

GREETINGS

Jambo!



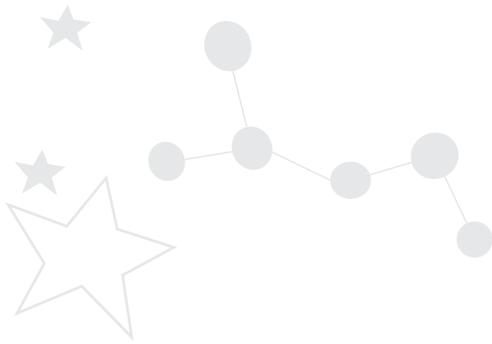
**MISSION
MOMENTS
for
kids 2017**

Serve Globally is pleased to present the Mission Moments for Kids 2017 for use in vacation Bible school, Sunday school, or as children's messages during your worship service. This year we have an opportunity to support the education of Congolese refugee children living in Kenya in a collaborative effort with the Evangelical Covenant Church of Kenya (ECCK). This guide is designed to educate children about Congolese refugees and engage them in the mission of the wider church. Please feel free to choose the portions and activities here that best fit your schedule and venue.

By supporting Mission Moments 2017, you and your congregation join in God's transformative work providing school supplies and educational opportunities for Congolese refugee children. Through these Mission Moments our partnership comes to life, because at its heart children are helping children for the sake of the gospel of Jesus.

Thank you for your participation and your partnership with the Evangelical Covenant Church of Kenya to help open the doors of education to Congolese refugees living in Kenya.





If you carry the egg basket do not dance.

AFRICAN PROVERB

In North America we might say, “Don’t put all your eggs in one basket,” but in Africa the proverb says, “If you carry the egg basket, do not dance.”

In both sayings, the goal is not to break the eggs yet the approach is different. Likewise, people all around the world have similar hopes, goals, and dreams, yet the way we go about achieving those desires is different. We pray that no matter what approach you take while using this material, it will be helpful for you in reaching your goals to impact your children and community for Christ.





HELPING CONGOLESE REFUGEES GO BACK TO SCHOOL

Project Goals



The Evangelical Covenant Church of Kenya started in 1998 through an initiative of Christ Covenant Church in St. Louis, Missouri. Today, the ECCK consists of 30 pastors and 23 churches in both rural and urban areas. Two churches in Kitengela and Kasarani work with refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Kitengela church has 800 members, 75 percent of whom are Congolese. The Kasarani church has 700 members, all of whom are Congolese refugees.

The ECCK started their refugee program in 2009, through which they help provide school supplies for children living in Kenya. The program provides livelihood skills trainings as well as job placements and open market business connections. So far, more than 100 students have completed high school, and more than 70 refugees have found job placements and open market connections. Volunteers also teach English to the new arrivals.

PROJECT GOALS

The fundraising goals of the project include supplies children need to be successful students in their new country. Please consider how your children's program can best help meet some of these goals:

- \$1** . . . One notebook and pencil for a child
- \$5** . . . One textbook for a child
- \$18** . . . One pair of shoes for a child
- \$25** . . . One backpack and school uniform for a primary school child
- \$100** . . . Mattress and bedding for a high school student at boarding school
- \$375** . . . Tuition, boarding, and supplies for one high school student for one year
- \$500** . . . Tuition for two high school students for one year

SEND YOUR GIFTS TO:

Attn: VBS 2017
Evangelical Covenant Church
8303 W Higgins Rd
Chicago, IL 60631



HELPING CONGOLESE REFUGEES GO BACK TO SCHOOL

Day #1



MEET AGAPE

My name is Agape Mukobwa, I am twelve years old and in sixth grade. There are seven people in my family. At school I love math because it's the easiest subject for me. In Congo we spoke and studied in French, so studying in English is harder for me. When I am not in class, I like playing football (soccer) with my classmates and at home with my neighbors. I love potatoes—especially mashed rather than boiled.

Hear God's Story for Us:

This week we will be learning about God through some traditional African proverbs. Today's proverb says, "We desire to bequeath two things to our children; the first one is roots, the other is wings." To "bequeath" means to leave something for someone. Ask children, "What is one thing you think your parents would want to bequeath to you?" You can hold up a family heirloom or some other physical item that might be handed down in families.

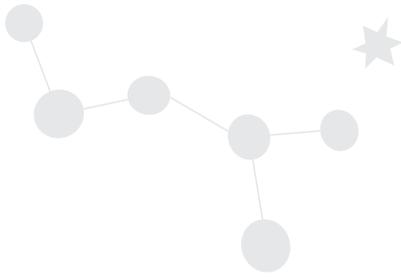
In today's African proverb the speaker says they want to bequeath roots and wings. Ask children, "Do you think they mean real roots and wings?" Explain that roots mean that no matter where their children go, they will always know where they come from, and they will always know they have a home. Like a plant, they need to stay connected to their roots in order to keep growing.

With wings, they can fly to new places and learn new things. As they explore and grow, their roots always give them a place to go back to.

Today in the African country of Kenya live many families who have traveled far from their homes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. They had to leave their homes behind because of war in their country.

AFRICAN PROVERB

**We desire to bequeath two things to our children;
the first one is roots, the other is wings.**



Like the African proverb, they were able to fly far away to a safe place, but they will always have their roots back in Congo. Parents of children like Agape teach them about their home in Congo, even though they now live far away in a new country.

Jesus uses a similar metaphor about plants.

In John 15:5, Jesus says, “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”

If our branch is cut off from the vine of Christ, we will leave our roots behind and forget where we came from. God wants us to grow and explore the world and to tell others about him, but we must never forget our roots.



Offering

During our Mission Moment this week we will learn more about Congolese refugee children living in Kenya. Let's set a goal to raise \$_____ to support educational opportunities for our Congolese brothers and sisters as a sign of God's love for them.

Pray

Lord God, you have given us roots so we can grow and wings so we can share your love with others. Thank you for the partnership we share with the church in Kenya that is helping Congolese families who are far from home. Teach us how to better love one another, especially the people who are vulnerable in our own community.

Activity

Set up two “homes” on opposite sides of the room. Designate one as Congo and the other as Kenya. Have the children make paper airplanes with a long piece of yarn tied to the back of each plane to represent their roots back home. Ask children to stand in Kenya and try to land their planes in Congo while holding onto the end of their thread.

Snack

AVOCADO SANDWICHES—Thinly slice a ripe avocado and place between slices of bread for a tasty treat!



HELPING CONGOLESE REFUGEES GO BACK TO SCHOOL

Day #2



MEET LYDIA

My name is Lydia Luitonze but my friends call me Lydia. My Kenyan friends say my other name is too difficult to say. I am six years old, the fourth born in my family of five children. I joined class 2 this year and I love school especially mathematics lesson, because my teacher is so nice. My mom dresses my sister and me in pink and I love the color so much. When I am at home I play hide-and-seek with my younger sister. When I am in school I like watching the big girls play soccer, which I hope to play when I get older. My favorite food is rice. I can eat it for breakfast, lunch, and supper.

Hear God's Story for Us:

Bring some rocks to show the children—some that are rough, big, and heavy, and a couple that are soft, smooth, and flat. Ask which ones they think are the best and why. Everyone can have their own opinions.

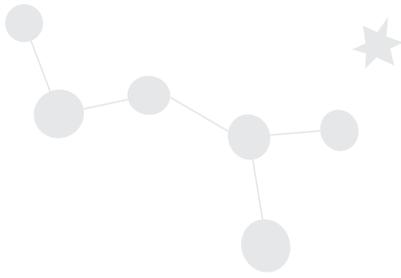
Then explain that if you are skipping stones, the flat, smooth ones are best because they are light enough to skip across the water. It also works best if you are throwing the stone into a calm body of water like a lake. When you skip stones, each time they hit the water, you can see the ripples and waves the stones create. Skipping stones into the ocean is difficult because the waves are rough.

Today's African proverb is "Do a good deed and throw it into the sea."

This sounds like a story in Matthew 6, where Jesus says, "Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you."

AFRICAN PROVERB

Do a good deed and throw it into the sea.



Jesus is telling us that we don't need to show off our good deeds. God knows what we have done. As the African proverb shows us, when we throw our stones into the sea, our good deeds can remain hidden for only God to see.

Jesus reminds us that God knows everything we do, including things we do in secret. Can you think of a good deed you can do in secret today?

Offering

This week we are raising money for refugee children in Kenya. Giving your money to help these children is one way to do a good deed, but it is also important to give more than our money. What is another good deed you can offer someone else today?

Pray

O God, we thank you for creating us to be people who care about others. Help us to love others with your love and to do good deeds and then throw them into the sea. We give all the glory to you. Amen.

Activity

Lydia loves playing hide-and-seek with her little sister. Try this version of the game: Cut out brown or gray rock shapes from construction paper and help each child write their name on a shape. Choose one child to be seeker. Ask all the other children to "throw their rocks into the sea" by trying to hide their rock somewhere in the room while the seeker is not looking. Once all the rocks are hidden, the seeker will try to find all the rocks. Whoever has the last rock to be found gets to be the new seeker.

Snack

MARSHMALLOW BROWNIE BITES—Need brownie mix and marshmallow fluff.

Prepare brownie mix as directed on the box. In cupcake tins, spoon one layer of brownie mix. Add a small glob of marshmallow fluff to the center of each cupcake (be careful not to touch the side of the tin). Cover the fluff with another layer of brownie mix. Bake as directed. Let cool and serve this sweet treat with a hidden marshmallow surprise in the center.



HELPING CONGOLESE REFUGEES GO BACK TO SCHOOL

Day #3



MEET LOUISE

My name is Louise Ishimwe. I am a boy but sometimes children call me Loise, which means girl. I am the fifth born of seven kids in my family. I'm eight years old, and I am in class 3. My favorite subject is Swahili, which I learned in Kenya. It's the language my friends speak at school and in our neighborhood. My friends and I play soccer in the park and I like doing that much more than school. I love the color red but my mom sometimes likes to dress me in yellow. I love it when she buys me chips (French fries).

Hear God's Story for Us:

Bring in two pots—one that is beat-up and dirty and another one that is shiny and new. Tell the children you would like to make them a delicious treat. Ask them which pot they think you should use and why.

Place the two pots down for everyone to see and wait a minute in silence and then say, "Okay, I think the food should be ready now! Who wants to eat?" If anyone says yes, ask them to serve the food.

Today's African proverb says that "even the best cooking pot will not produce food." It does not matter which pot we cook with—a pot on its own will not give us food.

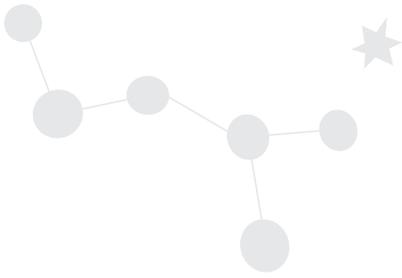
This sounds like a story about Elijah in 1 Kings 17:7-16. (Read the story out loud.)

Some time later the brook dried up because there had been no rain in the land. Then the word of the LORD came to him: "Go at once to Zarephath in the region of Sidon and stay there. I have directed a widow there to supply you with food." So he went to Zarephath. When he came to the town gate, a widow was there gathering sticks. He called to her and asked, "Would you bring me a little water in a jar so I may have a drink?" "As she was going to get it, he called, "And bring me, please, a piece of bread."

"As surely as the LORD your God lives," she replied, "I don't have any bread—only a handful of flour in a jar and a little olive oil in a jug. I am gathering a few sticks to take home and make a meal for myself and my son, that we may eat it—and die."

AFRICAN PROVERB

Even the best cooking pot will not produce food.



Elijah said to her, “Don’t be afraid. Go home and do as you have said. But first make a small loaf of bread for me from what you have and bring it to me, and then make something for yourself and your son. For this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: ‘The jar of flour will not be used up and the jug of oil will not run dry until the day the LORD sends rain on the land.’”

She went away and did as Elijah had told her. So there was food every day for Elijah and for the woman and her family. For the jar of flour was not used up and the jug of oil did not run dry, in keeping with the word of the LORD spoken by Elijah.

The widow did not have a special pot that would fill itself up with oil and flour. Where did the oil and flour come from? This story reminds us that it is God who provides for our needs, not the cooking pot. Even though the widow did not have enough food to feed herself and her son, she took the little she had and served it to someone else in need first. God used her pot to provide for Elijah and for her family.

Sometimes God calls us to take the little that we have in our pots and serve others in need and then to trust God to take care of our needs.

Offering

On the first day we set a goal to raise \$_____ for Congolese refugee children living in Kenya to help them go to school. So far we have raised \$_____. Even as we give money, let us not worry about how much we have left in our piggy banks but trust God to provide for our needs as well.

Pray

Heavenly Father, we know that you want us to be generous people who put our trust in you. Refugees like Louise and his family had to leave their home and all their possessions, yet they trusted you to take care of their needs. Even though we live in North America and may have really nice cooking pots, we pray that we will never forget that the pots do not provide our food. Instead, it comes from you. Amen.

Activity

FILL UP THE OIL POT

Divide the children into two teams for a relay race. On one side of the room place a bucket with water and two cups. One child from each team takes a turn filling up the cup and racing to an empty pot on the other side of the room. They empty their cup into their team’s pot. The first team to fill their pot with water wins!

Snack

TASTE WHAT THE WIDOW MAY HAVE PREPARED FOR ELIJAH TO EAT

—Cut up a simple flour bread like pita, tortilla, chapati, or naan and let the children dip it into a little bit of olive oil.



HELPING CONGOLESE REFUGEES GO BACK TO SCHOOL

Day #4



MEET JOSHUA

I am nine years old and my name is Joshua Ntwari. I am the fifth child born in my family. I have two brothers and four sisters. I am in class 4 and I like the Swahili language because that's what everyone in my neighborhood speaks. I think I may forget my Congolese language because my parents also talk to my siblings and me in Swahili. I like my church and singing with my friends. I like the color orange but white is good too. My favorite food is ugali (corn meal) served with milk. Sometimes my mom serves it with kale.

Hear God's Story for Us:

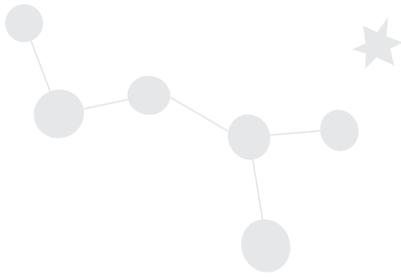
Have you ever been speechless? Perhaps you had to get up in front of your class and give a report and you could not find the words. Or maybe your parents wanted to introduce you to someone new and you didn't know what to say. Maybe your teacher asked you a question like "What is the square root of 144?" and you did not know the answer.

Imagine being Joshua Ntwari who had to leave home and move to a new country where everyone spoke a different language. Can you imagine how speechless he would have been on the first day of school if his teacher had asked him a question like "What is your name?"

Today's African proverb says, "Birds sing not because they have answers but because they have songs." Each of us may have experiences in life where we are unable to answer questions that arise. But even when we are speechless we can still sing like the birds.

AFRICAN PROVERB

**Birds sing not because they have answers
but because they have songs.**



In Habakkuk 3, we read:

Though the fig tree does not blossom, and no fruit is on the vines; though the produce of the olive fails, and the fields yield no food; though the flock is cut off from the fold, and there is no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will exult in the God of my salvation.

Like Joshua, you may encounter questions you are unable to answer—like why war came to his country and he had to move away. You may not be able to understand why someone you love got sick, or why other difficult things are happening to you. But no matter what happens in life you can still choose to be like the birds. You can still choose to sing songs of praise to God because even when life is hard God is good.

Offering

When we give our money so that other children have a chance to grow up and get an education, we aren't just doing something nice. Our gifts can be a song that we sing as a praise to God. Our songs

and gifts acknowledge that the lives of refugees are important. They are important to us because they are important to God

Pray

Dear God, we know that you love all your people. But not all people have the same chance to have a good life. Help us to find songs to praise you when we have no words for the hard things life brings our way. Amen.

Activity

SINGING BIRD ORIGAMI

Make copies of the origami activity sheet. Also available online at covchurch.org/mission/projects/vbs-project. Invite children to color the bird's face and help them fold it using the directions provided. Ask the children to use their new origami birds to sing a song of praise to God.

Snack

MIXED FRUIT—Congo and Kenya have lots of fruit. Some of the most popular kinds include bananas, mangoes, pineapples, papayas, and passion fruit. Cut some fruit into chunks and mix it together for a nice fruit salad.



HELPING CONGOLESE REFUGEES GO BACK TO SCHOOL

Day #5



MEET JANET

My name is Janet Nyagichiro and I am the second born in a family of five kids, three boys and two girls. I am twelve years old and in class 7. I love football (soccer) which I can only play at school. In the neighborhood, boys don't like playing with girls and there are not enough of us girls to make our own team. I miss the sport especially when schools are closed. My favorite color is blue because I like peace which we did not have in Congo. I like chips (French fries) anytime of the day. When my mom sends me to the shops to buy groceries, I buy chips with some money.

Hear God's Story for Us:

Can you name something your parents have taught you? Perhaps it was your first word, how to ride a bike, or how to make your own bowl of cereal on Saturday mornings so they could sleep in. Our parents teach us lots of things, but we also learn a lot from other grownups. At school your teachers teach you to read and do math. At church we hope that the many grownups here are helping to teach you about God and how much he loves us all.

Believe it or not, all of us grownups used to be kids once too, and we did not know the things we know now. We had to learn it just like you, from other grownups.

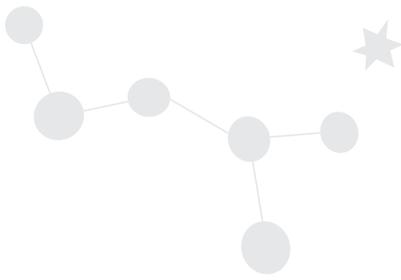
Today's African proverb is "The young bird does not crow until it hears the old ones." This sounds like one of Jesus's early followers named Paul.

In 1 Corinthians 11:1 Paul said to other followers of Jesus, "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ."

Grownups teach us how to do things. We learn by watching and imitating the actions of adults such as our parents.

AFRICAN PROVERB

The young bird does not crow until it hears the old ones.



When we heard Janet's story earlier, we learned that she loves to play soccer but can only play it at school. When she goes home to play in her neighborhood, the boys won't let the girls play with them. What would be a good thing for those boys to do?

Paul reminds us that all of us (both young and old) need to imitate Jesus. Remember as you grow older that you can help teach those who are younger than you. What will you teach them? Can you teach your younger siblings to crawl, to do a load of laundry, to let boys and girls be kind and play games like soccer together, to follow Jesus?

Offering

So far this week we have raised \$_____ for Congolese refugees in Kenya! This means that we have enough for _____. (To celebrate the offering, refer to funding goals at the beginning of this resource. For example, five backpacks! Uniforms for two children! etc.)

Prayer

Lord God, thank you for creating us as your family. Thank you for Jesus, our good shepherd whom we can imitate. We thank you for the opportunity to learn more about our brothers and sisters from Congo who are now living in Kenya. We ask for your blessing on the children as they grow up far from home. Please give their parents strength and encouragement so that the young birds will learn to crow by imitating the old ones. Amen.

Activity

IMITATORS OF CHRIST (SIMON SAYS)

Create a list of activities for the leader to say and act out and for the children to imitate. Add some activities that are bad examples and do not say "Christ says." If a child imitates those actions, they must sit out until the game is over.

HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES:

- "Christ says, love one another." (Hug your neighbor.)
- "Christ says, be fishers of people." (Pretend to throw out your fishing line and reel it in.)
- "Christ says, give water to the thirsty." (Pretend to fill a cup with water and drink it.)
- "Christ says, clothe the naked." (Pretend to put on a t-shirt.)
- "If someone hits you, hit them back." (Slap your own hand.)
- "Eat all the food and don't share it with others." (Pretend to lick your plate clean.)

Snack

CHIPS—Peel and thinly slice potatoes. Fry them until they are cooked through. Lightly sprinkle with salt





The Evangelical Covenant Church

8303 W. Higgins Rd.
Chicago, IL 60631