

**Mission Stories
to Accompany
Club VBS® 2010**



Club VBS® 2010: Route 254™

Route 1: Missions Story

Choosing to Worship Jesus

Have you ever heard the word Islam? Do you know what it means? The people who practice Islam are called Muslims. The god they worship is Allah. Muslims do not believe that Jesus is God's Son.

Let's play a guessing game. Where do Muslims who have become Christians like to hang out? Maybe you think it's a mall or a soccer field. Those are good answers, but think again. Some former Muslims who have asked Jesus Christ to be their Savior and now worship him hang out at mosques [mawks].

Do you know what a mosque is? It's a place where Muslims go to practice their religion. Their mosques are different from our churches. For example, mosques don't have pews or benches. Instead, they have large, open rooms without furniture. Muslims who come to worship can get down on their knees to pray.

Muslims fiercely protect their religion. They don't like it when other Muslims become Christians. So for a former Muslim to tell people about Jesus in a mosque is a big deal.

Abdul grew up in North Africa and was a Muslim. He followed the teachings of Allah. When Abdul was 16, he was planning to go to a youth recreational camp. But Abdul got on the wrong bus and went to a Christian camp instead! When everyone realized the mistake, the camp leaders offered to take Abdul to the right camp. However, that night Abdul heard about Jesus and asked Jesus to be his Savior. He began following Jesus that night!

It was hard for Abdul to live in a country where most people were Muslim. Some people were angry with him for believing in Jesus. Abdul was even poisoned and thrown out of a moving bus! He was afraid, but he knew Jesus was protecting him.

Abdul came to the United States. Now he lives in a place where many other Christians help him tell Muslims about Jesus. And, when Muslims become followers of Jesus, Abdul tells them to keep going to the mosque for a while so they can tell their Muslim friends about Jesus!

You play an important part in the lives of missionaries when you pray for them.

- Pray that God keeps Abdul and his family safe.
- Ask God to help new Christians who were former Muslims to be bold as they tell others about Jesus.
- Pray for former Muslims who tell about Jesus in the mosques.

Adapted from "God's Secret Agents," written by Kima Jude, Crusader, July 2009, produced by the North American Mission Board, 2009. Used by permission.

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Route 2: Missions Story

Kim's Journey to Thankfulness

Kim grew up in a nice home and was part of a happy family. She was a good student who went to college and then got a great job. But then something happened.

Kim began having problems. She lost her job and moved to Chicago. Soon she was homeless. Kim knew she had made some bad choices. She was a drug abuser. She had nowhere to go and didn't know what to do to make her life better. Was there hope that her life could change?

Kim had a friend who invited her to attend church. "Pastor Allen is really cool. He can help you," the friend said. "The church has a ministry to homeless. You can get food and clothing. And you can also receive help finding a job and getting off drugs."

Going to church was a bit strange for Kim. She didn't have nice clothes to wear. Would people wonder why she was there?

Kim met Pastor Michael Allen before the church service began. He prayed with her. During church, Kim listened carefully. Pastor Allen talked about Jesus and Jesus' love and forgiveness. Kim knew she needed to have a personal relationship with Jesus. She knew she needed to be forgiven and to begin a new life.

Later, Kim talked to Pastor Allen. She told him her story of how she came to be so confused and lost. Then she said she was ready to be a follower of Jesus! She prayed that God would forgive her, and she asked Jesus to be her Savior and Lord.

Today, Kim is following Jesus. She has a job and a place to live. She has a husband who loves Jesus. She knows God has a special plan for her life. Kim is thankful for so many things. She is thankful for the friend who invited her to Uptown Baptist Church. She is thankful for Southern Baptists who placed missionary Michael Allen in Chicago. And she is thankful that God now places in her life people she can encourage and tell about Jesus.

You play an important part in the lives of missionaries when you pray for them.

- Pray for Michael Allen and Uptown Baptist Church members. Pray that God will give them many opportunities to tell people about Jesus.
- Pray for people like Kim who need to know Jesus and His love.
- Pray that God will help new Christians grow in their faith and share God's love with others.

Written by Carmon Keith, North American Mission Board, 2009. Used by permission.

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Route 3: Missions Story

What's Your Destination?

Paris is home to the Eiffel Tower and is a dream vacation spot for many people. Paris is also home to 500,000 Kabyle [kuh-BEEL] Berbers, a people group from North Africa. Many of them have come to Paris illegally to live and to try to find work.

When International Mission Board missionaries Frank and Diane Shaw* moved to Paris, it wasn't their dream destination. They were sure God wanted them to live in North Africa to work with the Kabyles. But God knew what He was doing. Many Kabyles became Christians because Frank and Diane went to Paris instead of North Africa.

Some Kabyle believers in Paris met in the Shaws' small apartment for church. (Often, churches overseas don't meet in buildings like we are used to in America.) The Kabyle church started out with only a few believers, but in six months 70 people attended!

"They [the Kabyles] started bringing people in," Frank explained. "They brought friends. They brought non-Christians—maybe atheists, maybe Muslims."

The Kabyle Christians wanted to grow stronger in their faith, so they decided to meet three times a week. On Mondays they got together to pray and sing praise songs. On Thursdays they studied the Bible, and on Sundays they met for church.

Finally, the Shaws found a bigger place for the church to meet. Another church in the area let them share their building. They decided to call themselves The Kabyle Evangelical Baptist Church.

Frank and Diane are retired and are back home in America, but they left behind a strong church with Kabyle pastors in Paris.

You play an important part in the lives of missionaries when you pray for them.

- Pray that the Kabyle Christians in Paris will continue to grow in their faith.
- Pray that God will call more Kabyles to be pastors.
- Pray for opportunities to let God use you, even if the opportunities are not what you expected.

*names changed for security

Adapted from "Southern Baptist Couple Taps into Kabyle's Gospel Thirst," written by Don Graham, International Mission Board. Used by permission.

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Route 4: Missions Story

The Creator Calls

If you think all missionaries are older adults who serve in remote jungles, you've never met Brad Lartigue. Brad thought the same thing about missionaries before God called him to serve as a resort missionary in Big Sky, Montana, and Yellowstone National Park.

Each year, thousands of people visit Yellowstone National Park. The park includes almost 3,500 square miles and covers parts of Montana, Wyoming, and Idaho. People come to see, hike, and camp in one of the most beautiful places in America. They come to see Old Faithful, a famous natural geyser in the park.

But many visitors do not understand that the Creator of all that they see is also the God who wants a personal relationship with them. Even many park employees who see the sites every day do not know God, the Creator.

The summer is a busy time for Brad. Special young people called Innovators join him in his ministry. These are student missionaries who come from all over the United States to work in the park. They have park jobs that earn them a paycheck. But it isn't the attraction of making money that motivates these students to come to Yellowstone for 10 weeks. The real reason they come is to serve Jesus. They spend their non-work hours telling people about Jesus.

It is Brad's responsibility to supervise the Innovators. The Innovators work as a team to minister to Yellowstone employees. These students lead worship services, Bible studies, and camping and hiking trips. They live in staff dorms where they talk about Jesus with the people who live around them. The Innovators become a part of the Yellowstone family. They form bonds with people who might never go to church. The park does not allow the Innovators to tell park tourists directly about Jesus. However, Innovators can tell the other employees about Jesus.

Brad and the Innovators model their ministry after the way Jesus lived. Jesus believed in helping people where they were—outside of church. That is why Brad and the Innovators use outdoor sports like backpacking and bike riding to reach others for Christ.

You play an important part in the lives of missionaries when you pray for them.

- Pray for health and safety for Brad Lartigue as he serves the people vacationing and working in Yellowstone National Park.
- Pray that God will prepare the hearts of those at the resort to hear His message.
- Pray for the college students who are serving as Innovators at the park this summer.

Adapted from "Snowboarding for Jesus," written by Jennifer T. Holt, Crusader, March 2009, produced by the North American Mission Board, 2009. Used by permission.

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Route 5: Missions Story

Obedience to God's Call

Obedying can mean doing the dishes or making your bed because your parents asked you to do it. But for missionaries Rusty and Debbie Pugh, obeying meant going to a war-torn country to tell people about Jesus because God asked them to do it.

Rusty and Debbie are International Mission Board missionaries living in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). They are trying to help the thousands of Congolese who had to leave their homes because of the fighting in their home country. The DRC is one-third the size of the United States. Rusty and Debbie travel long distances to tell others about Jesus. There are few paved roads, so visiting people in different parts of the DRC is hard.

Rusty and Debbie are putting themselves at risk by simply being in the DRC, but they are being obedient to God's call and trusting Him to protect them. God has already helped them give three tons of rice and beans to more than 300 homeless families. Rusty and Debbie are also telling the Congolese how they can have a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Rusty and Debbie work with local pastors to reach the Congolese. "These pastors have a dream of going into the mountains and evangelizing the rebels," Rusty said. To accomplish this dream, Rusty and the pastors planned a trip last year to a dangerous part of the country. "These guys have real guns," Rusty reminded the pastors before their trip. Because of the danger, Rusty asked if they would like to cancel it.

"Don't they still need to hear about Jesus?" one pastor responded. Rusty agreed. Obeying God's call sometimes means going to dangerous places.

You play an important part in the lives of missionaries when you pray for them.

- Pray that God will call other missionaries to help Rusty and Debbie tell the many people groups of the DRC about Jesus.
- Pray that Rusty and Debbie and local pastors will continue to be obedient to God's call, even if it means going to dangerous places.
- Pray for peace for the DRC.
- Pray that you will obey if God asks you to do something difficult.

Adapted from "Missionaries Bring Relief to Troubled Congo," written by Shawn Hendricks, International Mission Board. Used by permission.