

MEXICO

Lessons for Mission Minded Kids

Lesson 6

E.C. Churches in Mexico



Mexico

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Goals for Lesson 6:

- Children will be made aware of the eleven congregations that are part of the E.C. Church of Mexico.
- Children will realize that they can be part of and contribute to the large body of Christ, made up of believers all over the world.
- Children will understand that God's Word is the same in all languages, and that it is important to be able to read it in one's own language.

Verse for Mexico:

"Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." Matthew 5:16

Before Class:

- Read through lesson and decide what you will use according to your age group and time allotted.
- Make necessary preparations for the Poster Board Relay, as indicated. You may want to plan a small prize for the winning team, although this is not necessary.
- Make necessary preparations for the yarn art project. Make plans for a safe place to let the projects dry for several days. Depending on your time, you may start the project with this lesson and finish it in the next lesson, or you may finish the whole thing with this lesson.
- Make a copy of the Spanish John 3:16 for each student. If you know someone fluent in Spanish, consider having them visit class to say the verse to the class and help them learn some of the words.
- Prepare pictures of the Mexican E.C. Churches and the Huichol Yarn Paintings as power point slides, or back them with cardstock for stability.

Lesson Plan:

- Begin your lesson time with prayer.
- Divide your group into two teams that are fairly equal in ability. Play the Poster Board Relay game, as described.
- Have children return to seats and read or tell the story part of the lesson, stopping to explain or discuss as needed, and showing the pictures where indicated. Talk about the idea that they are part of a huge body of believers all over the world, and each one contributes what they can do for the Kingdom of God. Ask them what they think their individual part is, and discuss ways that they can contribute to the body of Christ, even now, as young children.
- Pass out the Spanish John 3:16 sheets. If you have a fluent Spanish speaker, have them say the verse to the children, and let them teach the children to say some of the words, or the whole verse. If you have non-readers, show them the verse and help them say some of the words. They will know that other people speak other languages, and will appreciate hearing some of the unfamiliar words. Children can take the verses home and practice saying some of the words, using the pronunciation guide, or maybe they have a friend who speaks Spanish and they can use the verse to begin a conversation about God, who sent His Son, Jesus.
- Lay out materials for the yarn painting project, explaining to the children about the ancient Indian artists who made elaborate pictures using this method. Show pictures of Huichol artwork. Depending on the amount of time you have, you may want to allow the children to begin their projects this time, and then store them safely to dry until the next time you meet, when they would finish their projects and take them home.

Lesson 6 Story: E.C. Churches in Mexico

Hundreds of years ago, when Spain conquered Mexico and made it a Spanish colony, one of the things they brought to Mexico was the Spanish language. Another thing they brought was the Roman Catholic church. Spain wanted all of the people in their new colony to worship in the same way they did. So they sent many Spanish monks and priests to Mexico to build Catholic missions and churches, and to convert the native people to Roman Catholicism.

Do you remember that the towns are built around a central plaza, with a church and government buildings around the four sides? In almost every town, that church is a catholic church, and to this day, 89% of the Mexican people call themselves Catholic and attend services weekly in a Catholic church. (Mexico has the world's second largest number of Catholics after Brazil.)

When Mae Royer went to Mexico in 1940, she was the only person in Mexico supported by an E.C. church and there were no E.C. churches anywhere in Mexico. She found some Christ-followers there, but these people were not usually treated well, and it was often difficult to be a Christian in Mexico. Some Christian missionaries were working in Mexico and trying to start churches, but none of them were E.C.

After Mae started El Retiro, and moved to Montemorelos, many of the E.C. churches in the United States were interested in the work she was doing there, and wanted to help out. Mae was interested in planting Evangelical churches in some of the small towns near El Retiro, so within a few years, a plot of ground was bought in the little nearby town of Congregacion Calles (Con-gray-gah-see-own CAH-yay-ss). Meetings were held under the large tree in the middle of the plot. As a small congregation grew, a temporary building was built, and then eventually, a permanent church building and a small parsonage. It was named, "Christo La Puerta"(Cree-stow Lah Pwhere-tah), or Christ the Door.

Other opportunities arose in other local communities, and other churches were planted. In addition to supporting El Retiro financially, the E.C. churches in the U.S. began to send teams to Mexico to visit and help the children's home and the new little churches. Buildings were built and fixed up, parsonages were built, and relationships were formed.

Some Christian churches that were already established asked to join the E.C. group of churches, and soon there were 11 E.C. churches in Mexico, centered around the Monterrey area. **(Show pictures of three E.C. churches, including the one from the cover.)** Each one needed a pastor, and someone needed to oversee all of the churches, forming them together into a tight family that could share their problems and successes, and work together to share the light of Jesus in their communities.

Today, Rev. Elias Martinez Osorio is the leader of all the E.C. churches and pastors in Mexico, (like our Conference Minister would be). He is also the pastor of the E.C. church in General Teran (Hey-nay-rahl Tay-ron).

What language do you think these churches use to worship God? (Spanish) Do you think God understands them and enjoys their prayers and songs? Of all the hundreds and hundreds of languages spoken in all of the world, God hears and understands them all. He loves to hear us sing to him in any language, and He loves to have us talk with Him in prayer, no matter what language we use. All of the people who love God make up a huge crowd of believers of all races and languages from all over the world.

Isn't it amazing to think that thousands of people can all worship God at the same time, in their own language and their own location. He hears and understands each one, and cares about the lives of each one of His children. If you are a Christ-follower, you are part of that huge body of believers. You may be just a child, but you are God's child. By letting the Light of Jesus shine out of you right where you are, you are contributing to God's Kingdom, and showing the people around you the way to glorify their Father in Heaven.

Poster Board Relay

Preparation: You will need 52 index cards and two poster boards, different colors (red and green for Mexico?) if possible. To prepare the boards, lay each board horizontally on a table, and using a ruler and index cards to measure, draw 26 lines, the size of an index card in several rows across each board. These will be the spaces for cards to be placed, representing the words of our Mexico verse. The last line will be for the reference. Write one word of the verse, plus the reference on each of 26 cards. Make one verse set for each board (the cards can be different colors as well, to help keep the sets separated). Shuffle the cards from each set, so they are not in order. Attach the two boards at the children's eye level, beside each other on the same wall. Attach a small roll of tape or a small wad of sticky tack above each line so that the index cards will stick to the board, but can be easily moved around.

To Play: Divide your class evenly into two groups. All ages can play, but try to keep the two teams approximately equal in ability. Form two lines, one in front of each poster board, but beginning several feet back from the board. Have an adult helper stand at each board with one set of shuffled verse cards. At the signal, the first child in each line will move to the board and pick one verse card. He will try to place the card on the appropriate line on the board, and then he will move to the back of his line. The second child will then move forward and pick a card. This child can place their own card and may also move the first card to correct the position if necessary. That child will move to the end of his line, and each subsequent child will move forward and have a chance to place their own card and correct any other cards. Depending on the number of children, you may move through each line several times before all 26 cards are correctly in place. The team to correctly place all of their cards first will win the game. You may wish to plan some small reward for the winning team.

For Younger Children: Non-readers will have memorized much of the verse by this time. When a non-reader comes to take his turn, let him pick a card, and have the adult read it to him. Then point to each line and say the verse together until you come to the word on the child's card. The child can then correctly place his card and move to the back of his line. If you have only a few non-readers, you could also pair a younger student with an older student. They would both move to the front together, the older student would help the younger one place his card correctly, and then place his own card, and they would move together to the back of their line.

At the end of the game, have each adult helper lead their team in saying/reading their correctly constructed verse out loud.

Juan 3:16

**Porque tanto amó
Dios al mundo, que
dio a su Hijo
unigénito, para que
todo el que cree en
él no se pierda, sino
que tenga vida
eterna.**

Pronunciation for John 3:16 in Spanish: "Pour-kay tahn-toe ah-MOE DEE-yose al MOON-doe, kay DEE-yo ah sue EE-hoe oo-knee-HAY-knee-toe, pah-dah kay toe-doe el kay KRAY-yay en el no say pea-air-dah, see-no kay tayn-gah bee-dah ae-tair-nah."

Mexican Yarn Painting

The Huichol (Oo-wee-chole) Indians of Mexico are known for their yarn paintings. The Huichols take beeswax which they melt in the sun, and spread it over a piece of wood. They then push colored yarn into the wax to create images. **(Show pictures of yarn paintings.)** You can create your own yarn painting using glue and scraps of yarn and wool.

What You Need:

- A 5x6 inch piece of sturdy cardboard for each student
- Pencils
- Bits of yarn, of all colors, cut into 5 to 12 inch pieces.
- White glue
- Wet paper towels

What to Do:

1. Decide on a (simple) design and sketch it onto the cardboard with the pencil. (If you prefer, you could draw designs onto the cardboard ahead of time and have children fill them in with their choice of yarn colors.)
2. Spread a small amount of glue onto one side of the cardboard.
3. Starting at one edge, press yarn into glue, making patterns out of the colors, and doubling back each piece to form a tight shape with each color. Flatten and press each piece of yarn as you go, making sure none of the cardboard shows between the yarn pieces.
4. When the entire cardboard is covered, allow glue to dry for several days until yarn is no longer wet. If you want, pieces can be “varnished” with a mixture of 80% glue and 20% water, and allowed to dry again.



