



# Journey to Congo

A children's curriculum for VBS or  
Rotation Church School  
Adapted from *Congo Connection!*

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<http://globalministries.org/>



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# Welcome to Journey to Congo

In 2008 nine members of the Disciples denomination were privileged to visit the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) under the auspices of the Global Ministries. They were on a specific mission to establish a partnership with District of Mbandaka (pronounced mm-bonn-DOCKA), so that the witness of the church in both places might be strengthened. What the travelers found there was a strong, vital church that is reaching out beyond themselves in faithful ways. This delegation experienced generous hospitality and formed strong relationships in Christ with many Congolese brothers and sisters.



(Photo by John Richardson)

This curriculum has been designed to introduce the Congolese life in Mbandaka to children, youth, and adults through a fun, educational experience as it explores themes and Bible stories that will help us understand our kinship to Christians on the other side of the world.

Though written primarily as a VBS curriculum *Journey to Congo* can easily be adapted for use in a Rotation Model Church School or even a five week, once a week, event for children and youth. There is something for every type of learner — a few quiet moments, lots of active learning, Bible drama, art, music, dancing, and even eating together.

The Indiana Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) produced a 12 minute DVD that may be helpful to your teacher preparation and you may want to use part of the DVD as an introduction to the first session. A DVD about the Indiana delegation's visit to the Congo can be watched on-line or downloaded from [www.indianadisciples.org/congovideo.php](http://www.indianadisciples.org/congovideo.php). The DVD offers a personal experience of the joy of the people as they sing and dance, worshiping and praising God.

The Disciples/UCC Kids to Kids Office is grateful to writers, Diane Spleth and Susan McNeely, and to the Indiana Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) for letting this curriculum be revised and used as part of the new web-based Kids to Kids Mission Program.

Your feedback is welcome as you use *Journey to Congo*. We look forward to hearing the reaction and reflection of the children, youth and adults who participate.



# How to Use Journey to Congo

*Journey to Congo* can be used for a five day Vacation Bible School or you can adapt it for a flexible number of sessions for the rotation model Sunday School. You can even do five one-day sessions spread over five weeks. The time schedule can be adjusted for your needs as well.

The lesson plans for the Bible stories are designed so that volunteers with no teaching experience will find them easy to use. Do plan a Leaders' Meeting to give everyone an overview of the curriculum so that craft and game leaders will have a good understanding of the day's Bible story and Story Leaders will know what games and crafts the children are doing. Scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV).

Everything in the *Journey to Congo* can be tailored to your needs. For example:

- In larger churches, divide the children & youth into family groups (extended families are very important in Congolese culture), and have them rotate through the activities in smaller groups. Smaller churches with fewer children may find that all of the children can rotate through the stations or activities together.
- The food, whether a separate stop in the rotation or done as a part of the Worship rotation, can be as simple or complex as you choose. There are suggestions for both.
- This can work as an indoor or outdoor experience.
- Make *Journey to Congo* your own to make it work for your setting and context.



# Sample Schedules

*Adapt to your congregation's needs*

## **SCHEDULE A (3½ HOURS)**

5 Day Experience

5:30-6:10 p.m. Meal & Introduction

6:15-7:00 p.m. Rotation

7:05-7:45 p.m. Rotation

7:50-8:35 p.m. Rotation

8:40-9:00 p.m. Whole Group Gathering

## **SCHEDULE A (2 HOURS)**

5 Day Experience

10-15 minutes: Welcome & Introduction

Four Rotations of 25 minutes each

(Agape Meal is combined with Worship)

## **ROTATION SUNDAY SCHOOL (45–60 MINUTES)**

2 Rotations each week for 10 weeks



# A Brief Word about the Rotation Model

First, a caveat! This is really a modified rotation model curriculum with a lot of leeway built in for churches to adapt it to their needs.

A true Workshop Rotation Model takes one story and offers multi-media workshops over a period of four to five weeks on that same story so that children and youth become deeply immersed in the story in a variety of hands-on ways.



*Journey to Congo* takes one theme each day and offers “workshops” of shorter duration so that they will experience the theme in a variety of ways. It is a way of learning that attempts to appeal to all learning styles.

Art, music, food, games, drama, story-telling, puppets, computers and any other educational media you can imagine may be used to tell the story or share the theme for the day.

Teachers are responsible for one workshop or portion of the day’s activities and, unless you have only one group of children rotating through the activities, will repeat their lesson as many times as there are groups. This is great for teachers because they have only one thing to be responsible for each day, and it’s great for students because teachers are able to concentrate more time and attention on fewer preparations.

If you would like more information about a true Workshop Rotation Model, there is a wonderful comprehensive website: [www.rotation.org](http://www.rotation.org)

“The Workshop Rotation Model: A Brief Introduction & History,” a re-printable article, may be found at [www.rotation.org](http://www.rotation.org)



# Leaders & Facilities

(Remember there should be two adults, 18 years and older, with children at all times.)

## **JOURNEY TO CONGO COORDINATOR**

One or two people who will take overall responsibility for planning, inviting others to join the team, and supervising the event

## **PLANNING TEAM**

Several individuals who will plan the nuts and bolts of how your congregation will conduct *Journey to Congo*.

## **MATERIALS COORDINATOR**

One or two people who will make sure all materials needed for the event have been collected and are ready to go

## **1 TEACHER FOR EACH WORKSHOP/STATION**

One teacher who will be ready to teach/lead one activity each session. Depending on the size of the church, they may repeat their activity up to four times. Add 1 assistant for large groups of children.

## **1 ADULT GUIDE FOR EACH GROUP OF CHILDREN**

One adult to accompany each group of children through their rotation

## **AGAPE MEAL CREW**

2-3 persons for snacks, more for meals. With the coordinator they will plan, purchase, and serve.

## **SET-UP/TAKE-DOWN CREW**

6-8 people to help set up or take down, particularly if you are outside and need to move everything in and out each day

## **FOUR TO FIVE ROOMS OR AREAS, INSIDE OR OUT**

We can envision Journey to Congo working inside or out. Take a look at your facility and see what would work best for you. You will need four spaces if you combine the Agape Meal with Worship or five if you do an extra rotation for the Meal.



# Session Themes

✓ **PARTNERSHIP & PEOPLE**

✓ **HOSPITALITY**

✓ **WATER**

✓ **EDUCATION**

✓ **HEALTH**

THEME	STORY & SCRIPTURE	CRAFTS	GAMES	AGAPE MEAL	WORSHIP
<b>PARTNERSHIP &amp; PEOPLE</b>	God's covenant with Abraham Genesis 12:1-9; 17:1-8; John 17:17-21	Musical Instruments, Masks	Partnership Games	Intro to Congolese Foods: Fish, greens, rice, fruit juice, water	See "Worship" Section
<b>HOSPITALITY</b>	Abraham and Hospitality Under the Oaks of Mamre Genesis 18:1-8	Book Marks of local natural materials	<i>Younger Children:</i> "Stars & Catchers", "Snake" <i>Older Children:</i> "Catch the Tail"	Fresh Fruit: Pineapple, Bananas Juice/Water	Singing and Dancing, Story Sharing
<b>WATER</b>	Jesus and the Woman at the Well, John 4:1-15:39-42	Bowls, Water Carriers, Cups	"Fetching Water" or other water relays; "Balancing"	Fresh Fruit: Papaya, Mangoes Juice/Water	Singing and Dancing, Story Sharing
<b>EDUCATION</b>	God's Great Commandment, Deuteronomy 11:13-15; 18-21; The Boy Jesus in the Temple, Luke 2:41-52	Art Bead Necklaces, Folk Art Fabric	"Kisolo" (Mancala)	Fresh Fruit: Plantains Banana Chips Juice/Water	Singing and Dancing, Story Sharing
<b>HEALTH</b>	Jesus Heals the Ten Lepers, Luke 17:11-19	Book on a Stick, Family First Aid Kit	<i>Younger Children:</i> "Galloping Zebras", "Kasha Mu Bukondi", "Ameshi Ne Mpuki" <i>Older Children:</i> "Bokwele"	Fresh Fruit: Bananas, Pineapple Juice/Water	Singing and Dancing, Story Sharing





# Bible Story Lesson Plans

## PARTNERSHIP & PEOPLE

### SCRIPTURE

Genesis 12:1-9 and John 17:17-21

### OBJECTIVES FOR STORY TIME

Children will be able to:

- Understand and explain “covenant”
- Tell the story of God’s covenant with Abram
- Claim relationship as a part of the fulfillment of Jesus’ prayer in John 17

### MATERIALS NEEDED

Bibles for everyone, globe (be sure to have an updated one that identifies Congo and not Zaire), Bible-times costumes (can be very simple), paper, markers, pencils

### GETTING STARTED

Open with prayer thanking God for the children/youth present and for the church at work in the Democratic Republic of Congo, in the U.S. and in all the world. Thank God for the relationship between Global Ministries (Disciples and United Church of Christ denominational work) in Mbandaka.

Using the globe ask the children to find the Democratic Republic of Congo on the continent of Africa. Find your home state or province and show the distance to the Congo. Tell them that for over 100 years our churches have sent missionaries to the Congo until the church there got strong on its own. Many missionaries are still living and have a great love for the Congo and its people.

### Ask: (5 min.) — You know what a “promise” is, right?

Well, a covenant is sort of like a promise that people make to one another. Some people call a covenant a formal agreement. Often people write their covenant (agreement) down and they often give each other something to mark the covenant. (You can talk about a wedding and the exchanging of rings.)

The work of our churches through Global Ministries is the result of a covenant made with the Congo. We are partners together in sharing the Good News of God’s love in Jesus Christ. When covenants are made gifts are often exchanged. When members of the Disciples Denomination went to the Congo, they took a gift of Indiana limestone in the shape of their state. The people in the Congo gave them a beautiful carving of two men who are holding tools that show that they have carved their way through the rainforest toward each other (photo above).

### ASK someone to look up the John 17 text and read it.

Explain that Jesus is praying that someday the whole church will be united. Explain that in Global Ministries partnerships around the world we are working to make the church more united, one church like Jesus wants.

### BIBLE STORY: (15-20 MINUTES)

Have everyone find the Genesis story and ask for volunteers to read the story aloud. Tell everyone to listen closely because they will soon be acting it out. (Note that Abram and Sarai still have their old names. God will rename them Abraham and Sarah as a part of the covenant.)



(Photos by John Richardson)

*(Partnership & People continues next page.)*



## **PARTNERSHIP & PEOPLE (*continued*)**

### **PERFORM THE STORY**

Assign the following parts: Abram, Sarai, Lot, other family members and servants, sheep, goats. Looking back at the story in the Bible, invite the children to “write” the script. You can actually write it out if time allows, or simply act it out as you plan. Then perform the story as a whole, more than once if there is time. Kids love to repeat a performance!

### **WRAP-UP (3-5 MINUTES)**

**Ask: What was the covenant, the agreement, between God and Abram?**

(Abram would leave his home and family and country and travel to a place that God would show him and God would give him many children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren so that his people would become a great nation.)

**Ask: What do you think is the covenant between Global Ministries and the churches in Mbandaka?**

(That we will pray for each other, and communicate with each other, and help each other spread the Gospel of Jesus to everyone we can. And we will help take care of each other too.)

### **CLOSING PRAYER**

Offer the opportunity for any of the children to offer a thank you prayer for Global Ministries, mission partners working in Congo. Ask God to watch over all the people in Congo and all the people here at home.



## HOSPITALITY

### SCRIPTURE

Genesis 18:1-8

### OBJECTIVES FOR STORY TIME

Children will be able to:

- Understand and explain the concept of “hospitality”
- Learn how the Congolese people offer hospitality to visitors
- Tell the story of Abraham entertaining the visitors under the Oaks of Mamre
- Consider how we show hospitality to visitors
- Consider how we can show hospitality to our Congolese brothers and sisters even though they are very far away
- Say the Lingala word for “Hello”

### MATERIALS NEEDED

Bibles for everyone, large sheets of white or light colored construction paper for each child, markers, crayons, pencils, pens

### GETTING STARTED (3-4 MINUTES)

Offer a prayer thanking God that we are welcomed into fellowship with God every day. Ask that we may learn about offering hospitality to others.

### ASK — What does the word “hospitality” mean?

If no one has an idea ask them about hospitals. What happens at hospitals? (They take care of people.) Tell them that the words “hospitality” and “hospital” come from the same word. The main definition of hospitality is “kindness to visitors or strangers,” but it also means taking care of people’s needs.

### ASK — What kinds of things does your family do when you are expecting guests?

(Clean the house, cook special foods, set the table, make sure everything is ready, greet your friends warmly . . .)

### EXPLAIN:

The Congolese people are very hospitable. The people of the church there prepare for guests by cooking food, by gathering large crowds to welcome visitors, they sing and dance and smile and wave palm branches, they give gifts, and sometimes they even put beautiful fabric on the ground for visitors to walk on.

The language the people in Mbandaka speak is called Lingala and in Lingala instead of saying “hello” when you greet someone, you say, “mboté,” which is pronounced (m-bō-tay). Have the children practice saying mboté to each other a few times.

### BIBLE STORY: (7-8 MINUTES)

Tell them our Bible story today is about extending hospitality — taking good care of guests. Have everyone find Genesis 18:1-8 in their Bibles. Ask for volunteers to read the story and ask everyone to read along and listen closely.

### THEN ASK:

**Did you notice what the man’s name was in verse 1?** (Abraham; explain that the Abram of yesterday’s story is now called Abraham. God has given him a new name to mark the covenant between them.)

**Where was Abraham when the Lord spoke to him?** (Under the Oaks of Mamre [Mom-rä]; That was a grove of trees where Abraham and his family were trying to stay cool. It was hot out in the sun and having some shady trees to rest under was a blessing.)



The church at in the Democratic Republic of Congo welcomes U.S. visitors with song and dance and love. (Photos by John Richardson)

*(Hospitality continues next page.)*



## HOSPITALITY (*continued*)

### ASK:

**What did Abraham do when the Lord appeared to Abraham?** (He saw three men standing there and ran from the opening of his tent to greet them. He bowed down to the ground to them and said, “Please don’t go on by. Come in and rest under the tree and let me bring water to wash your dusty feet. Let me bring you something to eat and then you can go on your way.”)

**What did the men answer?** (Okay, we will do as you have invited us to do.)

**Who do you think the three men were?** (Answers will vary and Biblical scholars are divided on the answer. The text says, “The Lord appeared to Abraham,” so if the children say, “God” or “The Lord” that is a good answer. If they say, “angels or messengers from God,” that is also a good answer.)

### STORY BOARDS (15 MINUTES)

Invite the children to make a Story Board to tell this story. Have them fold a large piece of construction paper in half lengthwise and then in half the other way so there are four equal boxes. Using a black marker or crayon make a line down each fold. Each box will be a panel for the story board. The children will draw and write in the boxes to tell the story.

Panel 1 — Abraham sitting in the doorway of his tent sees the Lord and two others standing there.

Panel 2 — Abraham bows down and offers water and food and a resting place.

Panel 3 — Abraham asks Sarah to make some fresh bread and he prepares some meat.

Panel 4 — The three visitors sit under the tree and rest and eat and drink.

Assure the children that stick figures are fine — this isn’t a time to worry about great art work — the task is to tell the story in pictures and words. They can use captions or conversation bubbles above the characters’ heads to tell the story. Markers or crayons can be used to outline or color their creations. Have the children share their Story Boards, encouraging them to show appreciation for each other’s work.

### SAY:

**“We talked about the things we do at home when guests are coming to show hospitality to them. Now, think about the kinds of things we can do to be kind to kids at school, especially new kids or ones who have few friends? How can we show hospitality to our sisters and brothers in the Congo?”** (Pray for them, welcome them if they visit us by offering a comfortable place to sit, and something to eat and drink.)

Tell them that today we are making bookmarks to give away to other children, and that even though we will not meet the children who receive our gifts, they will know that our gifts mean we care for them.

### CLOSING PRAYER:

Close with a prayer circle asking God to help us make all strangers feel welcome.



## WATER

### SCRIPTURE

John 4:3-15, 39-42

### OBJECTIVES FOR STORY TIME

Children will be able to:

- Tell the story of Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well
- Demonstrate understanding of the Samaritan woman's role in the story both as a woman and as a Samaritan
- Recognize the importance of water to our physical lives and recognize that we share that in common with our partners in Congo
- Learn about the challenges people face in the Congo with regard to water
- Celebrate Jesus' gift of Living Water to the world



Neighborhood water well.  
(Photo by John Richardson)

### MATERIALS NEEDED

Bibles for everyone, at least one Bible with New Testament times map of Judea/Samaria/Galilee, a Bible-times picture book, clay or play dough (enough to make a good sized well and two figures) for each group, copies of the Bible story scripture page for each student to be used as a "script refresher" at the end of the session

### GETTING STARTED (4-5 MINUTES)

Open with a prayer thanking God for the abundant water we have in our lives and asking God's blessing on those who are doing without those things today. Ask that God will teach us how to share with sisters and brothers throughout the world who don't even enough to eat and who never have easy access to clean water to drink.

**ASK: How many times a day do you get a drink of water? Can you think of a time when you were really thirsty?**

Tell us about it. (Let everyone share who wants to.)

### BIBLE STORY: (8-10 MINUTES)

**Say: Today we're going to hear a story that begins one day when Jesus was tired and thirsty.**

Make sure everyone has a Bible. Offer to help them find the passage. Ask for volunteers to read the story. After verse 3, please stop and do two things. One, make sure everyone knows that "he" in this verse is Jesus, and take time to look at a map (in your Bible or the children's Bibles) to let the children identify Judea, Samaria, and Galilee so they can get a visual picture of that basic geography.

After verse 6, pause to show what Jacob's well might have been like, using a Bible-times picture book, or you can download the picture to the left at the following site: [www.godrules.net/pictures/Ssamaria.jpg](http://www.godrules.net/pictures/Ssamaria.jpg). Check your church and minister's libraries, your public library, or Bible book store for appropriate books.

Continue reading through v. 15, then skip to v. 39-42 and ask for a volunteer to read these verses.

**After the children finish reading the story, offer this background information:**

This is an amazing story because back in Jesus' day a man didn't talk to a woman in public unless she was a part of his family. It wasn't considered the right thing to do for a man to talk to a woman he didn't know. And, Jesus' people, the Jews, didn't talk to Samaritan people either.

For many years Jews and Samaritans disagreed about things they felt were important, like where the proper place was to worship God. The Jews didn't think the Samaritans kept God's laws very well so they wouldn't speak to them or have anything to do with them. They would never drink out of the same cup as a Samaritan.

*(Water continues next page.)*



## **WATER (*continued*)**

### **ASK:**

**Why do you think Jesus decided to ask the woman for a drink of water even though she was a woman and a Samaritan, two kinds of people most Jewish men wouldn't have spoken to?** (Kids might answer, "He was thirsty," "Jesus loves everybody," etc.)

### **ASK:**

**What kind of water did Jesus tell the woman he would give her?** (Living water that would keep her from ever getting thirsty again — that would become a gushing spring of life-giving water that would last forever)

### **ASK:**

**What did Jesus mean by living water? Did he mean that we really would never need another drink of water if we drink his water?** (Jesus means that if we love and accept him into our lives, he is like a stream of thirst-quenching water always running through our lives. He will keep us going spiritually like real water keeps us going physically.)

### **ASK:**

**The woman asked Jesus to give her some of that water so she wouldn't be thirsty and wouldn't have to always keep coming to the well. Why do you think going to the well was such a big thing to do?** (The well was outside the village so she had to walk there to get the water and walk back to her house carrying the heavy water. Our games today will give us a chance to see how heavy water is.)

### **ASK:**

**Are there still people today who have to go to wells far away to get their water and carry water back home again?** (Yes. In many places in the world people have to walk a long way to get clean water for their families to drink. Many children in the world get sick and even die because they live in places where there is no clean water to drink. In Mbandaka some people have water that comes from a faucet in their homes during certain hours of the day, but many people have to take big plastic jugs to the community well and fill them up every day and then walk back home with the heavy water so their families will have water to drink and cook with and wash in.)

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT WATER**

- Water weighs 8.35 pounds per gallon.
- In the United States, we use about 150 gallons of water per day per person.
- In the Congo, people use only about 10 gallons of water per day per person.
- <http://www.alhekma.com/challenge2020/global%20water%20consumption.htm>

### **BIBLE STORY ACTIVITY (10-15 MINUTES)**

Using home-made play doh, modeling clay, or any other type of clay that is easy to work, have the children work as a group to create a well and the two figures of Jesus and the Samaritan woman.

As they are working ask, **How many different ways do we use water every day?** (drinking, washing our hands, washing clothes, cooking, washing dishes, bath/shower, flushing toilets, watering gardens, etc.) **How do we use water on certain days or special days?** (swimming, filling the baptistery)

When they are finished making the figures, ask the children to tell you the story using the clay models. Pass out the Bible story scripture page so they can check the story if they need to before they tell it. Be sure everyone takes a turn in some way even if the group has to tell the story more than once.





## WATER (*continued*)

### CLOSING PRAYER

Ask the children to repeat today's prayer after you, line by line.

Dear God,

We thank you for Jesus  
and for his love  
which is the living water  
for the whole world.

We thank you for the Mbandaka people  
and ask that every one of them  
and every other person in the world  
will have clean water to drink today.

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.



Washing of hands before a group meal.  
(Photo by John Richardson)

### WATER BIBLE STORY SCRIPTURE PAGE

John 4:3-15, 39-42

Jesus left Judea and started back to Galilee. But he had to go through Samaria. So he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.)

Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." The woman said to him, 'Sir, you have no bucket and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?"

Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life." The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water."

Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I have ever done." So when the Samaritans came to him they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days.



## EDUCATION

### SCRIPTURE

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Matthew 22:36-40

### OBJECTIVES FOR STORY TIME

Children will be able to:

- Hear about some differences in schools in the U.S. and Congo
- Demonstrate understanding of the two Great Commandments
- Repeat the basics of the two commandments
- Name ways they can show their love of God
- Identify who “your neighbor” is
- Name ways they can show their love of neighbor
- Create and perform vignettes of loving God and neighbor



Students in their classroom  
(Photo by John Richardson)

### MATERIALS NEEDED

Bibles, paper, pencils, markers, a poster board or piece of newsprint for each group, a costume box with a variety of props for vignettes (hats, clothes, play money, cans or boxes of food, baseball glove, telephone, etc.) Let your imagination be your guide!

### GETTING STARTED (3-4 MINUTES)

Open with prayer thanking God for each person in the group, for friends and family, for neighbors, and for our sisters and brothers in Mbandaka. Ask God’s blessing on our story time today.

#### SAY:

Today we are going to learn some important things about how we’re supposed to live our lives as Christians. **Where do we usually learn things about our faith and about God and Jesus?** (at church, at home) **Where do we learn other things like how to read, how to add and subtract?** (at school)

Tell them that here in the United States all children can go to school for free, but in the Democratic Republic of Congo families have to pay for children to go to school. So not every child gets to go to school and learn to read and do math and all the other things we learn at school. Only children whose parents can afford the money to send them to school have the chance to learn all the wonderful things you all learn in school every day. Many families don’t have the money to buy school supplies, either, so one of our Indiana Region projects is helping children get school supplies so they can learn more easily.

#### ASK:

**Why is it important for us to learn things like how to read?** (lots of good answers; eventually we want to guide the discussion to an appreciation of being able to read so we can learn about God and Jesus and our faith) **Today we are going to read and learn about two very important commandments of God.**

#### ASK:

**What is a commandment?** (an order, or instruction) **Do you know what the two greatest commandments in the whole Bible are?** (If someone knows the answer — Love God with all your heart and soul and mind, and love your neighbor as yourself — that’s great! If so, tell them we’re going to look in the Bible to see the commandments. If not, tell them that we’re going to check in the Bible and learn them together.)

### BIBLE STORY (10-12 MINUTES)

Be sure everyone has a Bible and help them turn to the Table of Contents. Show them how the Bible is divided into two parts, the Old Testament and the New Testament.

**Explain very briefly** that the Old Testament contains books and stories that are very old. Here we find the stories of creation, the laws that God gave God’s people to live by, stories that tell about the people of Israel and Judah, the Jews, and stories about God’s prophets who reminded the people how God wanted them to live.





## EDUCATION (*continued*)

Tell them that the New Testament tells the story of Jesus' life and ministry on earth when he traveled around with his disciples, preaching and teaching and healing and helping people. The New Testament also tells the story of the early church and its most famous missionary, Paul. It shows us some of the joys and problems the first Christians had and helps us learn how to live as the church too.

Tell them that we are going to find the two greatest commandments by looking in both testaments. First, the Old Testament. Help everyone find Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and ask for volunteers to read the verses. Be sure to encourage the readers with help when needed and offering a compliment like, "Good job!" as they finish.

### ASK:

**What is the commandment in verse 5?** (You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.) Write the answers on a poster board or piece of newsprint with a marker as the children offer the answers. **What are some ways we can show that we love God with our whole selves?** (Listen for a wide variety of good answers: going to church, praying to God, doing what God wants, etc.) Add the answers to the poster board using a different color marker so the commandment stands out.

### SAY:

**I think God must have known the commandment would be hard for us so verses 6-9 offer some helpful ways to remember what God has commanded. What are they?** (Keep these words in your heart, recite these words to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. Bind them on your hand and on your forehead and write them on the door of your house and on your gates. Explain that these verses were put into small leather cases called phylacteries [fill-lack-tu-rees] that Jewish people wore on their foreheads and wrists. People still wore them in Jesus' day too. The cases contained these verses.)

### SAY:

**Now we're going to find the same commandment in the New Testament. Help them find Matthew 22:36-40.** Ask for volunteers to read.

### ASK:

As we read the verses in Matthew, what did you hear that is the same as the commandment in Deuteronomy? (Love God with all your heart and soul) What was different? ("mind" instead of "might;" there are two commandments instead of one — the second one is, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself") Add the differences and new information to the poster board using the same color as the first commandment so that they are all easy to spot later during prayer time.

## BIBLE STORY ACTIVITY (15 MINUTES)

### *Love Vignettes*

### ASK:

**Who is our neighbor?** (Everyone else is our neighbor. Not just the people who live close to us or go to school with us or people we know. Everyone in the whole world is our neighbor.)

### ASK:

**What kinds of things can we do to show that we love our nearby neighbors?** (be nice to everyone, be friends with kids other kids don't want to be friends with, help do small jobs for others, etc.) **What kinds of things can we do to show that we love our far-away neighbors, like the people in Mbandaka and other people around the world?** (pray for them, send a special offering to them, write letters to them)

### ASK:

**What kinds of things could someone else do for you that would make you feel like a beloved neighbor?** Tell the children that they will create and perform little mini-plays to show how we love God and our neighbor.

*(Education continues next page.)*



## **EDUCATION (*continued*)**

Invite them to look through the props you have gathered and help them come up with three or four vignettes, as time allows. This can be a whole group activity, where all the children cooperatively create and act out a scene of loving God or loving neighbor at a time. Or you can create groups of two or three and ask each group to come up with one vignette to perform for the others. Be sure everyone has the opportunity to participate.

### **CLOSING PRAYER**

Have the children stand in a circle and hold the poster board up for them to see so they can say the two Great Commandments together. Then offer a short prayer thanking God for God's love and for teaching us how to love too.



## HEALTH

### SCRIPTURE

Luke 17:11-19

### OBJECTIVES FOR STORY TIME

Children will be able to:

- Understand what leprosy in the story might have been and what it meant for those who were isolated because of their illness
- Recognize the power of God in Jesus
- Tell and act out the story of Jesus and the ten lepers
- Review what it means to be a Samaritan in the context of Jesus' place and time
- Recognize and thank God for the blessing and power of community
- Learn about the challenges of the health care system in the Congo
- Learn ways we can support the Congolese people in the area of health care



(Photo by John Richardson)

### MATERIALS NEEDED

Bibles, at least one Bible with maps that show Samaria and Galilee in the time of Jesus, signs that can hang around the actors' necks that say, "Unclean," "Do Not Touch!," bandages or gauze that can be taped or tied around hands, legs, arms, tunics, blankets

### GETTING STARTED (3-4 MINUTES)

Open with a prayer of thanksgiving for the children gathered, for the fact that we have doctors and hospitals and medicine when we need them, for the community of the church both locally and globally who support us in times of need.

Tell the children that today we will hear a story about Jesus healing 10 lepers and about what happened after they were healed.

**ASK: Do you know what Leprosy is?** (Let children answer)

**Then offer some background:** Leprosy is a very bad skin disease that people used to get in Bible-times and in some far-away parts of the world people can still get it. It was a very bad disease because it hurts and because when people got Leprosy they had to go away from their families and friends and synagogues where they worshiped God and go live by themselves or with other people who also had the disease.

They were considered "unclean." That didn't mean they were dirty, like they needed a bath. Instead it meant that they were not considered clean enough in their bodies and spirits to be with others. It's also true that Leprosy is contagious so that's the other reason they had to live apart from everyone else, so nobody else would get the disease.

To make matters more complicated, in Jesus' day if you had any kind of skin disease it was still called Leprosy and you still had to live apart from the community. Imagine what it must have felt like to be sick and have to go away from your Mom and Dad and brothers and sisters or husbands or wives or children and live by yourself. You couldn't even go to the market or to the synagogue to worship God. You lived outside of the town or village and if anyone started to come down the road close to you, you had to shout, "Unclean! Unclean!" so the travelers would be warned and not come near you. It was a way of protecting others from getting the disease but it probably made people feel very bad.

### BIBLE STORY (10-12 MINUTES)

Be sure everyone has a Bible and help them find Luke 17:11-19. Before you read the story have the children look at the map you have provided to see the region between Samaria and Galilee. Ask for volunteers to read the story. When you get to verse 16, there are two things to stop and talk about. First, make sure that everyone knows "prostrated" means "lying down on the ground with your face on the ground." In this case the man probably threw himself down in submission to Jesus. And second, review the material from the lesson on Water about what it means to be a Samaritan (pg. 16).



## HEALTH (*continued*)

**ASK: What is surprising about this story?** (The children may have many good answers: Jesus could heal people, Jesus didn't run away from the "unclean" people, only one person came back to thank Jesus, that person was a Samaritan)

**ASK: Why did Jesus tell the ten lepers to go show themselves to the priests?** (Because in that tradition people who were set apart from the community couldn't go back to their homes or villages until the priest looked at them to see that they were well.)

**ASK: Why do you suppose only one of the healed lepers came back to find Jesus and thank him?** (Maybe the rest of them just kept going to the priests, maybe the nine were so excited they just went home, etc.)

**ASK: How would you feel if you were one of the ten lepers who Jesus healed?** (All answers are acceptable) **Do you think you would run back to find Jesus and say thank you? Why or why not?** (again, all answers are acceptable)

**ASK: What must it have been like for the ten lepers to finally get to go home and be with their families and friends?** (exciting, happy, etc.) **What is it about being with family and friends that is so wonderful?** (Family and friends love you, take care of you, they are fun to be with, you can eat together and play and work together, you can worship with others, you have someone to talk to, etc.)

**ASK: What do you and your family do when you get sick?** (Call or go to the doctor, take medicine, if we are really sick we go to a clinic or to the hospital)

### **SAY:**

Sometimes in the Congo where our partners in Mbandaka live they get sick too, but they aren't always able to get help from a doctor or hospital. Sometimes there is no medicine or even bandages available if they need them. Most places in North America have paved streets and ambulances to take sick or hurt people to the hospital. In Mbandaka most of the roads are dirt roads and there aren't very many cars or trucks of any kind. (You may want to say something here about whatever project you have decided to support with your VBS offering. Find information on special projects in Congo at <http://globalministries.org/africa/countries/democratic-republic-of-the-congo/>.)

## **BIBLE STORY ACTIVITY (15-16 MINUTES)**

### **Jesus & the Ten Lepers — A Play**

**Actors:** Jesus

The one leper who returns to thank Jesus

The lepers who go on their way

This is a great story to act out. Ask for a volunteer to be Jesus and the rest will be lepers, no matter if there are more or fewer than ten. Designate one person to be the leper who returns to thank Jesus. Pass out tunics and bandages and signs so that everyone has a costume. Signs can easily be made ahead with poster board or heavy paper, markers, a hole punch and yarn.

Use the script (page 25) and/or let the children ad lib, keeping to the spirit of the Bible story.

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

Gather the children in a circle and give them a minute to quiet down. Ask the children to think about the story they have just portrayed and ask them to offer a prayer thanking God for something we've talked about today (like good health or family) or a prayer asking God's blessing on those who are ill or alone. If some children are shy, reassure them that even one sentence is a good prayer, but don't insist that everyone pray.



## HEALTH (*continued*)

### JESUS AND THE 10 LEPERS — A PLAY

Jesus walks down the road, humming to himself (I've Got the Joy, Joy, Joy or a similar song). While he's still pretty far from them a group of lepers standing by the side of the road begins to shout at him.

All the Lepers: (*Shouting*) **Unclean! Unclean! Don't touch us! Stay away!**

Leper #1: **Hey wait you guys!** (*The others stop shouting at Jesus and listen.*)

Leper #2: **What? Wait for what?**

Leper #1: **Wait a minute! I think that could be that man, Jesus of Nazareth, that we've heard about!**

Leper #3: **You mean the one they say can heal people and make them well?**

Leper #1: **Yes, that's the one! I think it really might be him!**

Leper #4: **Then maybe he can help us!**

Leper #2: **Nah, nobody can help us. Everybody's scared of us — he won't help.**

Leper #1: **Well, I don't know about you, but I'm going to try!** (*He looks at Jesus who is still coming toward them.*) **Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!**

All of the lepers: **Yes, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us! Have mercy on us! Heal us, please!** (*Jesus arrives just then right where they are and looks at them.*)

Jesus: **Yes, I do have mercy on you. Go and show yourselves to the priests.**

(*All of the lepers turn around and start going down the road and as they are walking they begin to notice that they are healed. They peek under their bandages and then pull them off. They are happy and excited.*)

All of the lepers: (*Choose one phrase to say*) **I can't believe it! I'm so excited! Look, my skin is all healed! Look, my skin is as soft and smooth as a baby's skin! This is unbelievable! Wait till the priest sees this — he's not going to believe it! This can't be happening! All this time I've been a leper and now look at this! What a day! Amazing, I'm well!**

All of the lepers but one: **Let's go home! I can't wait to see my family! I can't wait to eat some home cooking! I'm outa here! Yippee!** (*Nine of the lepers take off down the road, joyfully. The Samaritan leper turns around and goes back to where Jesus is standing.*)

Samaritan Leper: (*falls down on the ground at Jesus' feet and buries his face in his hands*)

**Thank you, Master! Thank you so much, Jesus! Thank you! Thank you!**

Jesus: **H'mmm. Weren't there ten of you I healed just now? Where are the other nine? Didn't any of them come back to say thank you? Only this foreigner came back?**

(*Jesus pauses for a minute. Then he reaches his hand down to the healed leper and helps him up.*)

**Get up now and go on your way home too. Your faith has made you well.**

(*The Samaritan Leper goes on his way down the road, joyfully, skipping and singing and saying.*)

**Thank you Lord!**

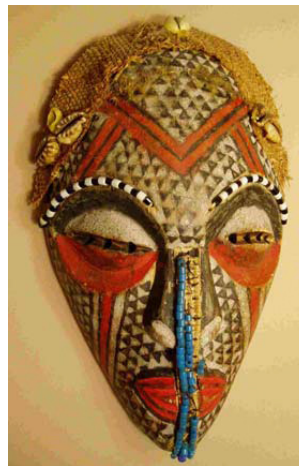


# Crafts

Each craft idea is designed to complement the day's theme but if there are other crafts that will work better for your application please feel free to substitute them.

There are two choices of crafts for the first theme — Partnership & People. We suggest that you do the musical instruments so that the children will have them that day and every day after to use during worship time. We realize, though, that some of the instruments may take more than one session to complete, particularly if children want to make more than one thing. We've also included a second craft for that day.

If you intend to offer both the musical instruments and the masks you will have some children who will not be able to complete all their crafts in one session. We have addressed that by offering a simple craft for the second day's theme — Hospitality. Most children should be able to complete that craft in less than the time allowed for crafts so they can then finish what they began the day before, so be sure to have both sets of materials available at your second session.







## INSTRUMENTS: PARTNERSHIP & PEOPLE

We suggest that you have the children make musical instruments during the craft time on the first night of crafts. They will be able to use their instruments during the singing and dancing time all week long. Be sure to let them decorate their instruments with crayons, paint, beads, string or whatever!

Some directions for instruments follow, but we also suggest you check out the following web sites:

<http://www.kinderart.com/teachers/9instruments.shtml>

<http://www.artistshelpingchildren.org/musicalinstrumentsartscraftsideashandmadekids.html>

<http://cnx.org/content/m11889/latest/>

### TYPES OF INSTRUMENTS:

- Tambourines
- Hand chimes
- Drums
- Shakers
- Gongs
- Sticks
- Stringed instruments



Shakers (Photo by John Richardson)



Small Talking Drum



Turtle Shell Thumb Piano



Playing a Talking Drum  
(Photo by John Richardson)



## INSTRUMENTS (continued)

Collect materials in advance.

### DRUMS

The “drums” can be played by hand or with the suggested drumsticks. The sounds produced by the sticks can be varied by adding a cork or rubber ball to the end of the stick, or wrapping stick with felt or yarn.

Drums	Drumsticks
Milk jugs	Unsharpened pencils
Large, hard plastic bottles	Dowel sticks
Buckets	Bamboo (e.g., plant stakes)
Oatmeal boxes or similar	Brushes (basting, scrub, wire)
Coffee cans with plastic lids (different sounds)	Spoons
Pots and pans	

### SHAKERS

All kinds of fillers can be put in different containers — just try them out for sound!

Containers	Fillers
Paper bags	Pebbles, buttons, beads, sand
Plastic eggs	Un-popped popcorn
Small metal boxes (e.g., Altoids®)	Beads, sequins, or buttons (Different sizes make different sounds)
Hollow balls (e.g., tennis balls)	Pebbles, beads

### CYMBALS, GONGS, BELLS, HAND CHIMES

Hold these instruments by a handle or suspend them from a piece of string to get a good sound.

- Metal bowls with no base
- Trashcan lids
- Metal pie plates
- Chimes from a wind chime
- Jingle bells (place on a string and shake)
- Bottle caps with holes (to string)





## INSTRUMENTS (continued)

### STICKS AND CLICKS

- Dowels (1" diameter, 6-8" long)
- Large stick for beating on floor
- Thick bamboo spoons (hold two back-to-back in one hand, strike against other hand or leg)
- Large buttons (tie to thumb and middle finger to make finger castanets)
- Keys on a ring

### TAMBOURINES

Staple or glue the plates together (cover staples with tape). Punch holes around the rim of the plates and attach jingle bells with string.

- Heavy paper plates
- Hole punch
- Glue or stapler
- String
- Jingle bells

### OTHER PERCUSSION

- Wooden blocks (4" pieces of 2 x 4) and sandpaper (stretch sandpaper over block and staple). Rub two blocks together to play
- Cheese grater — rub with a dowel or wooden spoon

### STRINGED INSTRUMENTS

An amazing variation of sound can be obtained by stretching a rubber band across an open box. The bands can be tightened or loosened by easing them over the edge, allowing the player to “tune” to various pitches. Rubber bands of different sizes will produce different sounds. These can sound much like a thumb piano.

- Metal, wooden, or stiff cardboard boxes rubber bands of various sizes and widths
- Combs and tissue paper (wrap paper around comb, hum with comb in mouth)
- Narrow neck bottles (blow across the tops, add water to vary pitch)



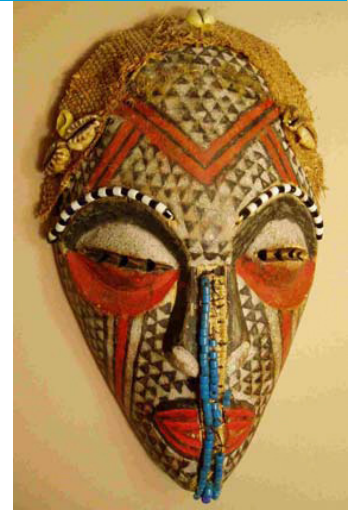
## MASKS — PARTNERSHIP AND PEOPLE

We do suggest that you make instruments during the first craft session so that you will have them available for worship in all subsequent sessions of Journey to Congo (See the “Singing and Dancing” and “Instruments” sections.) However, these masks offer a second craft option for “Partnership & People” day.

Masks have been made by the Congolese people for hundreds of years. All kinds of materials are used for the masks — wood, beads, fabric, shells, feathers, paint, and so on. Several suggestions for masks construction are included in the links below, or use your imagination with the suggested materials.

### MATERIALS:

- Paper plates (cut out eyes and mouth, punch holes in sides and add string ties)
- String (to tie on) or craft sticks (to hold in front of the face)
- Paint or markers
- Raffia or yarn
- Shells, beads, buttons, construction paper to make designs to glue on



### HERE ARE SOME RESOURCES WITH MORE DETAILS FOR MASK CRAFTS:

- <http://www.scissorcrafter.com/masks.htm>  
This page has coloring sheets that would be good for small children.
- <http://www.childfun.com/index.php/activity-themes/our-world/726-africa-activity-theme.html?>  
Paper plate masks
- <http://www.thebestkidsbooksite.com/craftdetails3.cfm?CraftID=15>  
Paper plate masks on a craft stick (good picture)
- [http://www.dltk-kids.com/world/africa/make\\_an\\_african\\_mask.htm](http://www.dltk-kids.com/world/africa/make_an_african_mask.htm)  
If you want to make a REALLY big mask or shield for a wall decoration — will take more time.



## BOOKMARKS — HOSPITALITY

Today's craft is making bookmarks from materials that are native to your area. Have the children make one to share and one for themselves.

### MATERIALS:

- Heavy construction paper cut into strips 1.5" or 2" wide, 5" – 6" long
- Extra colors of paper to use to create a collage effect
- Markers
- Glue
- Scissors
- Pens (to write names on the back)
- Native natural materials — leaves of various shapes, corn, wheat and other decorative grasses, small flowers, regular lawn grass
- Clear contact paper

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Gather the materials before the session or let the children gather them in the churchyard.
2. Spread glue on the front of the bookmark and place the leaves, etc. on top in a pattern or randomly.
3. Let the glue dry and then sandwich the bookmark between two pieces of clear contact paper cut slightly larger than the construction paper.



## WATER CONTAINERS — WATER

### IDEAS FOR GOOD STEWARDSHIP OF THE EARTH

1. Collect half gallon plastic jugs (clean them well) and let the children decorate them with markers, beads, colored yarn, and so on. These can be used at home by filling them with water and keeping them in the refrigerator. This reduces the need for bottled water. They also could be used in the “Fetching Water” activity.
2. Purchase inexpensive re-usable water bottles (#’s 2, 4, or 5 are fine; do not re-use commercial water bottles that are designed for a one time use; please do not use any bottle with a #7 on the bottom — they are not safe for children or adults to drink from) or cups and allow the children to decorate them. They can write their names on the bottles using a permanent sharpie and use them for their liquid refreshments, eliminating the need for disposable cups. As the children work, talk about why you are making more permanent water containers.

### GOURD OR PAPER MÂCHÉ BOWLS

Bowls are often made from gourds. If you do not have gourds available, you can simulate this by making paper mâché bowls. Practice this activity in advance to determine how long it will take for the bowls to dry — remember, children tend to use a lot of glue! See ChildFun:

<http://www.childfun.com/index.php/activity-themes/our-world/726-africa-activity-theme.html?start=1>

### MATERIALS:

- Newspaper torn into 1" x 3.5" strips (approximate)
- Liquid glue, can be thinned with water
- Plastic wrap
- Plastic bowls (disposable)
- Paint
- Clear acrylic spray

### INSTRUCTIONS:

Turn the disposable bowl upside down and cover with plastic wrap. Dip the strips of newspaper in glue and apply to the bowl, overlapping the strips. After the bowl is completely covered with newspaper, repeat with one or more additional layers. When the bowl is completely dry, remove the plastic wrap and bowl. Trim the top edge of the newspaper strips to make a circular rim. Paint the bowl and spray with clear acrylic.

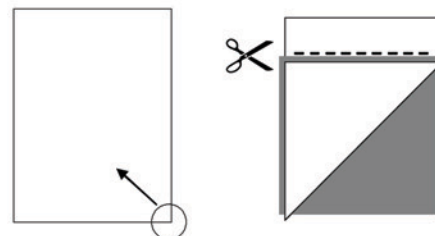
**Remind the children that these are for decoration and not for eating.**

## PAPER CUPS — WATER

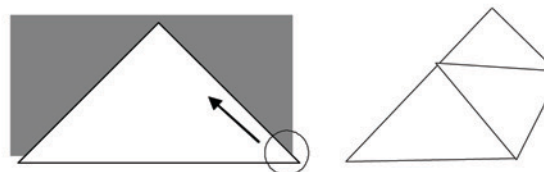
### EMERGENCY PAPER CUPS

Have you ever been caught without a cup for drinking?  
Did you know you can make a cup from a sheet of paper?  
Here's how.

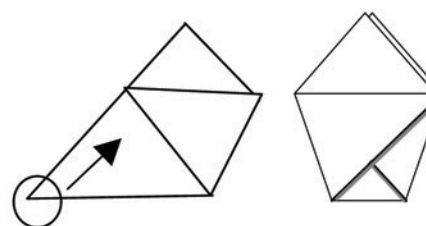
Place an 8.5" x 11" piece of paper vertically in front of you.  
Fold the lower right corner over to the left side of the paper.  
Cut off the part of the paper at the top that is a single layer.



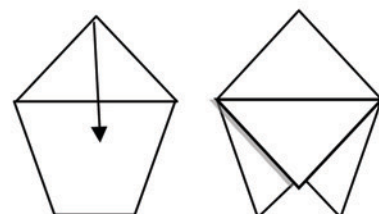
Turn the folded triangle so the point is at the top.  
Fold up the right hand corner to about the midpoint  
of the left-hand side of the triangle.



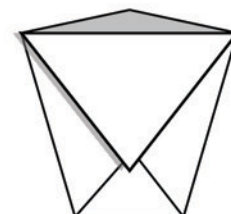
Fold the left-hand point of the large triangle up to the top of the  
right-hand fold.



Fold the top point (front side only) down over the last fold  
and crease well at the top. Fold down the remaining piece at  
the top and crease well.



Squeeze the sides to open the cup. Remind the children that these  
cups get soggy quickly, so they are good only for a quick drink!





## AFRICAN TRADE BEAD NECKLACE — EDUCATION

Some African beads were brought to the continent by outsiders, but many were made by the Africans themselves from native materials.



### RESOURCE

<http://www.crayola.com/crafts/detail/african-trade-beads-craft/>

### MATERIALS:

- Construction paper or wrapping paper
- Toothpicks
- Colored string or yarn
- Small beads for spacers

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Cut small thin triangles from the construction paper or wrapping paper.
2. Starting at the wide end of the triangle, wrap the paper around the toothpick, keeping the triangle centered.
3. Place a drop of glue on the pointed end to seal the wrap.
4. When the glue is completely dry, remove the paper bead from the toothpick.
5. String the paper beads on string or yarn.
6. Separate the paper beads using smaller beads or knots as spacers.

### VARIATIONS:

You can place larger beads or wooden objects at the middle of the necklace. Instead of, or in addition to, the paper beads, you can use beads from old costume jewelry.

There is another craft for the “Education” section on the next page.





## FOLK ART FABRIC — EDUCATION

You have probably seen some of the beautiful African fabrics in pictures and videos. Here is a chance to make some of your own design. After the paper from the bag is soaked, it will look like tapa or bark cloth.

### RESOURCE

<http://www.crayola.com/crafts/detail/folk-art-fabric-craft/>

### MATERIALS:

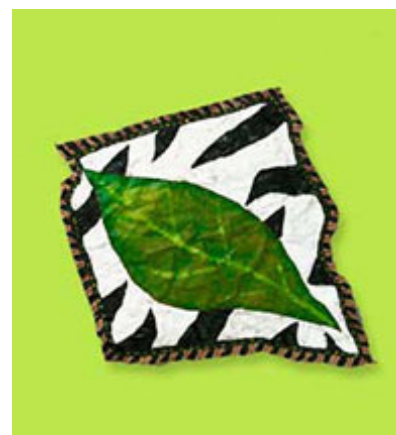
- Brown paper bags
- Scissors
- Newspaper to cover work area
- Heavy object
- Fine line markers
- Water colors and brushes

### INSTRUCTIONS:

NOTE: The first 3 steps may need to be done in advance if you have only one session for this craft.

1. Cut out various shapes, such as squares, ovals, or irregular shapes from the paper bags. The size of the shapes will determine the size of the final craft project.
2. Soak the paper in water. Wring out the paper over a sink.
3. Lay the wet paper out on a newspaper-covered table and press it down with a heavy object to keep it flat while it dries.
4. When the paper is completely dry, use fine markers to draw out a geometric design or one based on natural materials, such as leaves, trees, a river or animal.
5. Finish the design by filling in with watercolors.
6. After the design is dry, you could add some decorative touches, such as a leaf, yarn around the edges, braid, and so on.

The finished cloth could be glued to a scrapbook to make a lovely book cover, or glued to a blank note card.





## BOOK-ON-A-STICK — HEALTH



### RESOURCE

<http://www.crayola.com/crafts/detail/book-on-a%20stick-craft/>

### MATERIALS:

- Blank white paper, 8.5" x 11"
- Scissors
- Construction paper
- Large paper clips
- Rubber bands
- Hole punch
- Sticks (dowels or straight found sticks, about 6" long)
- Crayons or markers for decorating

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Cut at least three pieces of paper in half, then in half again. Stack the pages.
2. Cut out two pieces of construction paper that are slightly larger than your paper stack.
3. Decorate the construction paper with African designs (see books on book list).
4. Place the stack of paper between the covers of the book. Paper clip them together along a long side. Punch two holes in the long side of the book (not too close to the edge).
5. Thread a rubber band through the one of the holes. Slip the stick through the loop of the rubber band that is on the front side of the book. Then thread the end of the rubber band from the back side of the book through to make a loop on the front side, and slip the stick through that loop. The stick should be on top of the book with a loop of rubber band around each end of the stick.





## FAMILY FIRST-AID KIT —HEALTH

### RESOURCE

<http://www.crayola.com/crafts/detail/family-first-aid-kit/>

### MATERIALS:

- Empty box with a lid
- Construction paper or white copy paper
- Crayons
- Glue
- Scissors
- Paper to fit inside lid with local emergency phone numbers already printed on it and room to write personal emergency phone numbers, like Mom and Dad at work, near neighbor, Grandparents, etc.
- First aid supplies

### INSTRUCTIONS:

Cut out construction paper to cover the lid and sides of the box.

Draw pictures of first aid items on the paper, and glue it to the box. Glue the list of emergency numbers inside the box lid. First aid supplies may be placed in the box during the craft time (band-aids, bandages) or at home (things adults will choose to place in the box, like first-aid cream).





# Games

Most children in the Democratic Republic of Congo do not have elaborate toys, nor do they participate in many organized sports. They enjoy soccer, just as many North American children do.

Beyond some sports, children in the Congo let their imaginations run free, and they can make up games from the objects and spaces at hand. Simple games, such as Drop the Hanky or Duck, Duck, Goose, are a good American approximation of the types of games that would be played in the Congo, though their games would be different.

Children in Mbandaka play with what is at hand. For instance, travelers to the Congo have seen children playing with a hoop, rolling it along the ground much as people in our country did in the 1800s. Like children all around the world, Congolese children play with the things that are available.

The following pages include suggestions of games for each day, but you should feel free to substitute games such as those listed above, if you are more comfortable with them. For the “Partnership and People” and “Water” themes, the activities are directly related to the theme for the day; if you do substitute on those lessons, please try to use activities that also are related to the themes.



## GAMES — PARTNERSHIP & PEOPLE

Today's theme is about finding ways for people to come together and cooperate on projects. Here are two suggestions, but you may know other games that emphasize cooperation. Each of the games can be played more than once, if you have enough time.

### REFERENCE:

The New Games Book, Andrew Fluegelman, editor. Dolphin Books/ Doubleday and Company, New York, 1976.

### STAND UP (Ages 8 and up)

**Equipment:** None

**Rules:** Children form pairs. Each pair sits on the ground, back to back with their knees bent. The two players link arms at the elbow and try to stand up. After everyone has managed to stand up, try the same activity, but with three people instead of two. You can try it with four or more people, but it gets more and more difficult as you add people. The secret to getting a larger group up is to sit close together and all stand up quickly at exactly the same time.

### KNOTS (Ages 8 and up)

**Equipment:** None

**Rules:** This will require about a dozen players at a minimum, but can be played with many more. Players stand in a circle, shoulder to shoulder. They extend their hands into the center of the circle and everyone grabs hands with two different people. No one should be holding hands with a person beside them. Now you have a KNOT! The task is to unravel the knot by stepping over linked hands, crawling under linked hands, and sometimes turning around, always without letting go of hands. It's sometimes necessary to pivot a handhold without breaking the grip, in order to avoid straining arms too much. When the knot is successfully untangled, you will have one large circle or two smaller ones. Once in a rare while, a knot will be so tangled that it is not solvable — in that case, just decide where to break the chain and start again.

**For very young children, substitute games from the “Hospitality” or “Health” games pages.**



## GAMES — HOSPITALITY

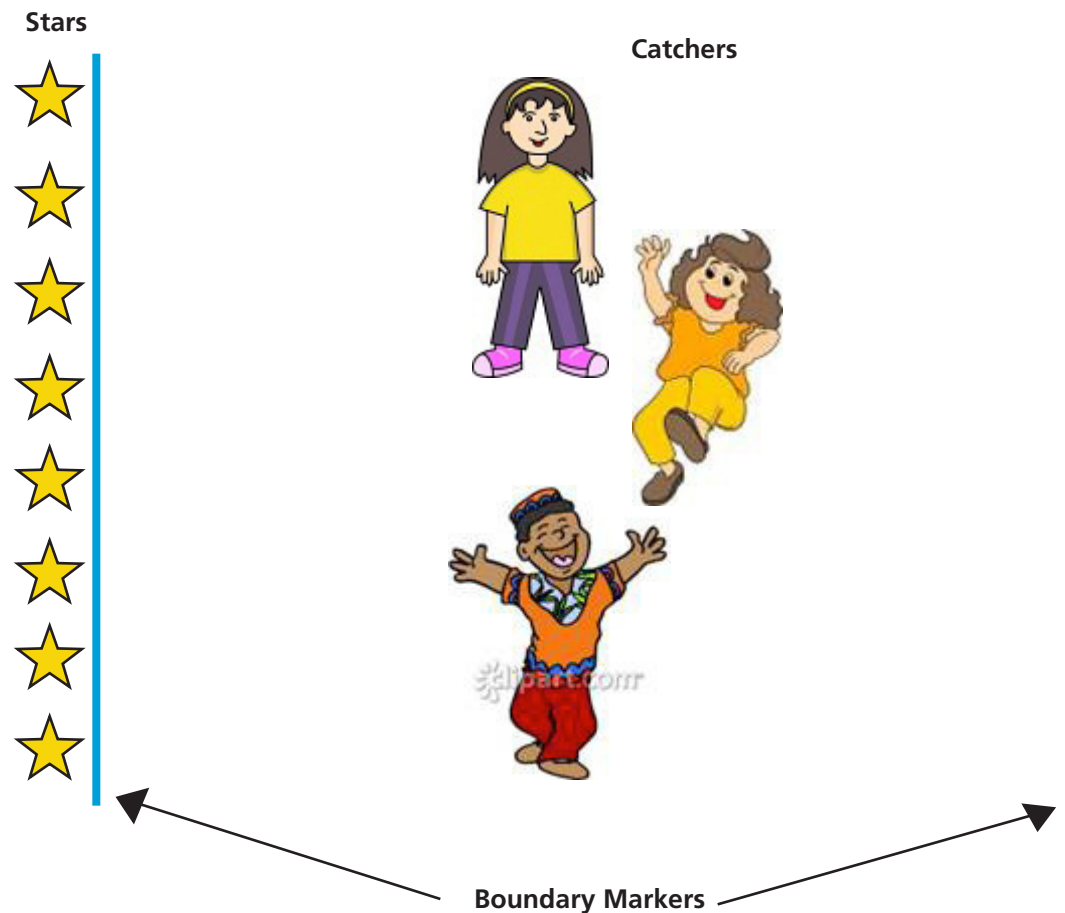
### STARS AND CATCHERS (Ages 4-8)

**Equipment:** None

**Playing area:** Set up two parallel boundaries, about 20 feet apart

**Rules:** Three children are Catchers, and stand in the middle of the playing area. The other children are “Stars”, and stand on one of the boundaries. The catchers chant: “Star light, star bright, how many stars are out tonight?” The Stars answer: “More than you can catch!”, and run for the other boundary, trying not to be tagged. Tagged Stars become Catchers, and the game continues until all the Stars are caught. The last three Stars to be tagged become the Catchers in the next game.

#### INITIAL SETUP





## GAMES — HOSPITALITY

### CATCH THE TAIL (Ages 6 and up)

**Equipment:** Handkerchiefs or bandanas

**Rules:** Players divide into teams of 5 or so players each. The teams are placed evenly around the perimeter of the playing area. The teams join hands, and a handkerchief or bandana (a “tail”) is dangled from a pocket or belt of the player at each end of the line. A person at one end of the line, the “chief”, leads the team in a chase, trying to capture the “tail” from another team without allowing theirs to be captured. The first team to capture a “tail” wins.

---

### SNAKE (All ages)

**Equipment:** None

**Rules:** One player is the head of the snake. The “head” tries to tag another player. When tagged, the player holds hands with the head and becomes the “tail” of the snake. The two players then chase other players. When tagged, they are added to the snake at the head or tail (depending on who tagged them). The snake grows until all players are part of the snake.

Thanks to this web site (<http://www.motherlandnigeria.com/games.html>) for these 2 games.



## GAMES — WATER

### FETCHING WATER (All ages)

Each day many Congolese women and children walk a long way, sometimes miles, to fetch water for their families. Most American children have no sense of what it means to carry water for a long distance.

#### EQUIPMENT:

- Items that can be used as “obstacles” (chairs, boxes, steps, etc.)
- Containers for carrying water (half-gallon jugs, bowls, plastic buckets)
- A water source



#### RULES:

Set up a path, perhaps around or over some obstacles in the area (for example, around chairs or over steps). Have the children line up at the start, and one by one let them carry a container of water over the course of the path without spilling any. The path can either be circular, or the children can go to the end of the path and return to the starting point. For young children, a half-gallon jug partially filled with water may be appropriate. More water can be added for older children. For junior high children, a 5 gallon bucket, half to three-fourths full, could present a challenge. It is important that the distance traveled be long enough and the weight of the water be heavy enough that the children have an appreciation for what their Congolese counterparts do every day. However, be sensitive that some children will find this more of a challenge than others, and do not let them be teased if they find the task too hard.

#### FOLLOW-UP:

After everyone has had a chance to carry the water, be sure to discuss how the children felt as they carried their burden. Remind them that many children, no older than they, carry far heavier loads over much longer distances every day. If they do not, they will have no water to drink.

### BALANCING ON YOUR HEAD (All ages)

Everywhere in Congo you see people carrying things on their heads - water, bread, packages, baskets, anything you can imagine. Let your children see if they can do the same.

**Equipment:** A variety of objects that can be carried on the head — bowls, books, baskets, buckets, blankets, bread, and other things that don't begin with “B”.



**Rules:** Players divide up into teams. Team members have to reach a goal while balancing an object on their heads. If they drop it, they must return to the start and begin again. When they reach the goal, they hurry back to the start line and hand the object to the next member. The first team to have all of its members reach the goal wins. Use objects of more or less difficulty depending upon the ages of the children (for example, a big folded towel for younger children, a book or a bucket of water [using one hand to balance] for older children). You may also decide whether it's allowed to use one hand to help balance more difficult objects, such as a bucket of water or a bowl of bread!

**This can also be done as a non-competitive activity**, simply allowing each child a chance to try and walk a certain distance while balancing different objects, with and without using a hand to hold it on their head.



## GAMES — EDUCATION

*Since these are games played in many different parts of the African continent, the names are not necessarily in the Lingala language which is the language spoken in Mbandaka.*

### KISOLO OR MANCALA (All ages)

Variations of this game are played all over Africa, as well other parts of the world. These instructions are for a simple version of the game.

#### EQUIPMENT FOR ONE PLAYING SET:

You will need one playing set for every two players, but you may want to have enough materials so that each child can make a set and take it home.

- Egg carton
- Small box
- 48 small markers (pebbles, buttons, shells, beans, or similar)

#### ASSEMBLING THE PLAYING BOARD:

Cut the egg carton apart, so that the top is separated from the bottom that has the egg wells. Glue the bottom of the egg carton to a piece of cardboard that is slightly longer than the carton. Glue each half of the small box at the ends of the egg carton. Children can decorate the game board with markers or paint, if you wish.

Alternatively, you can cut the top of the egg carton in half, and place half of it at each end of the bottom to make two containers for the markers.



**Rules:** Two players sit across from each other and place the game between them. Each player's collection box is to his or her right. Fill the "bins" (cells in the egg carton) with four markers in each one. The object is to get the most markers in your collection box.

The first player takes all the markers from one of the bins; one marker is dropped in the bin to the right of the empty bin, and continuing counterclockwise, the remaining markers are dropped. If the player comes to his or her own box, a marker is dropped there. If the player still has tokens after reaching the collection box, the markers are dropped in the opponent's bin until they are gone. Don't drop a marker in the opponent's collection box. If a turn ends in your own box, you may take an extra turn. If it ends in an empty bin on your side of the board, you may take all of the markers in the opponent's bin opposite where the last marker was played and put them in your box.

The opponent plays next. When all the bins on one side of the board are empty, the game is over. The person with the most markers wins.





## GAMES — HEALTH

### GALLOPING ZEBRAS (Ages 3-8)

Reference: <http://www.childfun.com/>

**Equipment:** A drum and beater (can be one of the drums made in craft time)

**Rules:** Children stand in a large circle and pretend to be zebras. One child stands in the middle of the circle and beats on a drum, changing from fast to slow rhythms and back again. The children gallop around in a circle to the beat of the drum.



### KASHA MU BUKONDI (ANTELOPE IN THE NET) (Ages 3-8)

**Equipment:** None

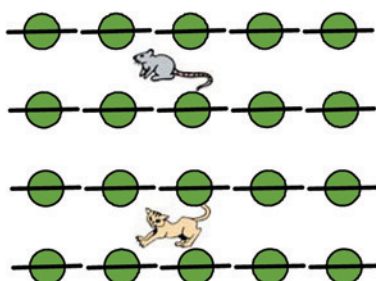
**Rules:** One child is chosen as the antelope. The other players join hands and form a circle around the antelope and chant: “Kasha Mu Bukondi! Kasha Mu Bukondi!” The antelope tries to escape by crawling under, breaking through, or climbing over the net. When it escapes, all the other players try to catch it. The player who catches the antelope becomes the new antelope and the game begins again.



### AMESHI NE MPUKU (Ages 5-8)

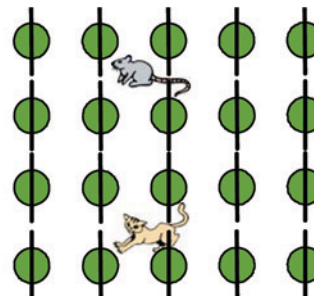
**Equipment:** None

**Rules:** One child is the caller, one is the “cat,” and one is the “rat.” The other children form four rows of players, each row holding hands. The cat chases the rat, trying to tag it. The rat runs up and down the rows to avoid the cat. When the caller calls out: “Mpuke ekali!” (m-POO-kay ee-KAW-lee — “Let the rat stop!”), the people holding hands will drop hands, turn ninety degrees, and join hands with a person who was in the row beside them. Then the rat must adjust quickly to avoid being caught by the cat. Repeat with a new cat and rat.



1. Game starts

2. Caller says:  
Mpuke ekali!”  
“Let the rat  
stop!”



3. Players join hands  
with next row





## GAMES — HEALTH

### BOKWELE (AGES 8 AND UP)

**Reference:** <http://www.unicefdayforchange.org.au/service3.html>

**Equipment:** Two hula hoops and four scarves

**Playing area:** Define a rectangular playing area (plastic cones can be useful here) and make a line half way between the ends of the area. A basketball court could be used. Place a hula hoop at either end of the playing area.

**Rules:** Divide the children into two teams. One person on each team is the “guard,” and that is the only person who can tag members of the opposite team. When a person is tagged, they are out of the game. Teams have to guard their own scarves, and try to capture the scarves of the other team. When a player steals a scarf, they yell “BOKWELE” (Bok-way-lay) and try to place the scarf in their own hoop. If a player who has stolen a scarf drops it, or is tagged before reaching their own half of the court, the hoop that the scarf was in is moved to where the scarf was dropped or the player tagged. The game is over when one team has all the scarves.



# Agape Meal

## FOOD IN MBANDAKA

The Congolese diet consists mainly of the following foods, though a family wouldn't usually have all of these at one meal: steamed fish cassava leaves cooked like spinach or other greens with palm oil and sometimes a little fish.

- **Manioc** — the root of the cassava plant which is pounded into flour and then made into a dish called fufu is used like bread to dip up juices left by other foods.
- **Rice**
- **Fried or boiled plantains**
- **Eggs**
- **Fresh fruit** like pineapples, various kinds of bananas, papaya, and mangoes.



Fruits, like bananas and oranges, along with chickens and eggs and Coca Cola are sometimes given as an offering to help feed travelers. In churches the food might be brought at offering time and placed in front of the Communion Table as an act of worship.



The picture to the left is of the kitchen at a Guest House in Mbandaka where visitors would stay. You can see that the kitchen is outdoors and is very simple. Small grills like these are used all over Mbandaka.

People sit on low chairs or squat on the ground while they prepare the food and cook. Preparing meals is a labor intensive chore in the Congo but is always done with joy and love — true hospitality!



(Photo by John Richardson)



## AGAPE MEAL

Rather than considering what we eat together at Journey to Congo “snacks,” we are choosing to call our time together over food an “Agape Meal,” or “Love Feast” making a connection with very early Christians who ate together as a part of celebrating the Lord’s Supper.

One time during the week you may want to consider doing a meal of Congolese food — some steamed fish, greens (cooked fresh spinach or kale would be a good substitute, though if you live near a big city you may find some cassava in a global food store), rice, and fresh fruit.

For most days, though, we would suggest that you serve fresh fruit — pineapple, papaya, mango, bananas and plantains, which are now available in many markets. Though plantains can be eaten raw if the skin is very black, it is better to boil or fry them — very tasty.



USA visitors enjoying fellowship and hospitality in a Congolese home.

Rice cakes and banana chips can also be used for the agape meal. Though not authentic, they do use authentic ingredients. Use your imagination to enhance the meal.

If you decide to serve mainly the same menu each day, use that as a teaching moment to help the children understand that people in Mbandaka generally eat the same dishes each day.

Water, lemonade, or fruit juice would be appropriate beverages to serve.

**The joy of the Agape Meal is not the food itself; it is in the fellowship around the table and the generosity of hospitality that provides it.**



Steamed fish (Photo by John Richardson)

*(Agape Meal continues next page.)*



## AGAPE MEAL (Continued)

### ADDITIONAL IDEAS FOR FOOD FOR THE AGAPE FEAST

**Reference:** [http://recipes.wikia.com/wiki/Congolese Cuisine](http://recipes.wikia.com/wiki/Congolese_Cuisine)

(This page does not contain actual recipes, but has some good background on Congolese cooking.)

[http://recipes.wikia.com/wiki/Category:Congolese Recipes](http://recipes.wikia.com/wiki/Category:Congolese_Recipes)

Congolese dishes will take a long time to prepare, contain ingredients that are hard to obtain in this country, and have tastes that children may not enjoy. So we suggest that for the most part you plan food listed on the previous page. However, if you are feeling more adventurous, this page offers some ideas and links to recipes.

For recipes marked “CC”, see <http://www.congocookbook.com/> under the appropriate section listed with the recipe.

#### SNACKS

- Akara (Black-Eyed Pea Fritters) - Snack (CC)
- Sugar Peanuts - Snack (CC) This is an easy one - raw peanuts can be found in Indian groceries)  
\*\*Please check for children with peanut allergies before serving this snack.

#### MAIN DISHES

- Muamba Nsusu (Congo Chicken Soup or Stew) - Chicken (CC) \*Contains peanuts\*  
(Be sure to omit or reduce the chili peppers)
- Liboké de Poisson (Fish in Banana Leaves) - Fish (CC)  
(Banana leaves are available in some international groceries, including Mexican stores. However, you can approximate this dish using aluminum foil.)

#### VEGETABLES AND SIDE DISHES

- Greens (most easily prepared using spinach or collard greens in this country) are eaten with practically every meal. The Congo Cookbook page has a number of recipes from Central Africa in its vegetable section.
- Beans and rice are also very common dishes. You can use any of a variety of types of dried beans for the dish. The rice and beans may be served separately or cooked together, as in this recipe:  
[http://recipes.wikia.com/wiki/Congo rice and beans](http://recipes.wikia.com/wiki/Congo_rice_and_beans)



# Worship

## WORSHIP IN MBANDAKA

Worship is central to the life of the church in the Congo. Most people have difficult lives working hard for long days to make a living to feed their families. Most people walk wherever they need to go — to school, to work, to the marketplace, to church. Many also have to walk to get water because not everyone has running water in their home. Cooking is done outside on small grills; cooks squat on the ground to cook — there are no convenience or “fast” foods available.



(Photo by John Richardson)

In other words, nearly all of the tasks we do easily and take for granted during the course of a normal day are much more difficult to accomplish in Mbandaka.

So, people depend upon their faith in ways we probably can't fully appreciate, and worship is central to their ability to go on for another week, working and going to school under conditions that are very wearing. Worshiping God is both rest for the Congolese Christians and it is the place they are energized in their faith and in their lives. More than one member of the church in Mbandaka has been heard to say that their faith and the opportunity to worship is what keeps them going.

Worship is a very lively, participatory event. Members of UCC and Disciples' churches would all recognize the parts of the worship service in the Congo — they are like ours. The Lord's Supper is celebrated, scripture is read, there is preaching, prayers are said, offering are collected. The difference, and a beautiful difference it is, is in the singing.

Church music in the Congo relies heavily on percussion and the human voice. Occasionally a guitar or horn might be added in a larger, city church, but this is not common. Drums and voices make a “joyful noise to the Lord” in Mbandaka and elsewhere in the Congo.

## SINGING AND DANCING

In Congo to sing is also to dance. Movement of body and hands and feet is just naturally a part of singing. To move is to praise God. Clapping and vocalizations, like one that sounds like a whistle being blown, enhance the song. Rhythmic movements and appropriate gestures always accompany songs (see the partnership video for examples, <http://www.indianadisciples.org/congo-partnership.php>). The faces of the congregation are filled with joy as they sing, dance, clap, wave palm branches and smile. We hope you will teach the children and encourage their expressions of joy as they worship. If you have a drummer available or even children who just like to drum, be sure to encourage them to play as you sing.



(Photo by John Richardson)

## OFFERING

Offering is always a part of worship, and in some cases several different offerings will be taken during the service to give opportunity to give to special mission or ministries of the church separately. Instead of passing offering plates around in a sedate manner as we do, Christians in Congo dance their offering forward to the Communion Table in a long, snaking line. They don't hurry this and in large churches the offering may take as long as an hour because the people understand themselves to be praising God with each step of the dance. It is always with joy and smiles that they come, singing and dancing all the way. It is a central act of a worship during the service.





## SUGGESTED SONGS FOR WORSHIP

Below are songs that will work well for the daily themes. There are of course many others you might want to plug in. “What a Friend We Have in Jesus” is a favorite hymn in the Congo and would be a good one to sing every day. They sing it, as they do all songs, with energy, clapping, and a faster tempo than we usually sing it.



### PARTNERSHIP AND PEOPLE

- We are Walking (Caminando)
- God of Many Names (This may be new, it's in the Chalice Hymnal)
- Weave
- Masithi (Sing Amen)
- They'll Know We Are Christians By Our Love

### HOSPITALITY

- What a Friend We Have in Jesus
- How Great Thou Art
- I Come With Joy
- I've Got Peace Like a River
- This Little Light of Mine
- Children Welcome! (Can be found in the Journey to India curriculum.)

### WATER

- Morning Has Broken
- All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly
- Wade in the Water
- Come Share the Lord
- Down By the Riverside
- I Have So Much (Can be found in the Journey to India curriculum.)

### EDUCATION

- Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ
- I Have Decided to Follow Jesus
- I Shall Not Be Moved

### HEALTH

- Rejoice, You Pure in Heart
- I Am the Light of the World
- The Doxology
- I've Got the Joy, Joy, Joy, Joy





## CONGO CONNECTION! WORSHIP

Even if you have divided the children into small groups for other rotations, please have everyone worship together as the last event each day. Worship could be done in small groups but the larger group will offer an experience more like worship in Congo.

Each day's worship should reflect that day's theme. Below are suggested activities for Worship time. Schedule the time to meet your needs. One day may have more time for singing/dancing, while on another day more time will be needed to review/perform the Bible story.



Children singing and dancing on their way into worship as they welcome visitors.

### ACTIVITIES FOR WORSHIP TIME

#### Singing & Dancing

The Worship Leader should choose songs ahead of time to use for each day's session, but try to leave time for songs chosen by the children as well, particularly after the first day — they will have some favorites they'll want to repeat. Lead the children in simple circle or line dances as they sing. Simple shuffle steps or hop steps can be done by most everyone. If you have children in wheelchairs, they can wheel themselves or someone can push them in the line. Encourage clapping or hand-waving. Above all, this is a time of joy!

#### Review/Performance of the Bible Story

Make the Bible story a part of worship by having one or more groups present the story each day. On days they have acted out the story in costume, with props, or with clay figures have a group (or more if there is time) perform the story for the larger worship group. On story board day everyone can present his/her story board to the person next to them in the circle, and on the "love vignette" day invite each group to present one vignette for the whole group.

#### Tie to Mbandaka or Congo

Be sure to ask each day, "What have you learned today about our brothers and sisters in Congo?" Give time for them to think before adults jump in with answers. After the first day, review what we learned about our partners yesterday (the day before, etc.).

#### Offering

During the Teacher Training Meeting decide together what special project you would like to support with the VBS offering. Some projects are outlined on page 49. You can research all projects at the Global Ministries web page: <http://globalministries.org/africa/countries/democratic-republic-of-the-congo/>. Each day tell the children what project you are supporting, reminding them of the ways they will be sharing in the mission and ministry of our friends in Mbandaka.

#### Prayer

Close with a circle prayer each offering each child who wants to pray the opportunity to pray for our partners in Mbandaka and all around the world. Prayers can reflect the day's theme or be general in their concerns.



# Additional Resources and Ideas



## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information about the work of the church in the Democratic Republic of Congo, please see the Global Ministries web page:

<http://globalministries.org/africa/countries/democratic-republic-of-the-congo/>

**Or, contact:** Sandra Gourdet..... Phone: 317-713-2551  
 Area Executive Fax: 317-635-4323  
 Africa Office [sgourdet@dom.disciples.org](mailto:sgourdet@dom.disciples.org)  
 P.O. Box 1986  
 Indianapolis, IN 46206



## JOURNEY TO CONGO

For additional information or questions about this curriculum, please contact:

Kaye Edwards	or	Lutie Lee
<a href="mailto:kedwards@dhm.disciples.org">kedwards@dhm.disciples.org</a>		<a href="mailto:leel@ucc.org">leel@ucc.org</a>
Phone: (434) 832-1119		Phone: (216) 736-3863 , ext. 3863

*Please use the response form to let us know when and where you used Journey to Congo so we can share your story with others and to offer suggests and additions to this curriculum.*

## JOURNEY TO CONGO RESPONSE FORM

Email to: [kedwards@dhm.disciples.org](mailto:kedwards@dhm.disciples.org)

Mail to: Kaye Edwards  
 1290 Enterprise Dr.  
 Lynchburg, VA 24502

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Journey to Congo VBS Position \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Church Name \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (street) \_\_\_\_\_ (city) \_\_\_\_\_ (state) \_\_\_\_\_ (zip)

**My Overall Rating of the Journey to Congo VBS Material is:**

Excellent      Good      Fair      Poor

**The best things about Journey to Congo are:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**My suggestions for improving Journey to Congo are:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_



## CONGREGATIONAL SUPPORT FOR THE CONGO

**Please send all offerings to:**

KIDS to KIDS Office  
P.O. Box 1986  
Indianapolis, IN 46206-1986.

**You can also send your offerings directly to the Global Ministries Africa Office:**

Africa Office  
P.O. Box 1986  
Indianapolis, IN 46206

Please clearly mark your check with the name of the specific project(s) you wish to support.

### #1 EDUCATION FOR YOUNG ("CHILD") MOTHERS

As a result of war and the general disregard for women in the Congo, there are many young girls 12-17 years old who have become pregnant. It is the wish of the Mbandaka district of the Congo that churches in the United States and Canada could support a training program for these "child mothers" to teach them life skills and professional skills training to support themselves and their children. **Your VBS offerings can support this education effort.**

### #2 PHARMACY

The city of Mbandaka has State health facilities that have been operating without medicine since the departure of the Belgian Doctors Without Borders in 2003. Currently, those who are sick consult doctors and nurses but purchase their medication from private pharmacies, often at prices beyond their means. Our river parishes have health centers at Motongambale and at Bondo with staff but they are without supplies or medication. Medicines that come to the CDCC Medical Office are for the CDCC hospitals, but not the district health centers.

In order to evangelize people in good health and spare mothers in distant parishes from harmful consequences caused by lack of education, the following is proposed:

- To open a low cost district pharmacy to help Disciple members and those in the community;
- That this pharmacy would also supply the health centers along the river to permit Disciples to serve a larger population

**Your VBS offering can help support this pharmacy effort.**

### #3 COOKING SCHOOL PROJECT

Young mothers do not have activities that will help them meet some basic needs for their children and themselves. To provide job options so that the members can support the church, the committee proposed a culinary training project that will give work to young mothers.

- Two 6-month training sessions
- A maximum of 30 girls from various parishes for each season  
Each session of the Cooking School Project costs \$2,500.

**Your VBS offering can help support a cooking school session.**

### OTHER POSSIBLE CONGO PROJECTS

- Scholarships for school children to attend church-related schools
- Funds for school supplies
- Hospitals
  - Refurbishing buildings after the war
  - IMA Medicine boxes
- Transportation for Pastors
  - Motorcycles
  - Motors and canoes (pirogues)



**For more information and ideas, please contact:**

Sarah Riester  
Division of Overseas Ministries/Global Ministries  
Phone: (317) 713-2564  
[sriester@dom.disciples.org](mailto:sriester@dom.disciples.org)



## DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO FACT SHEET



*(Fact Sheet continues next page.)*



## DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO FACT SHEET (Continued)

### CONGO GLOBAL MINISTRIES FACTS

- Mbandaka District of the Community of Disciples of Christ in the Congo (Église du Christ au Congo)
- An area served by Disciples of Christ missionaries for 100 years
- Location of 360 primary and secondary schools, six hospitals, and 50 medical clinics supported by the Christian Church (DOC)

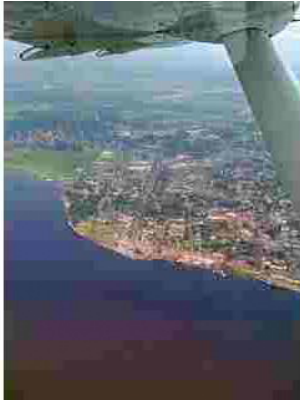
### FACTS ABOUT THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

- Sixty-three million people
- The third largest country by area in Africa
- A per capita income of \$2 per day
- Location of one of the most advanced cultures in sub-Saharan Africa prior to contact with Europeans
- Practically unknown to foreigners before the late 19th century
- Held as a private company owned by King Leopold of Belgium, forced to work as slaves to harvest rubber — as many as 10 million people dead
- A colony of Belgium until independence in 1960
- 1971–1997 known as Zaire — a harsh dictatorship under Mobutu
- Site of the deadliest conflict since World War II — 5 million people dead
- Struggling for democracy after recent elections
- 250 ethnic groups and languages
- Incredible biodiversity





## DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO FACT SHEET (Continued)



### MBANDAKA FACTS

- Mbandaka is right on the equator.
- The Congo River, which is the second largest river in the world, flows right beside the city.
- The name of Mbandaka used to be Coquilhatville.
- It is very hot, and there is no change of season
- The Mbandaka district is in a rain forest, or jungle.
- Mbandaka has half as many people as Indianapolis. Most of its streets are made of dirt.
- People walk or ride bikes wherever they go - there are very few cars and no buses.
- Outside of the city, there aren't many roads.
- People travel in canoes called pirogues.
- There are large and small churches in the district.
- People do not have much money, so they may bring eggs, or a chicken, or a fish as their offering.
- Churches along the river are built on stilts so that they will be dry when the river floods.
- People sing and dance a lot in church — that is how they praise God.

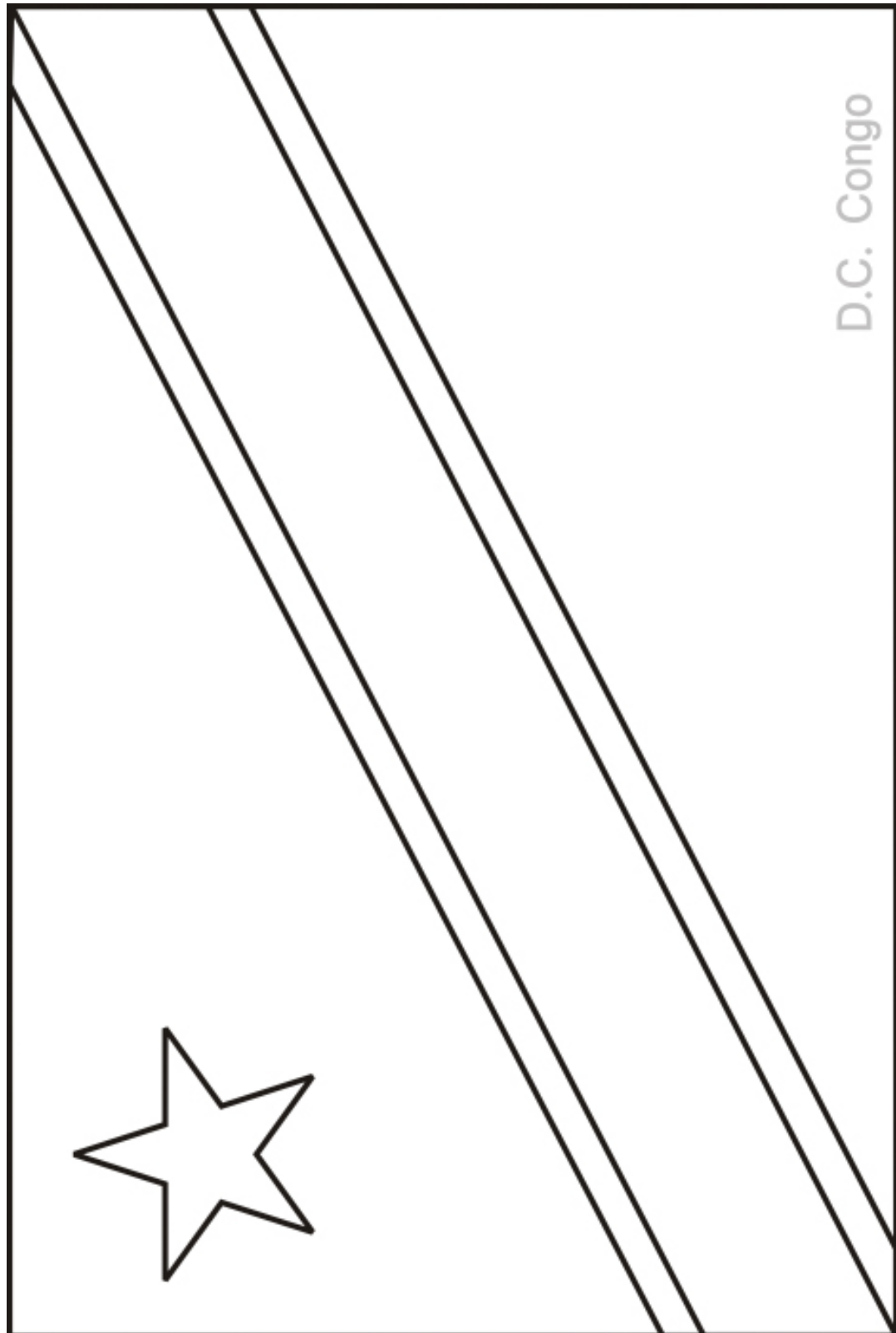






## CONGO FLAG COLORING PAGE

<http://www.crwflags.com/fotw/misc/cd-l.gif>



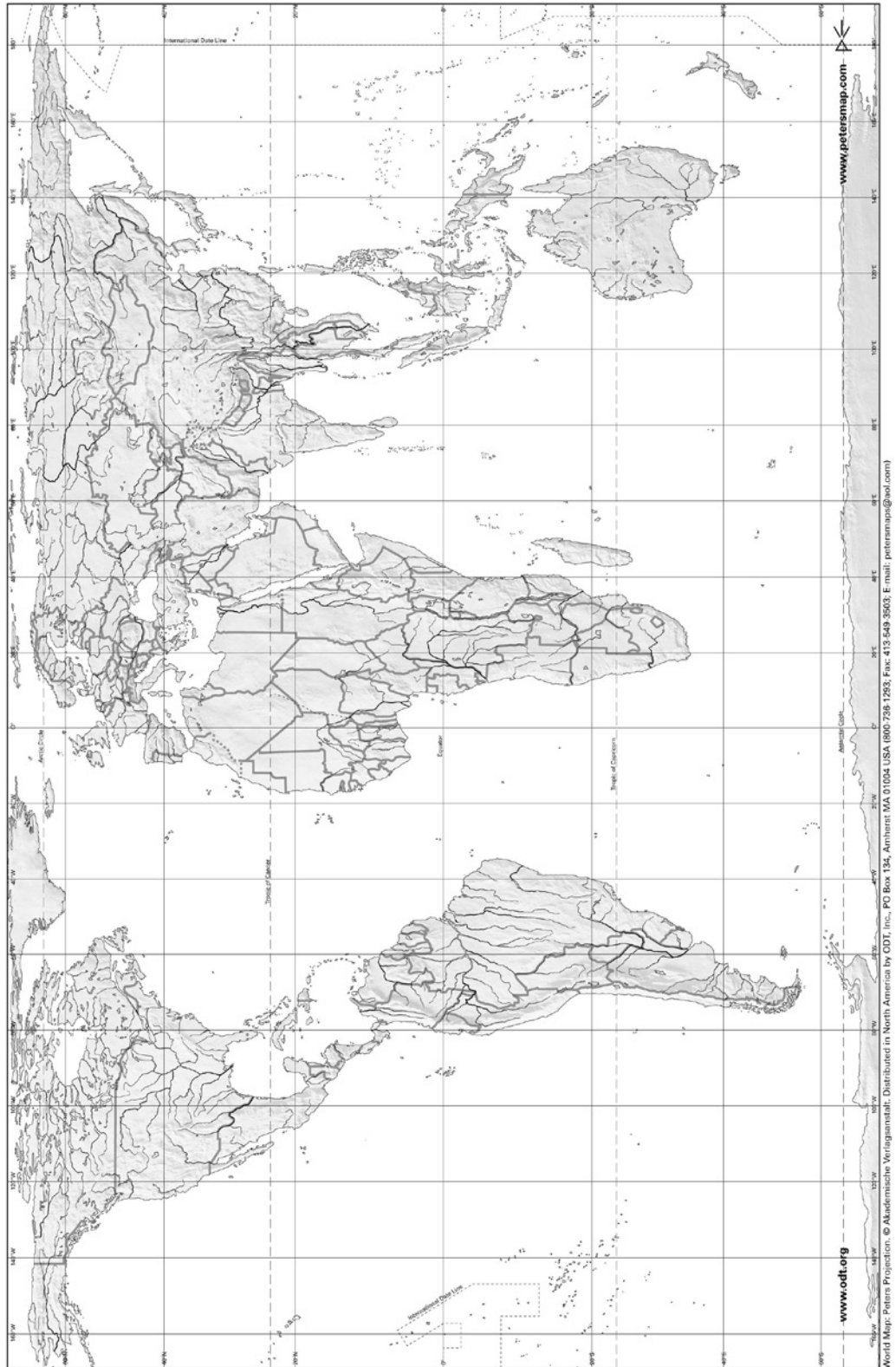


## WORLD MAP

<http://geography.about.com/library/maps/bldrcongo.htm>

This site offers several different types of maps of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to choose from.

[www.nationalgeographic.com/resources/ngo/maps/view/worldm.html](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/resources/ngo/maps/view/worldm.html)





## IDEAS TO DECORATE YOUR SPACE

- World map with your state or province and Mbandaka highlighted
- African motif fabric to wear or drape on furnishings
- African drums
- Fishing nets
- African carvings
- Colorful fabric to place on the ground to sit and walk on
- Inflatable palm trees available at Oriental Trading Co.
- Low stools
- Photographs of Congo

## BOOKS TO SHARE WITH KIDS AND HELP YOU PLAN FOR CONGO CONNECTION!

- Croze, Harvey. *Africa for Kids: Exploring a Vibrant Continent*. Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2006. (This is an activity book that will provide you with more craft and activity ideas.)
- Dipiazza, Francesca Davis. *The Democratic Republic of Congo in Pictures*. CT: Twenty-First Century Books, 2007.
- Gustafson, Angela. *Imagine a House: A Journey to Fascinating Houses Around The World*. Minneapolis: Out of the Box, 2003.
- Harvey, Miles. *Look What Came From Africa*. Children's Press, 2003.
- Katz, Karen. *The Colors of Us*. New York: Scholastic, Inc., 1999.
- Oneyefulu, Ifeoma. *A Is For Africa*. New York: Puffin Books, 1997.
- Parr, Todd. *The Peace Book*. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2004.