



Challengers

When teen boys are faced with the challenges of the world, keeping the Great Commission central in their discipleship can help them answer essential questions about identity, belonging, and purpose. Churches that love their communities and are serious about the lost help dispel the world's lies about Christianity and expose teen boys to the transforming power of Jesus. When teen boys learn to share the gospel and be on mission, they internalize their faith and are more likely to remain engaged in the church as disciples of Jesus who live on mission.

Through *Missions Journey: Students*, teen boys in grades 7-12

- **learn** about how SBC missionaries are engaging the lost throughout North America and around the world;
- **pray** for missionaries and learn how God calls, sustains, and guides them through Scripture;
- **support** missions through giving their money, time, and talents; and
- **do** missions and tell others about Jesus by planning and leading missions projects to share the love of Christ in their community and beyond.

Keep Reading to
Find Out How You
Can Save 20%!

WMU®
God's mission.
Our passion.



Curriculum Resources

Missions Journey: Students—Subscription

This fully-digital resource contains plans for four weekly sessions and includes links to missions videos, missions project ideas, supplemental activities, prayer activities, and a leader devotion.

Annual digital subscription (12 issues per year) · \$199.99

Missions Journey: Students—Monthly

Also available as stand-alone units, each of these fully-digital lessons contains plans for four weekly sessions. Each includes links to missions videos, missions project ideas, supplemental activities, prayer activities, and a leader devotion. · \$19.99

To purchase, visit wmustore.com or call Customer Service at (205) 995-4850 Monday–Thursday, 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. (CT).



Keep Reading to Find Out How You Can Save 20%!



How do I get missions discipleship started at my church?

1

Read through the **one-week lesson** below.



2

Check out wmu.com/howtoleadstudents if you have questions about getting started.

3

Schedule a free, no-strings-attached **video call with Keith Gates** to make sure all your questions are answered.

We're here to help!



For questions about starting or leading a group: Contact Keith Gates, National WMU ministry consultant, at kgates@wmu.org or (205) 991-4040. **Schedule a 30 minute video call with Keith at calendly.com/royalambassadors**

4

Don't forget to connect with your state and associational WMU for events and training. Find links to state WMU websites at wmu.com/statecontacts.

New Customers: Save 20% Today!

Ready to get started and be on mission? **Enjoy 20% savings** on your **new curriculum order** by calling WMU Customer Service at (205) 995-4850, Monday–Thursday, 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. CT. Be sure to mention promo code **START20**. (Some restrictions apply. Discount not available at wmustore.com.)

WMU[®]
God's mission.
Our passion.



MISSIONS JOURNEY: *Students*

PARIS, FRANCE



TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Action Lesson includes project options for ways students can meet needs in their community.

[Letter from the Editor](#) 2

[Leadership](#) 3

[How to Use This Resource](#) 4

[Tech Stuff](#) 5

SPOTLIGHT

[Get Ready](#) 6

[Background](#) 7

[Lesson](#) 8

[Reflection: Paris](#) 11

DISCIPLESHIP

[Get Ready](#) 12

[Background](#) 13

[Lesson](#) 14

[Reflection: 2 Corinthians 2:14](#) 17

CHALLENGE

[Get Ready](#).....

[Lesson](#).....

The Challenge Lesson encourages students to view their own community like a missionary. They are challenged to see the needs and think about how they can be a part of meeting those needs to the glory of God.

EDITORIAL TEAM:

Jon Jeffries, editor
 Kaitlin Ellis, copy editor
 Jennifer Richburg, art director
 Heather Keller, consultant
 Keith Gates, consultant

Have questions? Got feedback?
 We'd love to hear from you.
 Email us at students@wmu.org.

ACTION

[Get Ready](#)..... 22

[Lesson](#) 23

[Option 1: Parisian Café](#) 24

[Option 2: Sporting Event](#)..... 25

SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

[Baguette](#) 26

[A French Game: Pétanque](#) 27

[Prayer Calendar Activities](#) 28

[Coloring Page](#) 30

[On the Journey](#) 31

ABOUT THE WRITER:

LaRaine Rice lives in Lexington, Kentucky. She serves as a Regional Ministry Leader for Orphan Care Alliance. She is married to Jeff and mother of two middle schoolers.

Board and by Shutterstock.com.

National WMU is not a part of the Cooperative Program allocation budget and receives no funds from the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering or Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. National WMU is supported through the sale of missional resources and from investments and charitable contributions.

Woman's Missionary Union
 PO Box 830010
 Birmingham, AL 35283-0010

© 2024 by Woman's Missionary Union
 All rights reserved.
 Woman's Missionary Union® and WMU® are registered trademarks.

All rights reserved. Woman's Missionary Union grants to the initial purchaser or purchaser's organization (the "Individual or Organization") the non-transferable right to create hard copy masters and/or electronic files of the purchased publication, suitable for printing and distributing the text of the purchased publication in carrying out the prescribed purpose of the purchased publication. The Individual or Organization agrees that it will not, for any reason, reproduce in any form, store in any retrieval system, or transmit in any form by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or otherwise—this publication, in whole or in part, to distribute, resell, or otherwise transfer, the purchased publication to any other individual or organization.

Woman's Missionary Union, WMU, Christian Women's Job Corps, CWJC, Christian Men's Job Corps are registered trademarks of Woman's Missionary Union, Birmingham, Alabama. WorldCrafts, CMIC are service marks of WMU.

All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version® NIV®, Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide.

Scripture quotations marked (ESV) are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version® (ESV®), © copyright 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.]

While WMU attempts to review suggested websites for appropriate content, we have no control over the information on other websites, nor does referencing them imply our endorsement. Website addresses were active at time of publication.

MJ0924

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



INVESTING IN THE NEXT GENERATION

“I can’t wait for the mission trip!” That’s a phrase I have heard around my house for the past few months. As I write this, my wife, three children, and I are preparing to go on our first mission trip together as a family. We are not going far—just to a neighboring state. Lord willing, once there, we will have the opportunity to get to know and serve refugees from the other side of the world. While my wife and I have been blessed to be able to go on mission trips to far away places before, I am particularly excited about

this relatively short trip with no flights, no time change, and no passport needed. Why? Because my kids get to come with me! Our family, along with three other families with children from our small group at church, will be the mission team. Parents and children serving together.

My prayer for the trip is that above all God would be glorified, that the Gospel would be communicated clearly to those who need to hear, and that we will be a blessing to everyone we meet. But I also pray this experience will stoke a fire of missions in the hearts of my children. They are already excited, praying, planning activities, and checking out library books about the home country of the refugees we will be serving. I’m thankful that even though we haven’t left yet, this trip has opened the eyes of my children to a bigger world that needs to know about Jesus. Passing on the importance of missions makes me think of passages like Psalm 71:18 (NIV), which states, “Even when I am old and gray, do not forsake me, my God, till I declare your power to the next generation, your mighty acts to all who are to come.” May we be faithful to declare the power of God to the next generation.

You can pass on the importance of missions to your students is by leading them to help children participate in Children’s Missions Day. The goal is for children’s groups to create projects that move children out of their churches and into their communities to do missions. Your students can provide excellent help and leadership for the children in these projects. Meeting needs in their own communities can be anything from feeding hungry people to visiting shut-ins. Children’s Missions Day is on Saturday, September 21, 2024. To learn more, visit www.wmu.com/missions-discipleship/children/childrens-missions-day/. If you have any questions about Children’s Missions Day, please email children@wmu.org or contact your state WMU office.

Serving together,
Jon Jeffries, editor

LEADERSHIP



HOW TO PREPARE FOR A STUDENT MISSIONS TRIP

Yes, it is barely the end of the summer, but it is time to start thinking about next year. This is a great opportunity to reflect on what your group did well this year and areas you may want to improve for next year. Consider these thoughts as you reflect on your experiences this year.

- How many students were involved this year? Is there potential for more next year?
- What areas did students seem to grow the most because of their experience this year?
- What is worth repeating from this year?
- What were the pitfalls from this year?

As you reflect, seek feedback from students and volunteers who went on the trip. Their feedback may offer things you didn't even think about!

Next, take your reflections from this year and consider your missions experience for next year. With those reflections in mind, think about these decisions:

- What connections do you have that would allow for a great missions experience for your students and adult volunteers?
- What are the strengths of your group? Where do they need to grow?
- What will your budget allow you to do?

Once you begin to narrow down the broad strokes of the upcoming experience, begin planning a manageable timeline to ensure you have enough time (and support) to make it the best experience possible.

Include:


- Training for participants and volunteers
- Committees to have time to work (logistics, food service, on-location ministry, etc.)
- Multiple conversations with local host team
- Site visit, if possible

A missions trip for your students can be life-changing. Making sure that you are prepared ensures you have time to serve and experience the life-changing atmosphere only the Holy Spirit can provide!

See you out there,

Heather Keller

Missions Consultant and Editor (Girls in Action/Children in Action/Acteens)



HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

Welcome to *Missions Journey: Students*! We're so glad you are on this journey with us. Here are a few tips we think you might find helpful as you explore your new material.

How do we use this resource?

Any way you want to! We've made *Missions Journey: Students* customizable so you can adapt it to fit the needs of your group of students.

What's included?

Each unit of *Missions Journey: Students* includes four lessons—Spotlight, Discipleship, Challenge, and Action; links to three videos; and supplemental activities and prayer calendar activities that can be used to enhance the lessons.

- The videos feature firsthand accounts from real people who are serving Christ. They serve in a variety of environments and with people from all around the globe. Links to the videos, which are housed on Vimeo, are provided in the lesson plans. For tips on accessing and downloading the videos, see "Tech Stuff" (p. 5).
- The Spotlight Lesson walks your students through an overview of the workers and the people they serve. The Spotlight Video is followed up by discussion, activities, and focused prayer.
- The Discipleship Lesson dives into the Word as students explore a passage of Scripture that is integral to the work of those who speak to the Scripture passage in the Discipleship Video. Each Discipleship Lesson links to a Leader Devotion written specifically to encourage you, but also to give you more background information on the Scripture you're about to cover.

- The Challenge Lesson empowers students to use what they have learned in the unit about sharing the gospel to reach out in their own community and/or on trips. They are challenged by the featured workers in the Challenge Video to "walk the walk."
- The Action Lesson puts all that the students have learned into action. They learn by actually planning and sharing Christ with others.
- Supplemental Activities are included in case your group responds well to crafts or hands-on learning projects. And you may have more time some months than you do others. Either way, you've got additional projects or activities that will supplement what your students are learning. You can use these with any lesson.
- Prayer Calendar Activities are included to better engage students' minds in praying for workers on their birthdays. You can use these with any lesson.
- Oh, and blogs! Check out our blogs to find additional project ideas and first-person experiences in discipleship, and to hear from student leaders who are currently working with groups of teens similar to yours. Find our blogs here: wmu.com/students-blog.

How do we involve our students?

- Stretch and grow your students' leadership skills by having them lead your meetings and plan their own projects!
- Students are church leaders in training. Your role becomes that of encourager, trainer, mentor, facilitator, support staff, or whatever you want to call it. The amount of your involvement will, of course, depend on the maturity and strengths of your students.

TECH STUFF



These days, many teens consume multimedia the way some of us used to consume hieroglyphics! It's their language. It's how their brains work. *Missions Journey: Students* is designed to engage students in ways that ignite a passion in them for accepting Christ, growing in Christ, and sharing Christ with the nations.

How can we view the videos?

- Watch the videos from the host site, Vimeo, using your data plan, or your church's Wi-Fi.
- Download the videos to a personal digital device ahead of time. If you don't have home internet service, most libraries, restaurants, and coffee shops provide free Wi-Fi.
- Many teens have smartphones, and they can help you access the videos. Teach leadership accountability by assigning different teens the responsibility of downloading the videos each week.

How do we download videos from Vimeo?

- When you click on a video link in this PDF, the link will take you directly to that particular video.
- Below the video, in the description area, you will see a Download button.
- When you click Download, you will be given the option of choosing the video resolution/file size that you want to download. The larger the file size, the higher the resolution, the better the video quality will be when played.
- Also, Vimeo has a handy help section. Please note, at the request of NAMB and IMB, *Mission Journey: Students* videos will only be available online for two years from the date of publication. After two years the video will be taken down from Vimeo and the links in this PDF will no longer work. If you wish to save the videos and use them beyond two years, please download the videos from Vimeo and save them.

Please Note

While WMU attempts to review suggested websites (those not owned by WMU) for appropriate content, we have no control over the information on those websites (including user comments, ads, etc.), nor does referencing them imply our endorsement.

WMU recommends leaders preview any web content before sharing it with their students.

Website addresses were active at time of publication.

Tip: *If you need help with the tech stuff and you live near a college, especially one that has a Baptist Campus Ministry, ask for help there. This could even be a good way to get local college students involved in your church. (Two birds, one stone, anyone?)*



The Spotlight Lesson introduces the featured missionary, their ministry, and their missions field.

Jason and Cassie Harris minister “to the nations” in Paris, France. Forty percent of Paris residents are first- and second-generation immigrants from around the world. The 2024 Paris Olympics brought more nations to the city. Jason Harris leads a team of fellow missionaries to reach the world at their doorstep.

WHAT DO I DO?

PREPARE

- › Review
 - [Spotlight Video: Paris, France](#)
 - [Spotlight: Background \(p. 7\)](#)
 - [Spotlight: Lesson \(p. 8\)](#)
- › Gather Supplies
 - [Spotlight Video: Paris, France](#)
 - copies of [“Reflection: Paris” \(p. 11\)](#)
 - pens or pencils
- › Set up a way to play the video.
- › Decide how (or if) you will make use of the handout [“Reflection: Paris” \(p. 11\)](#).
- › Review [“Supplemental Activities” \(p. 26\)](#) and [“Prayer Calendar Activities” \(p. 28\)](#) for possible use.

Video content comes directly from the missionaries when possible.

LEAD THE LESSON . . . IN 4 EASY STEPS!

1. Watch the video
2. Talk about it
3. Get active
4. Pray



SPOTLIGHT: BACKGROUND

Paris, France, is a city that needs little introduction. It is the capital of France and home to some of the most iconic landmarks in the world.

The population of the city is approximately 2.2 million people with almost eleven million in the metro area. It sits on the Seine River in the northern region of France.

Paris is an ancient city with the first known inhabitants arriving thousands of years ago. A Gallic tribe known as the Parisii inhabited the area in the third century BC. According to Julius Caesar in his Commentaries (52 BC), the people of the town chose to burn the town instead of surrendering to Rome. Nevertheless, the rebuilt town became part of the Roman Empire. It became known as Paris in the fourth century.

Paris became known as the “City of Light” during the Enlightenment due to its rich cultural, intellectual, and educational heritage. Home to the Mona Lisa, the Bastille, the Louvre Museum, the Notre Dame Cathedral, and the Eiffel Tower, Paris continues to shine as a light of Western culture.

There is a strong international feeling in the city as, according to Britannica, more than one-tenth of the population was born outside of France. Many of these residents come from other European countries. However, the largest group of immigrants is from Africa—particularly Northern African countries such as Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia. There are people groups from West and Central Africa as well as people from Turkey, China, and Southeast Asia.

Roman Catholicism is the prevalent religion in Paris. However, only a small percentage of the people regularly attend church. There is a strong Muslim and Jewish presence in the city as well.

“I enjoy seeing our team thrive and grow. A big part of my job now is helping them prepare and thrive. I also love meeting with people who are getting excited about Jesus and interested in studying the Bible together.”

—Jason Harris



SPOTLIGHT: LESSON

1. WATCH THE VIDEO

Before watching the video, ask students to share what they know about Paris. What movies or shows do they know that are set in Paris? After they share, allow time for students to search for important landmarks in Paris. Spend about five minutes talking about Paris.

- You will need the [Spotlight Video: Paris, France](#)
- Inform students that this month you will examine the lives of a missionary family in Paris. Paris is one of the world's cultural centers and it is a vast mission field.
- Share the background information about Paris from the Spotlight. Many students might not realize that the city has such an extensive history. Be sure to highlight the many cultures that live in Paris.
- Show the video.

2. TALK ABOUT IT

Distribute the questions and allow time for students to individually think about their answers so they can have time to reflect.

Ask students to share what they learned from the video. After a few minutes, walk through the questions together.

1. God called the Harris family to “go to the nations.” How are they able to fulfill this calling in Paris?

Discuss question one. The Harris family was called to Paris to share the gospel with the nations. Many people live in Paris and many more visit Paris each year. It is truly an international city.

2. What does it mean to be called to the nations? What is the difference between being called to the nations and being called to a nation, state, or people group?

*“BUT THANKS BE TO GOD, WHO IN CHRIST ALWAYS LEADS US IN TRIUMPHAL PROCESSION, AND THROUGH US SPREADS THE FRAGRANCE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF HIM EVERYWHERE”
(2 CORINTHIANS 2:14 ESV).*

Tip: Give students time to find examples of Roman architecture on their phones or a shared electronic device as you discuss the history.

Discuss question two. To be called to the nations means that a person seeks to share the gospel with people from around the world. It means we don't focus on ourselves or our people. We seek to share God with the nations. Read Revelation 7:9-10. The Bible teaches that people from around the world will be in heaven one day.

Not everyone is called to go to the nations. Some are called to work within their own community, state, or nation. God's call is to share with those that we encounter. Read Acts 1:8.

3. How many nations do you encounter each month?

Discuss question three. We may encounter the nations even if we are called to serve God in our community. Take some time to discover just how many people from other nations your students meet on a weekly and monthly basis. Think about the people in their school, local businesses, and places they visit on a regular basis. Remind them that people from other nations may look like them or they may look different. Why is it important to remember the nations are often around us even when we don't know it? How can reaching people from other countries help spread the gospel around the world?

4. Look at this month's verse. God leads us in a triumphal procession. What does this mean?

Discuss question four. Read 2 Corinthians 2:14 found at the top of the handout. Ask students what "God leads us in a triumphal procession" means. The [Biblical Background \(p. 13\)](#) section of the Discipleship lesson provides more details on the background of that phrase. The verse uses figurative language that was familiar to Paul and his original audience. How does God lead students in triumphal procession?

3. GET ACTIVE

Relationships with Parisians can take time to develop. The Harris family and other team members make it a point to "sit and share" with people in the community. In this activity, your group will "sit and share," too.

Reflection Questions:

1. God called the Harris family to "go to the nations." How are they able to fulfill this calling in Paris?
2. What does it mean to be called to the nations? What is the difference between being called to the nations and being called to a nation, state, or people group?
3. How many nations do you encounter each month?
4. Look at this month's verse. God leads us in a triumphal procession. What does this mean?

SIT TO SHARE

Items Needed:

- variety of French foods such as baguettes, croissants, coffee, and teas
- posters and markers to create Paris-theme decorations
- paper and pencils
- device to play music

Instructions:

Work with students to decorate the room to resemble a French café complete with food. Play music in the background. Ask two students to come up with discussion ideas and write them on a sheet of paper. The discussion questions can be fun or serious questions (such as school-related topics). Once the café is set up, ask the same two students to read the discussion topics and lead a discussion with the group. Allow time for students to sit and share.

4. PRAY

PRAY AND SHARE

Introduction:

Transition from a time of sharing with each other at the café to a time of sharing prayer requests.

Share the following requests from the Harris family:

- › Pray for team unity and growth.
- › Pray as the Harris family and their team launch a digital engagement strategy across Paris.
- › Pray for several English-focused outreaches.
- › Pray for closer relationships with local partners.

Pray together in the café.

Sample Questions:

- › What is your favorite subject in school? Why?
- › Who is your mentor or role model? What makes that person important in your life?
- › Describe what your life might be like in two years. What do you hope to accomplish by then?



For creative ideas on how to incorporate praying for workers on their birthdays, check out [“Prayer Calendar Activities” \(p. 28\)](#).

Father,

WE ASK THAT YOU HELP US SIT AND SHARE WITH THOSE WHO DO NOT KNOW YOU. HELP US BE AWARE OF THE NATIONS AROUND US. WE ASK THAT YOU CONTINUE TO BLESS THE WORK OF THE HARRIS FAMILY AND THE TEAM IN PARIS. IN JESUS' NAME. AMEN.



"But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere" (2 Corinthians 2:14 ESV).

1. God called the Harris family to "go to the nations." How are they able to fulfill this calling in Paris?
2. What does it mean to be called "to the nations?" What is the difference between being called to the nations and being called to a nation, state, or people group?
3. How many nations do you encounter each month? Make a list of the places you encounter people from other nations and where you find them.
4. Look at this month's verse. God leads us in a triumphal procession. What does this mean?



The Discipleship Lesson is a Bible study on Scripture chosen by the missionaries, so students get to hear what verses encourage them, shape their call to missions, and sustain them on the missions field.

DISCIPLESHIP: GET READY

Jason and Cassie Harris were settled in East Asia with their kids when the pandemic forced them to return to the United States for an early stateside assignment. Prevented from returning to Asia, the Harris family followed God's leadership to France. 2 Corinthians 2:14 was a pivotal verse for them during this time.

WHAT DO I DO?

PREPARE

- › Review
 - [Discipleship Video: Paris, France](#)
 - [Discipleship: Background \(p. 13\)](#)
 - [Discipleship: Lesson \(p. 14\)](#)
- › Gather Supplies
 - [Discipleship Video: Paris, France](#)
 - copies of "[Reflection: 2 Corinthians 2:14](#)" (p. 17)
 - poster boards, markers, and other materials for the triumphal procession
 - paper
 - pencils or pens
- › Display or make copies to distribute to each student of "[Reflection: 2 Corinthians 2:14](#)" (p. 17).
- › Set up a way to play the video.
- › Review "[Supplemental Activities](#)" (p. 26) and "[Prayer Calendar Activities](#)" (p. 28) for possible use.

LEAD THE LESSON . . . IN 5 EASY STEPS!

1. Review
2. Watch the Video
3. Talk about It
4. Pray

PRAYER CALENDAR ACTIVITIES

Encourage students to pray for workers or challenge them to develop their own activities that focus on praying for workers on their birthdays. Visit [wmu.com/prayercalendar](https://www.wmu.com/prayercalendar).

PARIS

Items Needed:

- white board or large piece of paper
- access to [wmu.com/prayercalendar](https://www.wmu.com/prayercalendar)

Directions:

Working together, create a list of five prayer requests for your group of missionaries celebrating birthdays using the letters P-A-R-I-S. For example, the “P” can stand for patience or persistence. After creating the acrostic, use the acrostic and the prayer calendar to pray together.



Encourage students to pray for workers or challenge them to develop their own activities that focus on praying for workers on their birthdays. Visit [wmu.com/prayercalendar](https://www.wmu.com/prayercalendar).

THE FRAGRANCE OF PRAYER

Items Needed:

- paper or plastic bags with a variety of items that are fragrant
- access to [wmu.com/prayercalendar](https://www.wmu.com/prayercalendar)

Directions:

Place items that emit a recognizable fragrance in paper or plastic bags. These items can smell good or smell bad. Suggestions include: playdough, popcorn, or chocolate. Give students the opportunity to smell the bags and guess what is in them.

State that the Bible teaches our prayers have a sweet fragrance to God.

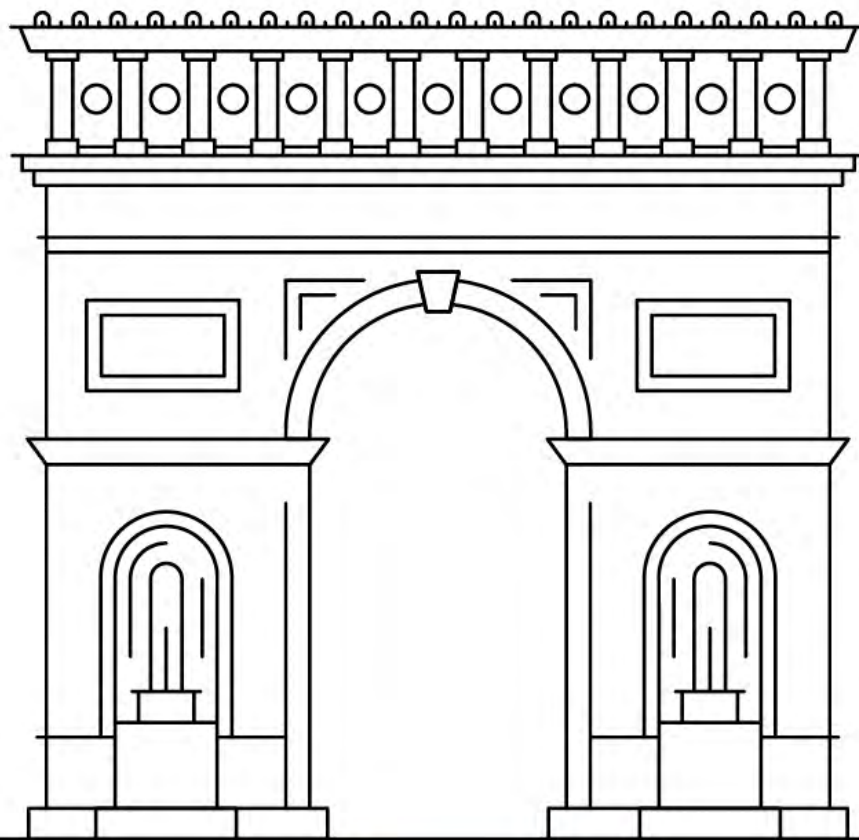
Psalm 141:2 (NIV) states, "May my prayer be like special perfume before You. May the lifting up of my hands be like the evening gift given on the altar in worship."

In Revelation 5:6, 8, the precious prayers of God's people have been gathered in bowls of gold are referred to as incense: "I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth . . . And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints."

Tell students that their prayers are a fragrance to God. He loves to hear the prayers of His people. Using the prayer calendar, take time to pray that the missionaries would spread the fragrance of the knowledge of God wherever God leads them.

But thanks be to God, who in Christ
always leads us in
triumphal procession,
and through us spreads the
fragrance of the knowledge
of him everywhere.

2 Corinthians 2:14 ESV



On the Journey • September 2024

by Sandy Wisdom-Martin

Don't Let Small Things Become Large

One day, my shower started losing water pressure. Then my husband and I felt a warm sensation under our feet when we walked into our bedroom. Our carpet was soaked with warm water. We called a plumber and had to move all of the furniture out of the bedroom while he jackhammered the foundation floor to get to the leak. The plumber asked, "Do you want to see what caused the problem?" He handed me a pipe that had a very tiny hole in it. The tiny hole caused a huge problem.

It made me think about the Christian walk. Usually, tiny things that get out of control cause most of our turmoil and consume our time and energy. As we begin a new church year, don't let small things become large. Missional leaders are lifelong learners. What should you do when small things grow into large things? Here are ten suggestions.

1. **Pray for the Holy Spirit's intervention.** When things are difficult, appeal to the Holy Spirit for patience, guidance, and understanding before charging in.
2. **Consult God's Word.** Scripture is a treasure trove of practical advice about how to interact with people. Before you do anything, consult God's Word.
3. **Reflect on your actions.** Look at Matthew 7:3–5. Ask yourself, "What did I say or do? What didn't I say or do?"
4. **Speak to the person involved rather than others.** So often we speak to everyone else instead of the person we should.
5. **Don't conspire with others.** When we have a conflict with someone, nothing is more tempting than blowing off steam with a friend. We need to have the personal courage to refuse the allure of making ourselves seem better in our friends' eyes while rushing to expose the flaws and weaknesses of others.
6. **Speak to one another with respect.** See Proverbs 15:1.
7. **Recognize you don't know their whole story.** Knowing the hardships in someone's life can give you an entirely new perspective on a situation. When we try to understand, perhaps we won't be so quick to feel anger and annoyance.
8. **Love and forgive.** See Ephesians 4:32. Love because you are loved. Forgive because you have been forgiven.
9. **Move toward restoration and harmony.** Too often we work to win the argument. Instead, work to win the relationship.
10. **Think about what you can learn from the situation.**



Father,

As we begin this church year, may we be guided by Your teachings in all we say and do.

In Jesus' name. Amen.