



The Evangelical Covenant Church



12-PART RESOURCE ENCOURAGING  
CHILDREN TO SERVE GOD & OTHERS

# Loving Our Neighbor as Ourselves

MARK 12:31

Refugees are our neighbors—they may live close to us or on the other side of the world. Right now more than 65 million people are displaced from their homes, and more than half of the 22.5 million refugees are under the age of 18. This year Kids Helping Kids hopes to bring children closer to this global issue and illuminate ways they can make a difference.

**Kids Helping Kids** enables us to partner with children on their spiritual journey to:

- fulfill Christ's commandment to love God and our neighbor,
- foster a larger kingdom view,
- offer an opportunity to serve and obey God,
- provide a shared faith experience to build community,
- learn from the faith stories of other children around the world, and
- reflect and share their own stories of faith and what it means to respond thoughtfully and responsibly to the refugee crisis.

### How can the children in your church help?

This booklet contains the stories of twelve children, each struggling to cope in the aftermath of fleeing their home and becoming a refugee or internally displaced person. It is our hope that these voices—representing millions of children facing the challenge of rebuilding their lives—will help shape the children in your care as they become sensitive to other's needs, inspiring them to respond thoughtfully and generously.

Examples of ways your gift will make a difference:

- immediate relief: food and water
- medical care
- peacebuilding training
- long-term investment in sustainable livelihood (e.g. agriculture, tailoring)

Before taking an offering with the children each week, please read one of the stories, explore where it takes place in the world, engage in the cooperative game, reflect on how Christ responded to those in need, and pray for those who have had to flee because of war or conflict. In this way, your children will connect with the bigger picture of God's kingdom and provide a tangible reflection of Christ's light in the world.

**Gifts should be made out to** Kids Helping Kids: Refugees Around the World

**Mail to:** The Evangelical Covenant Church,  
attn: Covenant World Relief, 8303 W. Higgins Road,  
Chicago, IL 60631

Thank you for joining us this year in providing children hope for a brighter future.

The *Kids Helping Kids: Refugees Around the World* curriculum is copyright 2018, The Evangelical Covenant Church. Permission granted to reproduce for local church use only. Names have been changed for privacy. All Scriptures are NIV.

**To order the Kids Helping Kids resources** in this packet go to: [CovChurch.org/kidshelpingkids](http://CovChurch.org/kidshelpingkids)

**Questions:** Email [CWR@covchurch.org](mailto:CWR@covchurch.org) or [steve.burger@covchurch.org](mailto:steve.burger@covchurch.org)

*Thanks to Cindy Wu for her work on the content.*



## Creative Ideas for Helping Others

Children involved in Kids Helping Kids have thought of some creative ways of raising money and praying for children around the world. Here are some ideas to share with the children in your ministry.

### Neighborhood Fair

Children set up a neighborhood fair with a variety of games, shows, and food.

### Odd Jobs

Children work in teams to clean up yards, garages, and basements.

### Reading Marathon

Children find people to sponsor them for each book they read.

### Recycling

Children and families gather recyclables and turn them in for money.

### Lemonade and Brownie Stand

Children sell lemonade and brownies made with fair-trade chocolate.

### Bible Reading

Children find people to sponsor them for each chapter or book of the Bible they read.

### Challenge

Children challenge an adult class or small group(s) to match their offering.

### Prayer Ideas

- Spend some time during each ministry gathering to pray for the children who have had to leave their home.
- Encourage a child to pray for children whose stories they read during the worship service.
- Make prayer journals for children and families to use at home.
- Make a bracelet as a reminder to pray daily.

We hope these ideas will inspire the creativity of the children in your church. We would love to hear about how the children in your church use these or other ideas. Please send your stories to [steve.burger@covchurch.org](mailto:steve.burger@covchurch.org).

Thank you for partnering with us in ministering to children all over the world and especially for your ministry to the children in your church.

## Patrick's Story

### SOUTH SUDAN

I am a ten-year-old boy from the Nuer tribe of South Sudan. The civil war in South Sudan started five years ago. Since then millions of people have been forced from their homes and tens of thousands of people have been killed. I lost both of my parents in the war. I now live in the Bor Refugee Camp. Bor Camp in Jonglei State, South Sudan, is a camp for Internally Displaced Persons (IDP)—people who have been forced out of their homes but are still living within the borders of their home country. Sometimes refugees have to escape to another country, but IDPs like me still live within our country's borders—we just can't go home.

When I first got to the camp I had a hard time adjusting. My new home is a simple tent among many tents, and I'm not allowed to leave the camp because it would be too dangerous. I live with an elderly relative whom I barely know. She takes good care of me, but I miss my parents very much and often wonder how my life would be different if they had not been killed back in our village.

One of the best things about my life in the camp is school. I am a Grade 2 student at Covenant Basic School. I know some children do not like to go to school, but I love it! Thanks to the CovKids program



of the Evangelical Covenant Church of South Sudan and Ethiopia, I have books, pens, shoes, and school supplies provided free of charge for me to get a good education. I am grateful to have the opportunity to get an education, not only for me, but for all the orphans in the camp. Life without parents is tough for young children, so for us, getting an education is very important. Education will open our eyes to the world and enable us to one day support siblings and relatives who are now caring for us. I keep praying for the day when the war will end, and we can finally return home.

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*The LORD watches over the foreigner and sustains the fatherless and the widow, but he frustrates the ways of the wicked. — PSALM 146:9*

**Read Daniel 1**

Daniel was a young boy when he was taken to Babylon as a captive. He had good friends with him, though, and they helped each other have faith during stressful times.

**Reflection**

Look at a globe and find South Sudan, where Patrick is from. Now find Israel, where Daniel was from, and Iraq, where Daniel was taken and where Babylon used to be. When was the last time you felt alone? Share about a moment in your life when having friends with you helped you get through a difficult situation. Pray for young refugee boys like Patrick to have access to education and to grow in wisdom and gain favor with their teachers and authorities the way Daniel did.

**Cooperative Game: Cooperative Companions**

**OBJECT:** Work together as a team to find school supplies and bring them to a central location.

**SETUP:** Place enough separate school supplies around the room so that there are four items for each child. This can include pencils, crayons, paper, glue sticks, or construction paper.

**PLAY:** Divide the children into pairs. One child in each pair is either blindfolded or shuts their eyes. The other child leads them to the four separate items by voice (they cannot touch them except to keep them from getting hurt). The blindfolded child brings each item one at a time back to the “school” (a designated table or place in the room). Once the first child on a team has finished bringing all their supplies to the school the roles are reversed.

**DEBRIEF:** What was it like to need the help of someone else? How were each of you needed to complete the task? Why do you think it’s important to Jesus that we care for each other and help each other?

**Prayer Focus**

Let’s pray for Patrick and other children who have lost their parents. Pray for God to be close to them and that they will know they are loved. Let’s pray for Patrick and all kids around the world who are blessed to go to school. Pray for their teachers. Pray that the children would learn and grow every day.

**Materials:** globe, pencils, crayons, paper, glue sticks, and construction paper

## Lily's Story

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC / DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Have you ever had a hard time sleeping? Perhaps you were troubled by nightmares or noises. In my case it was little bugs called lice and fleas that prevented me from sleeping at night. We could never get rid of the bugs because they are pesky and hide everywhere—in your hair, in your clothes, in your mattress. I felt itchy all the time.

The problem with the bugs began when we moved into Inke Refugee Camp in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where I live with my parents and two siblings. We had been forced to flee our home country, Central African Republic, due to civil war. There are thousands of people from my country in Inke. Even though we are all refugees struggling to survive, sometimes the different tribes in the camp disagree with each other, making our difficult lives even more stressful. Many of us are frustrated that we don't have proper clothing or enough food to eat. We start arguing, even though we should be helping one another.

My father, who has a disability, has had a hard time finding work, so it was a huge blessing when my mother got involved in Covenant World Relief's soap project. She and many others in the camp learned how to make and sell their own soap. Some of the people who buy soap from her cut the bars of soap into smaller pieces and resell it in markets outside



the refugee camp. My mother has also trained other women to make soap. With this soap she can earn money and feel proud of her work. She also washes our home and clothes, and as a result we were able to get rid of the bugs! Not only are we sleeping better, but now we have enough money to buy the things we need. My mother feels happy that she has learned a useful skill and is able to provide for our family.

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*When you lie down, you will not be afraid;  
when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet.*

— PROVERBS 3:24

**Read Exodus 16:1-4**

The Israelites were also a refugee people. They had fled Egypt because they were enslaved, but now they began to feel they were worse off and started to complain. God heard their cries and provided bread for them to eat.

**Reflection**

Find the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Central African Republic on a globe. When is the last time God did something amazing in your life or in the life of someone you know? Sometimes God uses us to offer something that could be a miracle in someone else's life. Covenant World Relief's soap project is an example of that. What could you do that could make a difference in someone else's life?

**Cooperative Craft: Making Soap**

Divide children into groups of three or four and give each group a bowl. Have children take turns adding ingredients.

1. Pour the soap flakes into the bowl.
2. Slowly pour in the water until the mixture is like play dough.
3. Add a few drops of food coloring.
4. Add a few drops of essential oils (optional).
5. Have each child coat their hands with a small amount of vegetable oil.
6. Encourage each child to mold some of the mixture by hand into shapes.
7. Place on top of a plastic bag and allow to harden overnight. (Or send the soap home in plastic bags with each child and explain that they need to take it out of the bag to let it harden.)

**Prayer Focus**

Let's pray for Lily and her family. Pray for the thousands of refugees in the Inke Refugee Camp. Let's pray that different tribes would be able to work together and help each other. And thank God that Lily's mom has a job making soap. Let us thank God that this soap has helped Lily and her family be healthy.

**Materials:** globe, large bowl(s), measuring cups, 3 cups of soap flakes for each bowl (Ivory Snow), 1 to 1½ cups of water for each bowl, food coloring, vegetable oil, plastic bags, and a few drops of essential oils such as lavender (optional)

## Mousa's Story

SYRIA / UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

My story starts in Aleppo, Syria. Our life was totally normal until a terrible war started in Syria in 2011. Many of our friends and family were killed or had to leave their homes. The Syrian government threatened to put my father in prison if he did not start working for them. That was when we knew we had to leave Aleppo as soon as possible. We left everything behind in the middle of the night and drove to the border of Turkey.

Our journey to safety was very difficult. In Greece, we lost our money and were put in jail twice. In Denmark, people accused us of being the very terrorists we had escaped from in Syria! That really hurt our feelings! At the same time, however, we met kind and supportive Christians, the first Christians we ever met.

We eventually made our way to America... finally! But we still did not have proper immigration paperwork yet, and to our horror, my father and I were put in jail for six months, separated from my mother and sister. As traumatic as that was, it was then that I started learning about Jesus through a group that came to lead a Bible study each week. They reminded me of the good Christians in Denmark.

Eventually my father and I were released, and our family was granted the right to stay in the United States, in Kansas City, Missouri. Once there, our excitement turned to panic when we were given notice



that we were going to be evicted from our new home. My mother cried out to God for the first time. She told God that if he helped our family get out of this mess we would all follow him the rest of our lives.

Moments after that prayer there was a knock at our door. A woman named Tali from Hillcrest Covenant Church said that she had heard about our situation and that her church wanted to find us a new home! It seemed like a sign from God that God loved and cared for us, and my entire family trusted in Jesus. Now we not only have a new home to live in but also a church home and family that cares for us in ways we didn't know were possible.

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*Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit. — EPHESIANS 2:19-22*

**Read Ruth 1**

Though Ruth and Naomi belonged to two different nations, Ruth decided to follow Naomi back to her hometown and even to follow her God. By doing that, Ruth expanded her understanding of the word “family.”

**Reflection**

Look at a globe and find Syria, Greece, Denmark, and Kansas City, Missouri. Is there anyone in your life who is not related to you by blood, but is like a family member to you? Does your family enjoy offering hospitality? If so, what do you do to make someone feel at home? When is the last time you did something nice to welcome a new person? Do you know anyone who used to not believe in Jesus, but does now? What brought that person to faith?

**Cooperative Game: Through the Maze**

**OBJECT:** Pairs of children talk each other through a maze to find their home.

**SETUP:** Create a maze on the floor using paper and tape. Make sure there are many ways through the maze so several pairs can be traversing it at the same time. Designate a large home space at the end. (You could create the maze by scattering many pieces of paper on the floor.)

**PLAY:** Divide the children into pairs. Explain that we are going to help our partner find their way home through a maze. One child gives verbal directions from the home space to their partner who must go through the maze walking backwards until they reach the home space. If the partner steps on a piece of tape, or steps off of the paper, they must start over. The person going through the maze may ask questions. Once they have made it home, reverse roles.

**DEBRIEF:** How did you feel as you went through the maze? How did you feel giving directions? How might we notice someone who is struggling and may need a hand?

**Prayer Focus**

Let’s pray for Mousa and his family. Let’s give thanks for the Christian family in Denmark who helped Mousa’s family. Let’s ask God to help us be welcoming and open to new people and new cultures.

Pray for those who do not yet know Jesus—pray that they will learn about God and accept Jesus into their life.

**Materials:** globe, paper, and tape

## Esther's Story

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO / KENYA

I was the only child of my father before he was killed in the war in Congo. My mother remarried and sent me to live with my uncle. My uncle fled the war and took me to Kenya. It was a long, dangerous journey. First, we went to Burundi, then to Uganda, and finally to Kenya riding in the back of a truck that was transporting charcoal. We didn't have the proper documents to cross the border, so we had to cover ourselves with the charcoal so that no one could see us. We rode all through the night. The black stuff got all over my body and in my eyes, but I didn't care because I really wanted to get to Kenya.

When we got there, we were met by another uncle who had fled earlier and was living in Kitengela, just south of the capital, Nairobi. He was working there as a security guard. This uncle introduced me to the Evangelical Covenant Church of Kenya, where I met many other Congolese refugees. In fact, most of this church is made up of my people, and they welcomed me warmly.

The church has many programs to help refugees gain skills so they can work. They gave me a scholarship to enroll in school, and now I am preparing for an exam to get into university. I wish to study gender rights so



I can fight for women's rights, especially for women who suffer through war and injustice.

I am sixteen years old and will soon graduate from school. I have my uncles, but without siblings or parents I must learn to do many things on my own. I have not heard from my mother since I left Congo. I miss her very much, and it pains me that I cannot reach her. I don't know where she is or how her new family is doing. But I have a dream: in the future, I will fight for women like myself and my mother.

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*A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows,  
is God in his holy dwelling. — PSALM 68:5*



### Read Genesis 21:8-21

Hagar is sad when she runs out of water in the desert because she is afraid her son will die. But God leads Hagar to a well where she finds water.

### Reflection

Find Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, Uganda, and Kenya on the globe. If you were Esther, what do you think would be the most difficult parts of her story to live through? Have you ever been thirsty like Hagar or Esther in the story? How would you feel if you were in a desert? What kind of things do you need to protect yourself in a hot place? Despite Hagar and Ishmael's harsh circumstances, how does God show his love? What do these stories tell you about how women and girls are treated? How are Esther and Hagar the same? How are they different?

### Cooperative Game: Uniquely You, Uniquely Us

**OBJECT:** To celebrate how God makes us each unique to make a complete "us."

**SETUP:** Children sit in a circle with a ball of yarn.

**PLAY:** Explain that each person in the circle will share one thing that makes them unique. After you share, hold onto the end of the string and throw the ball of yarn to someone else in the circle who has not shared. (Eventually everyone will be holding onto part of the string, connecting the whole group.) Explain we are not a complete group without all the unique parts. It's important that we care for every part and appreciate every part.

**DEBRIEF:** How can we reach out to someone who is being left out? Rather than automatically judging someone else, how can we learn more about a person's story? How can we show appreciation for someone else this week?

### Prayer Focus

Let's pray for Esther and give thanks that she made it to Kenya safely from Congo. Pray for Esther's mom and all the mothers who have to be separated from their children. Let's pray for all refugee families who have lost relatives. Pray for God to bring comfort to them.

Give thanks to God for making each one of us special.

**Materials:** globe and a ball of yarn

## Yasmine's Story

MYANMAR / BANGLADESH

I can feel the tears fall from my mother's face onto my cheeks. I am sick, and she doesn't know what to do. We are not in our home village and we have no friends here. Last month, the Myanmar army shot my father and he died. We are Rohingya, an ethnic minority made up mostly of Muslims. Life was always hard for us, but recently it's gotten worse, so bad that people are leaving the country in large numbers.

My mother escaped with me, hiding in the hills and trying to stifle my cries so that no one would see or hear us. We were out in the wild for many days, with nothing to eat or drink. It was cold and wet. I am just a baby, but I could feel the fear coming from my mother. Yet she is very brave and we were able to cross the border into Bangladesh.

In Bangladesh we moved into a house with other Rohingya families—23 of us living in a small house. There are other babies so there is a lot of crying all the time. We all sleep on the floor, but only some of us have mats. Because of the dirty environment I developed a skin rash and diarrhea two days ago. My mother was so worried about me that she took me to the camp in search of medical treatment.

Luckily, there are doctors here from Covenant World Relief partner, Medical Teams International, who treat sick children. I see them walking about the camp visiting families. Some of them are from Bangladesh,



but I can tell some are from other countries. Almost all of the refugee families have at least one child that needs a doctor, so they are very busy. The doctor just gave me some medicine, and I heard her tell my mother I should feel better by tomorrow.

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*For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. — PSALM 139:13-14*

**Read Matthew 2:13-23**

Did you know that Jesus was a refugee? When Jesus was just a toddler, his parents took him to Egypt to escape from King Herod, who gave an order to kill all the Hebrew baby boys.

**Reflection**

Find Myanmar and Bangladesh on the globe. Half of the world's refugees are children—how does that make you feel? What are some of the best things and hardest things about being a kid? Who in your life makes you feel safe and protected? Pray for healing and medical care for all the refugee children who are sick.

**Cooperative Game: Medicine Balloon Ball**

**OBJECT:** By cooperating as a group, try and get all the children to move from on one side of the line to the health center on the other side of the line.

**SETUP:** A tape line to divide the room in half. Gather the children on one side of the line. A teacher stands alone on the other.

**PLAY:** Explain that as the teacher you are standing in the health center and the balloon is the road to the health center. Explain that you will call out the name of a child as you bat the balloon over the line toward the other side of the room. Anyone may bat the balloon as long as it is toward the child whose name was called. When that child is able to bat the balloon back to the teacher she or he may step over the line into the health center.

The teacher must keep the balloon in the air and bat it to the child on her side who then calls out the name of another child and bats the balloon back over to the side she or he came from. Children work to keep the balloon from hitting the floor and trying to help the child whose name is called to bat the balloon to the health center side of the line.

As more children move across the line to the health center, their job is to keep the medicine balloon in the air and get it to each new person to call out a name and bat the balloon to a child in need on the other side of the line. This is repeated until all children have made it to the health center. If the balloon hits the floor, the teacher will take the balloon to restart play from where you left off.

**DEBRIEF:** What did you like most about this game? What was the hardest part? Why was it important to work together? How did you feel when the balloon hit the ground? How did you feel when someone called your name? When children receive help from Kids Helping Kids, they feel grateful in the same way. Because they have needed help, they are often the first ones to help others. When you help another child through Kids Helping Kids, remember that child is also helping others.

**Prayer Focus**

Let's pray for Yasmine and all the little children and babies who have had to leave home with their parents. Pray that they would know God sees them and cares for them. Pray that they would hear the story of Jesus and how much God loves them. Pray that all children would grow up to know God's love.

**Materials:** globe, balloon, and tape

## Omar's Story

SYRIA / LEBANON

When I first arrived in Lebanon I felt weak and tired. I had fevers and was constantly thirsty. The doctors thought it was depression, but it turned out that I had diabetes caused by stress. You see, I had witnessed heavy bombing in my home country of Syria. I saw people die. Six months after we left Syria, my uncle passed away.

Since 2011, half of the people in my country have had to flee for their lives. My family escaped to the Bekaa Valley in Lebanon. In Lebanon they do not allow formal refugee camps, so refugees either find an apartment or they rent a piece of land and build a tent home on it. Some of the homes are not strong enough to protect us from bad weather. When we first got here, people were kind to us, but I think they are losing patience now. They say the war in Syria is going to last for a long time and there are already thousands of Syrians in Bekaa Valley. Will there be enough food and shelter for everyone if more Syrian refugees come?

Today my health is much better and I am living a pretty normal life. I receive insulin (medicine) for my diabetes along with regular checkups by doctors and volunteers who are helping to serve us refugees. My own father is serving as a refugee outreach volunteer with Covenant World Relief partner, Medical Teams International, to share his experience of taking care of a child with diabetes with other families in the same situation. I'm grateful for his care and for my improved health, but



I still struggle with anxiety. I worry about other Syrian children. Children make up half of the population of our country, and I wonder how their memories of war will affect them.

Two of my six siblings and I attend an informal school here. We don't really have toys, so we spend a lot of time studying. I hope we will all get a good education so that someday we can return to our country together and help rebuild it.

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*Jesus replied, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment.*

*And the second is like it: "Love your neighbor as yourself." — MATTHEW 22:37-39*



### Read Matthew 22:34-40

What does Jesus say about being a neighbor?  
Where do our neighbors live?

### Reflection

Look at the globe and find Syria and Lebanon. What are Omar's fears and what does he hope for? What is something you are hoping for? How has Lebanon loved their neighbor? How can loving our neighbor be difficult? How can it be difficult for the neighbor? How can we love our neighbor in practical ways?

### Cooperative Game: Loving My Neighbor

**OBJECT:** Using sheets of paper as walking stones, help your neighbor.

**SETUP:** With tape mark off two lines for a start and a finish. Put the lines close enough to each other to walk easily over six stepping stones (six pieces of paper), but far enough apart that it is difficult to cross with five or fewer stones.

**PLAY:** Divide the children into pairs. In each pair, give one child two pieces of paper and the other four pieces of paper. Explain that the object of the game is to help your neighbor whose homeland is being destroyed by poison snake pits. Place the stepping stones across the poison snake pit so your partner can cross to safety. But there's a catch: each piece of paper is worth one treat if it is not used as a stepping

stone, and you cannot reuse a stone more than once. The neighbor closes his or her eyes, and their partner must help them across the pit. If either of you misses stepping on a paper stone, you fall into the snake pit. Reverse roles. (This game weighs the cost using the sheets of paper to save a neighbor against receiving a treat. Leaders may choose to give everyone a treat at the end of the game.)

**DEBRIEF:** Was it hard to give up the option of a treat to save your neighbor? What did Jesus give up to save us? What does that tell you about Jesus? What does it say about how we are to love our neighbor?

### Prayer Focus

Let's pray for Omar and all the Syrian refugees living in Lebanon. Let's pray that peace would come to Syria. Thank God for Omar's good health and good doctors, and give thanks for the people in Lebanon who are helping their Syrian neighbors. Let us pray that we remember to be kind to our neighbors. Pray that God would show us a way to reach out to someone who is different from us.

**Materials:** globe, sheets of paper, tape to mark off a start and finish line, and treats

## Alek's Story

SOUTH SUDAN / KAKUMA, KENYA

My last memory of my father is of him lying on a mat. He was sweaty with fever and his eyes had a faraway look in them. Before he took his last breath, he squeezed my hand, said my name—and then he was gone. I was nine years old.

Thankfully, I still have my mother. We live in Kakuma Refugee Camp in northwestern Kenya. Kakuma is one of the world's largest refugee camps. It is so big that it feels like a city. It is dusty and crowded but still better than being in danger in South Sudan. In my home country, there is an ongoing civil war (fighting between tribes), as well as famine (not enough food). It is not a secure place to be a kid. My village was destroyed, and my neighbors have been killed or not heard from in a long time. Many of my friends lost their fathers too.

My parents left South Sudan and brought us here to Kakuma, where there are refugees from many African nations, including others from the same Dinka tribe as us. It was in Kakuma that my father became sick and eventually passed away. The camp is so crowded that it is easy for disease to spread. Add to that poor nutrition and you understand why health conditions in refugee camps are often poor.

I am currently studying Grade 3 at Bethel Covenant School, located in the camp. My school supplies and books are provided through the CovKids program of Serve Globally, a ministry of the Evangelical Covenant Church in the United States and Canada. I am grateful for those who are giving to help orphans in South



Sudan and in refugee camps nearby. Without their help I would not be able to attend school.

I hope to become an engineer someday. I want to help improve people's lives, whether that be through building homes, designing water pumps, or constructing roads. I have seen much suffering, and that motivates me to study hard and work toward my dream of helping others.

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*He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing. And you are to love those who are foreigners, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt. — DEUTERONOMY 10:18-19*

**Read Genesis 12:1-10**

Abraham, the father of the Israelites, was called by God to travel to a land that God would show him. He did not know where he was going, he just had to trust that God would lead him.

**Reflection**

Look at the globe together and find South Sudan and Kenya. Then locate Southern Iraq, Central Turkey, and Israel. Explain that these were the separate routes that both Alek and Abraham in the Scripture passage took. Why did Abraham believe God? What would it feel like if someone told you to leave your home and didn't tell you where you were going? Abraham was willing to obey God because of a promise God made to bless Abraham and then bless others through him. How could you be a blessing to others who may have to leave their home because of war or famine?

**Cooperative Game: Getting Supplies to Those Who Need it**

**OBJECT:** Finding the fastest and best way to get supplies to those in need.

**SETUP:** Set up table and chairs on one side of the room so they can be moved to the other side and back. The second part of this game requires a little advance setup. Stretch out a piece of wire, and tie one end to the twelve-inch piece of pipe or wood. String enough washers along the wire so that there is one for every student. Tie the other end of the wire to the six-foot piece of pipe or wood.

**PLAY:** Explain that the class is going to look at two ways of getting supplies to the refugee camp—either sending the supplies or sending money to buy the supplies. First, the class will work together to send the supplies. Collectively they will move the table and chairs to the other side of the room and back. Quietly time them to see how long it takes.

Once the table and chairs are back in place, explain that they will now work to wire the funds to the refugee camp. Hold the pipe vertically. Run all the washers along the wire up to the top of the six-foot pipe. Allow each child to release one washer at a time. The washers will travel down the wire one at a time, so each student can watch how fast their washer travels. This demonstrates how much faster it is to wire the money than to physically send the supplies.

**DEBRIEF:** Why is wiring the funds to where they are needed better than trying to send the actual supplies? How could sending the money to another country help that country more than buying the same thing in the US and shipping it there? (Helps build their economy, more jobs means more money is available.) How can we extend God's blessing to others?

**Prayer Focus**

Let's pray for Alek and his mom. Pray for Alek's studies, that one day he could reach his goal of becoming an engineer. Thank God for all the people who help make the world a better place by building homes, roads, and water supplies. Let us thank God for our homes and pray that God would show us how we can give to help others.

**Materials:** globe, wire or string (wire is best), enough metal washers for each child to have one, and two pieces of PVC pipe or wood—one 6 feet long and one 12 inches long

## Rashida's Story

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC / CAMEROON

I was born in the Central African Republic (CAR), but Cameroon is the only home I remember. There was a terrible civil war in my home country with a lot of fighting between Christians and Muslims. In the end, Muslims like us were forced out of CAR. I was just two years old when I left with my parents.

The worst part of leaving was that we had to leave behind our cows. Pasturing cattle is the main job of my tribe, the Fulani, and my family have been herders for generations. Losing our large stock of cattle devastated us. Sometimes I imagine I can still hear the sound of them lowing in the fields.

Everything in my life changed when we arrived in Cameroon. We once lived a comfortable life, but now it is difficult to get enough food or basic necessities. Every two weeks we have to stand in long lines to pick up our food when the United Nations team comes to the camp. It's hard to imagine that I once lived on a farm with plenty to eat.

It is also much harder to get to a doctor. Last year my knees started to hurt a lot. They swelled up so much I couldn't even walk! My grandmother took me across the border back into CAR to a mission hospital that Covenant missionaries Roy and Aleta Danforth told us about. I was diagnosed with tuberculosis of the bone. To get to the hospital we had to deal with border-crossing officials, pay heavy fees, and lots of people yelling at us along the way. I ended up staying at the



hospital with my grandmother for two months, and even though my father and grandfather came to visit me, it made me sad to be separated from my mother and siblings for that long. We could not afford to be together during that difficult time, but I am happy to be back home now recovering. I am also thankful that although life is full of struggle and sadness, God has brought people into our lives to help and support us.

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*For every animal of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills. — PSALM 50:10*

**Read Genesis 12:1-4 and 15:1-6**

God told Abraham he would be the father of a great nation (Genesis 12:2), but Abraham did not understand how that would happen. Abraham was wealthy—he had many possessions and people and cattle—but he and his wife were childless. Abraham had no children to carry on his family line or pass any of his fortune on to. God had a plan, but Abraham did not know it yet.

**Reflection**

Find Central African Republic and Cameroon on a globe. When is the last time something unpredictable happened to you? What did you do? Who helped you through the difficult time? How did they help? Pray and ask God to help you accept difficult changes in your life. You might be the one to help someone else through a difficult time. Life changes all the time, but God's love for us never does. We can be an extension of God's love.

**Cooperative Game: Move the Marbles**

**OBJECT:** To move several marbles from one end of the room to a jar on the other side of the room, illustrating the challenge of getting children who are sick to a mission hospital.

**PLAY:** Place an empty jar at one end of the room to represent a mission hospital. Ask the children to line up at the other end of the room. Give each child a piece of cardboard that is folded in half lengthwise. Place a marble in the crease of the first child's cardboard. That child rolls the marble into the second child's piece of cardboard. The second child then rolls the marble to the next child and so on. To get the marble across the room, each child may need to run to the end of the line to keep the marble moving until the marble is in the jar across the room.

**Prayer Focus**

Let's pray for Rashida and her family. Let's thank God for bringing Rashida to a doctor and healing her knees. Thank God that Rashida's grandmother could stay with her while she was in the hospital. Let's pray for all children who are in the hospital right now, that they would know that God loves them and is with them. Let us pray for peace to come to the Central African Republic (CAR). And let's pray for all the refugees who have left CAR to live in Cameroon.

**Materials:** globe, marbles, foot long pieces of cardboard, and a jar or bowl

## Andrés's Story

HONDURAS / UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The night I graduated from middle school was the night I decided to leave Honduras. My cousin was injured by some older boys who were in a gang, and I was afraid for my safety. I begged my parents to allow me to go live with my uncle in Texas. Tearfully, they agreed. We carefully planned my route: I would catch a bus through Guatemala to the Mexican border and then ride freight trains to the United States border. When I arrived, I would immediately ask the border officials to receive me so I could be reunited with my uncle. Once settled, I would try to find a way for my parents to join me.

No passenger trains go north to the US–Mexican border, so if you don't have enough money for a bus fee or to pay for a guide, you ride what is called "La Bestia" ("beast" in Spanish). La Bestia is what we call the freight trains that run north-south through Mexico. Mexican officials allow migrants to ride on top of the trains at no cost, but the ride is dangerous.

Riding La Bestia was one of the craziest adventures in my life. I thank God I made it safely to the border, but when I got there I met a big challenge. I applied for safety and expected to go directly to my uncle's house,



but they ended up taking me to a detention center instead. Now I am waiting for my uncle to come and get me. In the meantime, I'm grateful for lawyers who volunteer their time to help me and other minors, as well as church volunteers who come to lift our spirits.

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*When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the LORD your God. — LEVITICUS 19:33-34*



### Read John 6:4-11

This is the story of a boy who shared what little he had to make a big difference in the lives of more than 5,000 people.

### Reflection

Find Honduras, Guatemala, Mexico, and Texas on a globe. Why did Andrés want to leave home? As you look at the globe, how hard do you think the trip was for Andrés? Who was there to help him? How did the boy in the Bible story help those who were hungry? Sometimes even when we give what seems a small amount, great things can happen.

### Cooperative Game: Humming Game

**OBJECT:** Working together as a group to help a classmate find their way to a new home.

**SETUP:** Hide a small item that looks like a house or small piece of paper with “home” written on it for each round.

**PLAY:** Invite one classmate (or a group of up to three classmates) to leave the room while the rest of the class helps to hide the small house or piece of paper. When the child/children return, tell them the class will help them find their way to a new home by humming a familiar tune like “Jesus Loves Me.” The closer the

seekers get, the louder the class will hum. If more than one child is trying to get home, they must stay together. Once they find their new home, the class yells, “Welcome home!” and new seekers are selected to play another round. Play enough rounds so that everyone may be a seeker.

**DEBRIEF:** How did it feel when your friends helped you find your new home? Did they find it for you? Do you think it was easier to find your new home with your friends’ help?

How did you feel when your friends yelled, “Welcome home”? How would you have felt if no one helped you and no one was excited that you found your new home? When you give to Kids Helping Kids, you help other children find their new home.

### Prayer Focus

Let’s pray for Andrés. Pray that God would be with him as he waits for his uncle to come pick him up. Pray for all other children who have to ride dangerous trains or boats to get to a safe place. Let’s pray that God will help reunite families that have been separated because of war or fear. Pray that God would help bring people together and give hope to those still waiting to be with family.

**Materials:** globe and a very small toy house or a small card or piece of paper with the word “home” on it

## Kabir's Story

MYANMAR / BANGLADESH

I was lying on a small cushion in a dimly lit room when they found me, close to dying because I didn't have enough food. I could see the concern in their faces. We were in a hut in Kutupalong Refugee Camp, Bangladesh. My mother had carried me in her arms from Myanmar's Rakhine state, where our people, the Rohingya, were being chased out and killed. As Muslims living in a Buddhist country, we were never treated like real citizens. Violence against Rohingya has recently gotten worse. Our village was attacked and set on fire, and my mother left everything behind, taking only me.

She carried me all the way to Bangladesh because I can't walk. In fact, I have never walked. I've also never talked. Since birth I have been disabled. In my remote village there were no doctors, no health care. When we arrived in the refugee camp, my mother was expecting to see me die in front of her.

But one day a group of health workers with Covenant World Relief partner, Medical Teams International, was making household visits and they found me. At first my mother was suspicious of them, as she had not seen doctors before and she herself had never been to a hospital. She had already sought the help of traditional healers, which did no good, so she didn't think these doctors could do any better. The doctors finally convinced her to let them help, and they immediately



rushed me to a clinic one hour's walk away. As they carried me out of the hut, I had to shut my eyes against the bright sun. We rushed past the colorful hustle and bustle of the camp with its shops, schools, and community centers. I was fading fast, but I can remember the sights and sounds as these strangers carried me. I think it was hope that gave me the ears to hear and eyes to see and remember.

The doctors treated me for malnourishment, and today I am on the road to recovery. I still do not walk or talk, but my body feels stronger and my heart feels grateful for the strangers who took care of me.

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*Cast all your anxiety on him because  
he cares for you. — 1 PETER 5:7*

**Read Luke 10:25-37**

In both the story of the Good Samaritan and in this real-life story about Kabir, it was a stranger who took care of the people who were suffering.

**Reflection**

Find Myanmar and Bangladesh on the globe. When is the last time you helped a stranger? Why is helping others so important for those who follow Jesus? If you have never helped a stranger before, look for opportunities at school, at home, or at church.

**Cooperative Game: All Together**

**OBJECT:** Work together to make sure everyone can belong.

**SETUP:** Tie a piece of rope in a loop large enough for all the children in your group to fit within it. Place it on the ground.

**PLAY:** Invite all the children to sit inside the circle. Then congratulate them for working together to make sure they all fit. Now ask them to leave the circle and tell them we're going to see if they can do even better. Make the rope circle smaller and invite the children once again to sit within the circle.

Once they have accomplished this, congratulate them again and see if they are up for another challenge.

Continue to make the rope circle smaller and smaller until the children begin to run out of solutions as to how they can all fit within the circle. Eventually, the circle will be much too small to fit every child. The goal is to cooperate with each other and work together to come up with creative solutions. Encourage them by asking questions or think about the various ways they can try to fit everyone in. (You will be surprised by some of the solutions they come up with, such as putting only hands in, feet in, fingers in, etc.)

**DEBRIEF:** Why is it important to make sure everyone is included? Was this easy to do? How do you know Kabir's mom loves him? What would have happened if the health workers had ignored Kabir? What happens if we ignore someone or leave them out of our circle? We have a circle of friends in our schools, but we also have a larger circle of friends around the world. Your gifts are helping children like Kabir not to be left out but to be cared for.

**Prayer Focus**

Let's pray for Kabir and his mom. Give thanks to God for the doctors that are helping Kabir feel better. Pray for all the Rohingya people who are afraid of being hurt and need to leave their homes. Pray that we would learn to care for all people, especially the lonely, the hurt, and the people who feel forgotten.

**Materials:** globe and a long rope

## Martin's Story

IRAQ / GERMANY

My father was raised in a loving Christian family in a rural town in Iraq. He had a fairly peaceful life growing up. After 2006, the Iraqi government did not allow us to freely worship as Christians and people became afraid. My family wanted to stay in Iraq, but in 2014 we heard rumors of militant groups coming to nearby towns. The adults in my town planned a nighttime escape.

The day after we left, soldiers arrived at my town and were surprised to find nothing but abandoned homes, deserted cars, and elderly men! My family was by then on our way to Kyrgyzstan along with 1,000 other people from my village. We spent a month there in a refugee camp.

From Kyrgyzstan we traveled to Turkey and stayed for one year in a rundown camp. My dad worked in a factory without proper eye protection there, which damaged his eyesight permanently. During that same time my mother gave birth to my little brother. We could not afford to wait for immigration papers in Turkey, so we boarded a small, wooden paddleboat with 60 adults and children to cross the Aegean Sea for the Greek island of Los. It should have been a 30-minute trip, but it ended up taking over six hours as our boat began to sink halfway across the sea! As the boat was sinking I could hear my dad praying. My baby brother was shaking uncontrollably and vomiting from the cold. One of the men on board used his cell phone to contact the police for help, and, thankfully, they rescued us.



When we finally arrived, a woman appeared from nowhere and gave my brother a bottle and a carton of infant formula. My parents say they don't know who she was, but I think she was an angel.

The next few weeks took us through Macedonia, Serbia, and Slovenia, and finally to Germany, where we were welcomed by Covenant missionaries and found a new home. It was the scariest journey of my life, but through it all, I sensed my heavenly Father holding onto my hand and leading me as securely as my earthly father did. Even though we have lost so much, God provided a way to safety for us.

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*For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. — PSALM 91:11*

**Read 1 Kings 19:1-8**

Elijah was a prophet of God who fought against evil rulers. In the story with Jezebel, he was so exhausted from fleeing that he sat under a tree and was ready to give up. He had no strength to continue. Many refugees feel this way.

**Reflection**

Find Iraq, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey, Greece, Macedonia, Serbia, Slovenia, and Germany on a globe. What is the most tiring journey you have ever been on? What did you do to rest your body? Did you ever feel like you were too tired to continue? Who are the people in your life that give you encouragement?

**Cooperative Game: Journey to Freedom**

**OBJECT:** To complete seven revolutions of the hand game, symbolizing the seven different countries Martin and his family had to travel through to find a new home.

**SETUP:** Children kneel in a circle on the floor or sit around a table. Then each child leans forward and places both hands on the floor or table. Next each child takes their right hand and puts it on the other side of their neighbors left hand. By doing this, everyone's two hands are separated by a neighbor's hand.

**PLAY:** Explain that this is a tapping game. The goal is to tap the table or floor in order around the entire circle seven times, representing the seven countries Martin and his family had to travel through. Practice tapping hands in order once around the entire circle. Now explain when they begin the game, they will be timed to see how fast they can make seven revolutions. The challenge is that the leader will read instructions from the cards that disrupt and reverse the direction

of the tapping along the way. For example, "Reverse tap direction for four hands before going forward again."

**Card Directions:**

Teacher reads these disruptions periodically as the children are trying to complete seven revolutions.

**ROAD IS OUT**—tap four hands in the opposite direction before resuming your journey.

**REFUGEE CAMP STOP**—tap six hands in the opposite direction before resuming your journey.

**BOAT IS SINKING**—tap eight hands in the opposite direction before resuming your journey.

**NIGHT TRAVEL MAKES IT DIFFICULT TO SEE**—tap four hands in the opposite direction before resuming your journey.

**FOOD SHORTAGE**—tap five hands in the opposite direction before resuming your journey.

**NO IMMIGRATION PAPERS**—tap three hands in the opposite direction before resuming.

**SICKNESS**—tap four hands in the opposite direction before resuming your journey.

**DEBRIEF:** What was frustrating about this game? Were you ever discouraged? How did you work as a group? How were you encouraged? How has Martin's life been different from yours? Does this make you want to help families like Martin's? When you give to Kids Helping Kids, your money helps families like this in refugee camps who need to find a new place to live.

**Prayer Focus**

Let's pray for Martin and his family that God will be with them as they set up a new life in Germany. Pray for all refugees who are on a long journey, trying to get to a safe place. Pray that God would protect them from danger and keep them safe.

**Materials:** globe and card directions for the cooperative game (print above directions on 3 x 5 cards)

## Lucía's Story

COLOMBIA / IDP

I carry a picture of my older brother, Miguel, in my pocket. He was only fourteen years old when he was asked to join a gang last year. He was not in school at the time and felt hopeless about the future. The gang members lured him easily with stories of a life of excitement. We haven't heard from him since.

For more than fifty years, conflict between different groups has resulted in kidnapping and even death. As a result, too many children in Colombia have grown up afraid. Like my brother and me, most of our friends have dropped out of school. Last year my teacher died when she was caught in the crossfire between two gangs. One of my friends was killed by a bomb while walking to school. I was too scared to go to school after that.

Many Colombians have had to leave their homes to find safer areas to live. Colombia has the highest number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the world. IDPs are people who have had to leave their homes but are still living within the borders of their home country. My family used to live in a jungle village, but we moved to the city—to two different homes—to escape the constant threat of gangs. Although we are safer now, we do not have enough money to live without worrying all the time.

In recent years peace treaties have been signed—and that brings us hope! My mother got involved with



a women's rights and empowerment group. Some people back in the village would not like that. They think only men can talk about empowerment. But I am proud of my mom for being an activist. She is one of the many people working to build a life of peace for Colombia. I know that there is even a group of Covenant youth—both boys and girls—that are running summer camps to teach younger kids how to live in peace. This brings me even more hope for the future!

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*Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

— PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7

**Read John 11:45-57**

Throughout Jesus's ministry he went around the countryside preaching, performing miracles, and spending time with all kinds of people. Some people believed and followed him, but others tried to bring down his ministry and even kill him. The crowds had Jesus crucified, but as we know, he was raised to life again!

**Reflection**

Find Colombia on the globe. Why did Lucía and her family flee to the city? What has been good about this move, and what has been hard? What do you do when you feel afraid? How does Jesus help you deal with fear?

**Cooperative Game: Safe Together**

**Object:** This is a two-part game. In the first part, pairs work together to help each other get across a dangerous area to the safe zone. The second part is working cooperatively as a class.

**PART ONE**

**SETUP:** Create a starting line with tape across the floor and a finish line partway across the room. Place pieces of red construction paper randomly between the start and finish lines. Divide the children into pairs, and ask each pair to stand back to back with their elbows locked. (Younger children may choose to simply hold hands for this game.)

**PLAY:** Explain that they must work together to get through the danger zone to the safe zone on the other side of the finish line. They must stay back to back and keep their elbows locked together (or hold hands), until they reach the safe zone. If they step on a piece

of construction paper, they need to start over. Once everyone has made it to the safe zone, explain that helping others to safety is just part of the way we are called to help each other. The second part is to care for each other and to work together as a team.

**PART TWO**

**SETUP:** Stand in a circle holding hands.

**PLAY:** Drop a balloon into the circle. Players try to tap the balloon into the air without letting go of their neighbors' hands. Players will need to work cooperatively to keep the balloon in the air. Count how many times the group is able to tap the balloon before it hits the ground. The circle will need to move as players follow the balloon. Players may contact the balloon with hands, arms, heads, shoulders, chests, or knees—but not feet. If the balloon falls to the ground or is touched by feet, start the count over. Encourage the children to compliment and encourage each other.

**DEBRIEF:** Which part of this game was harder for you? How did each part of the game require cooperation? Who can we cooperate with to help others in need? God has created each of us and sees each of us as his children, and God wants us to all love each other. How should we see each other and how should we see children in other parts of the world?

**Prayer Focus**

Let's pray for Lucía and her family. Pray for her brother who has joined a gang. Pray for all the kids who are too afraid to go to school. Pray for Lucía's mom who is working for peace. Give thanks for the peace treaties and signs of hope in Colombia.

**Materials:** globe, sheets of red construction paper, tape, and a balloon

