

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION STUDY FOR YOUTH

Make Jesus Known

“Then he said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation’”
(Mark 16:15, CSB).

Study Overview

The theme for the 2024 Week of Prayer for North American Missions is “Make Jesus Known.” The focal Scripture verse is Mark 16:15, where Jesus gives His apostles final instructions before His ascension into heaven. These instructions are known as “The Great Commission.” Jesus commissions all His followers to tell the world about him. He wants everyone, everywhere to embrace Him as Lord and Savior.

We can’t all go into all creation, so we send missionaries. Our gifts to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering® provide the funds missionaries need as they train and serve all over North America, making the name of Jesus known. We are helping missionaries across North America when we support them through both prayer and giving.

Students will learn about the ministry of missionary Noelson Chery and his wife, Edna. Noelson and Edna are originally from Haiti. They planted a Haitian church called First Haitian Metanoia Baptist Church in Lansdowne, Pennsylvania, located on the outskirts of Philadelphia. They strongly believe in getting students involved in the life of the church. They want students to know they can be used mightily to build God’s kingdom.

Prepare for the Study

- For the promotion of the North American mission emphasis to your entire church, download resources at AnnieArmstrong.com/resources or order the free North American mission emphasis printed resources, including a theme poster, Annie Armstrong Easter Offering envelopes, a promotion guide and prayer guides from your state convention office. Ordering information can be found at AnnieArmstrong.com/StateConventions.
- Work with missions leaders and other church leaders to plan aspects of the study, such as scheduling, scope and promotion. Encourage these leaders to enlist church members to take ownership by helping in the planning and implementation of the study. You may choose to do the study as a special event or incorporate it into an existing meeting.
- Publicize the study through church bulletins, social media, churchwide announcements, newsletters and so forth.
- Ask small groups and church members to pray for the study outcome. Pray that individuals will be inspired as they learn about mission efforts in North America and will eagerly support those who are serving as missionaries with the North American Mission Board (NAMB).

- Consider enlisting an outside speaker, such as a North American missionary, to address the church before beginning the study or as part of it.
- Explore the website, AnnieArmstrong.com/resources, for resources that will enhance the learning experience for your church.
- Download the study materials and video segment for youth from the website, AnnieArmstrong.com/resource/youth-study.
- Other segments found online can be used anytime for study purposes or during the Week of Prayer and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering emphases. The video segment for youth features Noelson and Edna Chery in Lansdowne, Pennsylvania. If you don't have a way to show the video, share the story provided with the lesson plan.
- Order or download and print enough 2024 Week of Prayer bookmarks and prayer guides for each participant or family to have one of each. Bookmarks can be ordered from NAMB at AnnieArmstrong.com/resources.

Note: Your church has permission to download videos and other resources from AnnieArmstrong.com. Downloads are free. To order DVDs free of charge, call 1-800-634-2462 or email AAEO@namb.net. You can also check out NAMB's Facebook page at facebook.com/aaeo.sbc

Lead the Study

Introduction and Icebreaker Activity

Welcome students and introduce yourself in case you have students who don't already know you. Introduce the study using the information in the study overview.

Explain what the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering is and how your church participates. Note that all donations to the offering go directly to support missionaries in North America and their ministries.

Show students on the map that North America includes the United States and Canada, as well as the U.S. territories of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

During the Week of Prayer for North American Missions, we pray for missionaries and collect an offering for them named the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering.

Note: If you would like to share more about who Annie was and why the offering is named after her, go to AnnieArmstrong.com/who-is-annie. There you will find lots of information and a video.

Tell the students the theme for the 2024 Week of Prayer for North American Missions is "Make Jesus Known."

Read Mark 16:15 or ask a student to read the passage. Explain that a similar verse can be found in Matthew 28:8-10. Read this passage as well.

Set context by telling the students that Jesus spoke these words to His disciples right before He went back to heaven after He rose from the dead. (If some in your group don't know the story, you can briefly share.)

We call these verses “The Great Commission.” When a person is commissioned, it means they are given a job to do. Jesus gave all His followers—including us—the job of telling everyone the good news about Him. Jesus wants everyone, everywhere to know about Him.

Illustrate the point of being known by playing the icebreaker game below.

Icebreaker

In this activity, students will become known by other students by sharing their name, which school they go to, which grade they are in and either their favorite subject in school or a favorite hobby. You may want to create questions for this activity that are specific to your group.

Seat the students in a circle so they can see one another. Either go one-by-one around the circle or have students toss a beanbag or ball to the one who goes next. Just make sure everyone has a chance to be known.

Tell the students that Jesus wants everyone to know Him through the gospel, which means good news. Don’t take for granted that all your students know all the elements of the gospel. Explain the gospel in the simple terms below.

1. All of us have done things that don’t please God (sinned). God takes this very seriously and can’t let sin go unpunished.
2. Jesus, God’s Son, came from heaven to take the punishment for the sins of everyone in the world by dying on the cross.
3. After Jesus had been dead for three days, He came back to life (was resurrected) and appeared to many.
4. Because of what Jesus did, we are forgiven of our sins and can have a relationship with Him now and in eternity with Him, if we trust and follow Him and He is coming back again. That’s good news!

Take questions if needed. Jesus has commissioned all Christians to share the gospel with all nations. It is important we understand what the gospel is.

Transition to the video presentation of Noelson Chery. If you don’t plan to show the video, read the story below. Note that there may be information in the story that is not in the video and vice versa, so you may want to do both.

Tell students to listen attentively and even take notes. They will need to remember some of the facts presented for the recap activity that follows the lesson.

Lesson

Both Noelson and his wife, Edna, immigrated to the United States from Haiti. One thing they noticed about the average Haitian churches in the U.S. is that they were tailored toward adults by teaching in Haitian Creole, the native language of the adults but not the young people. And so, the Cherys started a home Bible study with their sons to teach them more about God using English. This Bible

study soon attracted more youth and their families, until it became a church called First Haitian Metanoia Baptist Church, which presently meets in a gym. That means members must set up and tear down every Sunday.

The Cherys strongly believe in getting youth involved in the life of the church. They want today's youth to know they can be used by God now even at their young ages. Youth are being disciplined and trained so they can minister to their generation and beyond.

At First Haitian Metanoia, every Sunday is "Youth Sunday", and youth are encouraged to serve. This fosters a sense of belonging, which is what drew a teenage girl named Keysha to attend this church. When asked why, Keysha says, "Because it involved not only the adults but also the youth. Sometimes the youth are just left behind. I felt important like I had a job to do. I felt involved."

Keysha came to the U.S. from Haiti as a young child. She has had a relationship with Jesus for many years. Her love for Him makes her want to be actively involved in the life of the church.

She says, "I was introduced to God at a really young age. Back in my country, I was part of just everything. I had a love for God. I had enthusiasm for Him, so I was part of everything. I was in a choir and all that sort of thing."

Today, Keysha is part of the worship team at First Haitian Metanoia, which is a role she enjoys. When asked what she thinks it takes to serve Jesus in His church, she says, "You don't have to really be gifted. You have to be selfless. It's not about you. You're not what's important. It's just getting everybody to connect with God—to be in that spiritual place with God. You have to be willing to just do whatever God needs you to do."

Bonus Information

First Haitian Metanoia Baptist Church is an unusual name for a church. The word metanoia is drawn from the Greek word for repentance, meaning to change one's mind and think differently. This is the word used by Jesus in Matthew 4:17. Noelson says, "If this is what Jesus used in His first message, it's got to be central to the gospel."

Recap

The group will be working in two teams to recall facts about the ministry of the Cherys and how the youth in their church are involved.

Items needed:

- 2-sided whiteboard or blank index cards
- 2 whiteboards or other markers

Divide the group into two teams. If you are using a whiteboard, have the teams stand on either side of it in their group. If using index cards, have the teams sit in their groups.

Allow each team to choose one person to write answers to the questions on either the whiteboard or the index cards. Answers should be numbered as the questions are asked so there is no mix-up.

Questions:

1. What are the names of the missionaries we are studying? *Noelson and Edna Chery*
2. In which state are they serving? *Pennsylvania*
3. From which country did the Cherys emigrate? *Haiti*
4. How did the church start? *From a Bible study*
5. Who do the Cherys strive to involve in the work of the church? *Youth*
6. What is the name of the teenage girl in the story? *Keysha*
7. How does Keysha serve in the church? *Worship team*
8. The church meets on Sundays in a gym presently. What types of things do you think need to be done every Sunday to prepare for the service that youth could help with? *Set up chairs, instruments, signage, and other things.*
9. Keysha says a person doesn't necessarily have to be gifted to serve, just _____.
Selfless
10. What does the word *metanoia* mean in Greek? *Repentance*

Go through the questions and tally the correct answers. Discuss areas in your church where youth can serve. Some suggestions are children's ministry and VBS (Kids love teenagers!), taking up the offering, worship team, church cleanup, serving food and helping otherwise at events, praying for people, visiting shut-ins, missions work—the list is endless!

Encourage your students to pray about where God would have them plug in at your church and commit to that area of service. Remind them not to neglect their relationship with God. He provides direction and fuel for the passion.

Transition to the prayer activity.

Pray

Pray for Noelson and Edna Chery and the other Week of Prayer missionaries. Distribute the prayer guides and bookmarks you downloaded or ordered from AnnieArmstrong.com/resources.

Using the prayer guide, verbally review the ministries and prayer needs of all the missionaries featured during the Week of Prayer for North American Missions.

Note that every dollar given to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering goes directly to resourcing the mission and ministry of these missionaries and more across North America. We emphasize the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering during the Easter season, but donations are accepted year-round.

Encourage students to set aside a designated sum of money year-round. Decorate a jar or box in which to put the funds and celebrate as God blesses and multiplies the amount.

Ask for volunteers to pray aloud for the needs of a specific missionary or missionary family listed in the prayer guide. Encourage students to use the bookmarks as reminders to pray for these and all missionaries in North America throughout the year.

Remind them as well to pray about where God would have them serve in their church.