

Love with Action

By Carol Bohrer
CSBC Children's Special Worker

Dear Leader,

Children are without a doubt the greatest asset California Southern Baptist churches have. It is imperative that we stop thinking of them as our "future" and begin to see them as our "present." It is our biblical mandate to "bring them up in the way they should go. . ." and urgently teach them how to pray for, give to, and participate in missions. Since I believe *it is easier to teach a lifestyle (to a child) than change one (as an adult)*, major emphasis should be on teaching children how to naturally live the Great Commission. Having said that, this Children's California Mission Offering Learning Session should:

- be taught by the best workers a church has to offer;
- be thoroughly taught and not glossed over;
- be seriously taught as a life-lesson for children;
- not be a babysitting time while the adults meet.

Teachers need to remember that some children may already be saved, but some may not. You should be familiar with the plan of salvation for use with children. Pray and ask God to give you an opportunity to share with any child not already saved, and then expect God to answer that prayer! What a great bonus to teaching the children's CMO – leading a child to the Lord!

As a matter of policy there should always be at least two adults present when working with children (a teenage helper is acceptable, and helps them not only learn to work with kids, but also learn the CMO material).

Another suggestion for having a successful CMO study is a simple rule: if you have fun planning it, the children will have fun doing it. It is far easier to maintain a child's interest and cooperation when they are having fun and doing something they perceive to be exciting.

Finally, be aware of any special needs of your children. These could be allergic reactions to food, learning or behavioral needs, physical limitations or any of a number of other opportunities for you to make a difference. An awareness of these before starting can help you prepare adequately and be ready for a great experience with children.

Know that I am praying for you as you teach children about California missions. I am praying that this study not only enlightens, but enlivens the young lives that are touched by it – and by YOU! Enjoy making a difference . . . enjoy raising the bar . . . and enjoy serving God!

Teaching Format

All the material you will teach this year is found in the 2009 CMO videos on the CMO Website (www.calmissions.com). The videos can be viewed online and are available to be downloaded.

Printed scripts allow you the ability to review, make assignments to others or develop your own teaching plans. Older children may enjoy writing and performing a play while younger children will enjoy making puppets to represent each missionary. A printout of the video scripts will make it easier for them to write the play.

Depending on how much time you have, choose which videos and activities you will use.

Decorations

In keeping with this year's theme, use hearts, hands and feet to emphasize the study. A heart-shaped logo with hands and feet (CMO Dude) has been included to help illustrate I John 3:18. Remind children that love is not just lip service, but true love makes a difference by meeting the needs of others. Cut out pictures of people helping others and glue them on hearts cut from construction paper or poster-board. The hearts don't have to be red or pink, use different color heart shapes to represent that love doesn't always look like what we expect.

Put small hearts on a large California map to represent where the missionaries in our study are from. Use this during the study to help children understand that we live in a *BIG* state, and yet we all have a part in working together through the same offering.

Make a poster of the "allocations" of this year's CMO by cutting out a large heart shape from poster-board. Divide the poster into pieces according to the percentages (approximately) each item receives.

If you really want to make a big impression, bring in things that represent the various missionaries and their ministries (snow skis – Debbie Wohler in Tahoe; toy tractors – Don

Hargis and disaster relief; an alphabet chart – Monta Jo Erikson with literacy; a small bag of groceries – Ken Dean and community ministries; etc.).

Bible Study

I John 3:18

Children are very aware that what we say is not always what we mean, and that what we mean is not always what we say. They have heard us say over and over “do as I say, not as I do.” This verse warns us that there is more to love than simply saying “I love you!” Jesus teaches us in Luke 10:25-37 that just talking about love doesn’t help stop the hurt. Here we see two men – one a preacher and the other a lawyer – who talk a lot about love and what’s “right,” but when push comes to shove neither is willing to make the effort to practice what they preach. They both choose to ignore someone who truly has a need.

Our actions are a result of what is in our heart. If we say we love others but cross to the other side of the street when someone needs our help, we not only lack love but we lie. I John 4:7-8 tells us plainly that if we don’t love each other we don’t know God, because God is love!

The California Mission Offering is really a test of our love – not just for others, but for God Himself. If we are going to serve God, we must serve the very ones He loves.

Remind children of the story of the Good Samaritan found in Luke 10:25-37. Tell them how disappointed Jesus must have been in the two men who called themselves “men of God.” He emphasized the importance of doing what you can, when you can, as much as you can. This story even recognizes that we don’t have to have the same accent, or skin color, or background as the people who need help. (Jesus was talking about California!)

We only have to have what is needed.

Activities

Choose the activities you like and have the time and resources to present.

“Love With Action” Books: Have children cut heart shapes from colored construction paper (two each). Using the same pattern cut several more shapes from white paper and put them together with the white pages in the middle. Punch a hole in the top on each side and connect them with rings or colored yarn.

Discuss how love is shown by the things we do for others, and lead children to think about people or groups in your area who need to “see” love in action. Help them make a list of ways they can show that love, and encourage them to transfer several of those ideas to the white pages of their “action books.” Talk about how and when they will accomplish the actions (ie., as a group, as families, individually, etc.). Be aware of safety issues. Encourage children to “do and not just say” the things they put into their books.

CMO Foam Banks: Using “fun foam” (and patterns) have the children cut out good-sized hearts, feet or hands, two per bank. Glue around the edges of the fun foam and stick the two pieces together, leaving a two-inch opening in the top of each “bank” to allow money to be inserted. Decorate using I John 3:18 or the theme, “Love With Action.” While the children work discuss with them the importance of everyone doing what they can to help reach this year’s offering goal. Tell them that if every Southern

Baptist in California gave \$1 we would reach our goal. Encourage them to think of ways they can earn money to fill their bank.

If your church allows, have the children make multiple banks (being careful to do their best). Sell these to church members to use during the CMO emphasis. Set a date for collection and encourage everyone to return their bulging banks. Use the money from the sale of the banks to kick off your church’s CMO goal.

Prayer Reminders: Have each child cut out a sturdy heart shape (poster-board, construction paper, fun foam, etc.). Use pipe-cleaners to create legs and arms. Add a face using markers, glitter, beads, wiggle eyes, yarn (whatever you have). Let each one trace a California shape onto a cardboard base or CD, and then glue the CMO Dude on, as if walking across California. The CMO Dude should stand. Remind children that a very important part of missions in California is prayer, and that each time they see CMO Dude they should be reminded to pray.

CMO Notes: Provide fun writing materials such as colorful paper, markers, colored pencils, ink stamps, stickers, etc. Talk with the children about the important things California missionaries do. Lead them to understand that while it’s important work, sometimes it is difficult and frustrating. Encourage children to choose one of the people in the study and write a “thank you” note, letting them know that they are praying for them and appreciate their service to Jesus and California Southern Baptists. Have them decorate the notes carefully, and then make sure to mail them appropriately. Addresses for the featured missionaries are:

Randy Bennett
25 Garnsey Avenue
Bakersfield, CA 93309

Don Hargis
678 E. Shaw Avenue
Fresno, CA 93710-7704

Andrew Chan
3064 Fish Canyon Road
Duarte, CA 91010-1503

Song Sik Kim
1324 Carleton Way
Fullerton, CA 92833-2011

Ken Dean
934 Stanislaus Drive
Corona, CA 92881

Randy McWhorter
678 E. Shaw Avenue
Fresno, CA 93710-7704

Monta Jo Erikson
10311 Par Lane
Garden Grove, CA 92840

Debbie Wohler
PO Box 7452
Tahoe City, CA 96145-7452

Sal Fernandez
7865 Kelvedon Way
Sacramento, CA 95829

CMO Dude Pins: have each child cut a heart shape out of fun foam about the size of a golf ball. Using pipe cleaners, small beads, etc., have each child create arms, legs and a face on the heart shape. Apply a craft pin to the back with glue and allow to dry. Encourage the children to wear their “Dude” to remind them to pray and look for ways to collect money for CMO. Talk about opportunities that may arise to share Jesus with others when asked about the pin. (If your church allows, make extra pins and sell them to church members to earn money for CMO.)

Review Game

Create a game-board by cutting a large heart shape from poster-board. Using handprints or footprints, trace a path on the board from the bottom to the top, or side to side. Decorate the board with pictures of people helping people. Use the review questions or ones you make yourself. Use different colored (flavored) wrapped candies, buttons, stickers, etc., as game pieces.

Play the game by simply asking a question at each child's turn and allowing them to move forward one space if they answer correctly. If incorrect, allow the next child to try to answer and move forward if they are right. If incorrect twice, give the correct answer and put the question back into the pile to be asked again. The first player to complete the path wins.

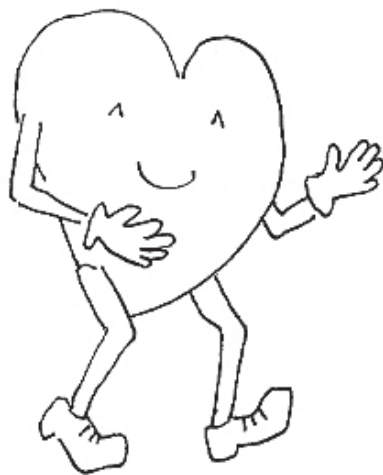
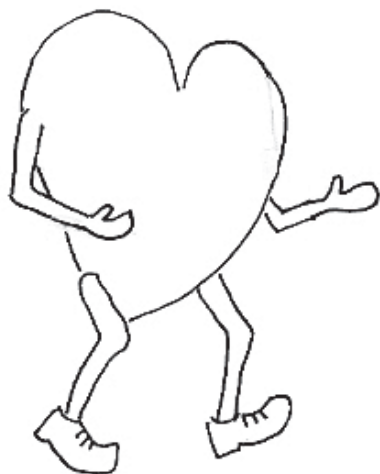
Or: Use cutout shapes of handprints or footprints on the game-board. Simply lay them around on the board and allow the children to collect one each time they answer correctly. The one with the most at the end of the game wins.

Or: Cut a rectangle and write the theme "Love With Action" on it. Use different colored small hearts for game pieces and, starting at the letter "L," move across one letter each time a correct answer is given. The winner is the first person to finish all the letters in the theme.

GAME (REVIEW) QUESTIONS

1. What is the theme for the 2009 California Mission Offering? (Love With Action)
2. What does I John 3:18 (NIV) say? ("Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.")
3. Fermín Whittaker is the executive director of what organization? (California Southern Baptist Convention)
4. How many people live in California? (38 million)
5. How many people in California are estimated not to go to church? (at least 33 million – 87% of the population!)
6. I John 3:18 calls us to show what? (Love With Action)
7. What three things can Baptists do to show they love their neighbors? (Pray, give money and be on mission)
8. Where does missionary Debbie Wohler work? (Lake Tahoe)
9. What is Debbie Wohler's goal for the people of Lake Tahoe? ("love them into the Kingdom")
10. How many people visit Lake Tahoe each year? (12 million)
11. What does Sal Fernandez do? (help start churches among Hispanics)
12. Where does Sal Fernandez work? (the Sacramento area)
13. What is Sal Fernandez' job? (church starting strategist)
14. How many languages are spoken in California? (more than 200)
15. How many Koreans live in California? (1 million)
16. Where is the largest Korean community outside of Korea? (Los Angeles)
17. Who is Song Sik Kim? (CSBC Korean church starting missionary)
18. How many Korean Southern Baptist churches are in California? (200)
19. How many Californians speak a language other than English at home? (42% – 14 million people)
20. What does Monta Jo Erikson do for California Southern Baptists? (helps churches teach people of all ages to read, write and speak English)
21. As people learn English what else does Monta Jo Erikson help them learn about? (Jesus)
22. Name a ministry evangelism missionary in the Los Angeles area. (Ken Dean)
23. What does Ken Dean help churches do? (show the love of Jesus to people in their communities)
24. Name two areas in which Ken Dean teaches churches to minister. (gangs, literacy, inner-city ministries, hunger)
25. Of the 13 million people who live in Los Angeles how many don't have enough food for their families? (at least half a million)
26. Name one way California Southern Baptists can help people know Jesus. (pray, give money or participate in mission activities)
27. Who does Andrew Chan work with? (Chinese)
28. How many Chinese Southern Baptist churches are in California? (more than 70)
29. Of the almost 38 million residents of California, how many are of Chinese descent? (1 million)
30. Who is the director of missions for Kern County Baptist Association? (Randy Bennett)
31. With how many churches does Randy Bennett work? (almost 60)

32. What does Kern County do with California Mission Offering gifts? (evangelism projects such as children's camp and migrant ministries)
33. What percentage of the California Mission Offering goes back to each association? (14%)
34. What helps Kern County Southern Baptists reach people for Jesus? (California Southern Baptists' prayers and gifts to CMO)
35. Who is Randy McWhorter? (leader of the CSBC Healthy Church Group)
36. What does GPS stand for in Southern Baptist churches? (God's Plan for Sharing)
36. In 2010, how will GPS be used? (to mobilize churches for sharing the gospel in their communities)
37. How does the Healthy Church Group help California Southern Baptists? (with evangelism projects to tell people about Jesus)
38. Don Hargis coordinates what CSBC ministry? (Disaster Relief)
39. Since 1983 how many incidents has the CSBC Disaster Relief ministry responded to? (80)
40. Where do Disaster Relief volunteers go to help? (wherever they are needed: in California, throughout the United States and around the world)
41. Name at least two types of disasters CSBC volunteers respond to. (hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, fires, mudslides, tsunamis)
42. Name at least two services CSBC volunteers are able to provide. (feeding, cleaning mud out of homes, fire cleanup, debris removal, water purification and construction)
43. What are the three needs volunteers meet for victims of catastrophe? (physical, emotional and spiritual)
44. Who makes it possible for volunteers to introduce disaster victims to Jesus and demonstrate His love? (California Southern Baptists who pray and give to CMO)
45. What does CMO stand for? (California Mission Offering)
46. What does CSBC stand for? (California Southern Baptist Convention)
47. What is the 2009 goal for the California Mission Offering? (\$450,000)
48. Name two things that are supported by CMO. (see the "allocations" page at www.calmissions.com for a list)
49. Since CSBC has about 450,000 members, how much would each need to give to reach the statewide CMO goal? (\$1)
50. Who was S.G. Posey? (early California Southern Baptist missions pioneer; leader of the Convention from 1948-1960; inspired the annual offering)



The California Mission Offering is inspired by S.G. Posey, a CSBC missionary pioneer.