peanuts and hold them as they sit quietly. Ask the children the following questions and write their answers on a board or flip chart: What do you think are some things we could pray for the Native people of Alaska? For people who watch the Iditarod? For mushers who race in the Iditarod? For university students? For Brenda Crim?

Tell children that in the spring we recognize the special time Southern Baptists have set aside to pray for missionaries who work in the United States and Canada. Show them the Missionary Prayer Cards, and explain that all of these missionaries work hard in their areas to find ways to become friends with people and tell them about Jesus. Encourage the children to pray for missionaries every week, but to especially pray for the ones on the cards this week. Explain that these missionaries could not do their work without people giving to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering®. All God’s people giving money together makes a harvest happen! Encourage children to give a gift to the offering. (Add “NAMB missionaries” and “Annie Armstrong Easter Offering” to your list of prayer requests.)

Have children count the peanuts they are holding. Ask them to pray for that number of things during the prayer time. They can refer to the list you made. Lead the prayer time.

As children prepare to leave, give them a Missionary Prayer Card (or set of cards), their snack and craft (if applicable), an Annie Armstrong Easter Offering® envelope, and a copy of “Flurry of Friends.”

Distribute Missionary Prayer Cards. Encourage participants to pray consistently for these missionaries during the Week of Prayer for North American Missions.

Distribute offering envelopes for the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering®. Encourage sacrificial giving, emphasizing that 100 percent of the offering goes to help missionaries like those we were introduced to on the videos.

Close in prayer, thanking God for faithful missionaries like Brenda Crim. Ask for God’s blessings on their ministries. Pray that the Lord of the harvest will inspire Southern Baptists everywhere to join together in sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with those who do not know Him.