

Living by Faith

Theme: Eye on the Sky

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EDITORIAL STAFF

Editor in Chief: Robin Johnston

Associate Editor, Curriculum:

Lee Ann Alexander

Children's Editor: Chris Anderson

Beginner Editor:

Krisann Durnford

WRITERS

Krisann Durnford, Shirley Engelhardt,

Heather Johnson, Barbara Westberg

THEME DEVELOPMENT

Sharon Krnavek

DESIGN

Layout: Dennis Fiorini

Artist: Ron Wheeler

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Join us on our Facebook group. Interact with editors and Sunday school teachers. Post pictures of your class. Brag on what God is doing in your class. You teach with us; now interact with us. Check out our group, "Word Aflame Beginner Curriculum Teachers."

NOTE: Before posting pictures of children, be sure to get parental permission.



Beginner Teacher's Manual

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All Scripture quotations are taken from the King James Version unless otherwise noted.

THEME DEVELOPMENT

Eye on the Sky

Space missions thrust humanity into a new realm—one that required faith. The early church was thrust into a similar mission—one that carried believers into a realm of faith and the supernatural. The church continues that same mission today, knowing that the impossible becomes possible through faith.

Explaining Our Acronyms and Symbols

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| (TRP) = Teacher's Resource Packet | BP = Bible Point |
| 📎 = Digital resource using code on TRP instruction sheet | MV = Memory Verse |
| (AP) = Activity Paper | KiM = Kids in Missions |
| | SMP = Special Memory Passage |

As you customize your lessons, prepare the room with fun space visuals. Think space center bulletin boards where stars and planets shine on the screen while buttons and switches glow on the panel. Create a control center for mission controllers. Make it large enough to seat several students at its screens and panels. Astronauts, telescopes, and shooting stars will fill the room while faith fills your student's hearts. Keep your eye on the sky and allow your faith to rise—God is about to do the impossible!



Room Decoration

Attach the door poster **(TRP)** and invite students to an exciting space adventure.

The suggested wall-decorating ideas can be adapted for any size classroom. Decorations can be basic or detailed and three-dimensional. Sizes can be reduced to fit bulletin boards. Select the best designs for your situation.

Keep all important items for interaction and teaching at students' eye level. Anything above the student should simply be used for decoration. Along the walls, place boxes of props for dramatic play opportunities (suggestions in margin). Encourage students who arrive early to explore the interactive areas in imaginary play.

Dramatic Play Suggestions

- Different sized and textured balls
- Globes
- Hoops
- Solar system cutouts or inflatables
- Hula-Hoops
- Moon rocks and moon sand
- Moon boots
- Space or shuttle sound bites

Visit <https://www.nasa.gov/connect/sounds/> for audio and ringtones from historical space moments.

Teaching Wall 1: Rocket Wall

Space is big, but God is bigger! Space highlights the Lord's creativity and is fascinating to Beginners. Create a space scene on this wall. Cover the wall with a black or dark blue plastic tablecloth or art paper. Place a writing board in the center of the wall for teaching lessons.

Make this wall an interactive attendance activity. Use the theme art **📎** or purchase thirteen solar system cutouts and attach along the wall. To make 3-D planets, cut Styrofoam balls in half and spray-paint each to represent planets. Attach with double-sided tape.

Provide each student with a rocket cutout. Students write their names on their rockets and attach them near the first planet, orbiting around the planet. Each week a student attends, the student moves the rocket to the next planet.

As an alternative attendance tracking method, mount student attendance charts **(AP)** **📎** at eye level.

Looking Ahead

Check all your lesson title pages now to see what supplies need to be gathered. Designate what activities require multiple copies, cutouts, or unusual supplies. Recruit volunteers to help with drawing, copying, or cutting.

- Always create a sample of every craft activity.
- Always practice object lessons well before class to make sure your methods provide the desired results.

Before the quarter begins, tear apart the activity papers and sort the papers by lesson for easier distribution each week. Set apart the title page to send home with students at the beginning of the quarter. This provides families with a copy of the unit memory posters for at-home study. Order one activity paper per student with a few extras for visitors and for growth.

Stars are a major part of this theme. Purchase stars of various sizes and colors to use as prizes (stick to clothing) or awards on their activity papers.

Avoid a Panic Attack!

If you occasionally loan out your teacher's manual or accidentally leave it at church, don't panic. Before the quarter begins, follow the process on page 2 to download the entire manual to your electronic device. You can check supplies, study, and focus your prayers with a few simple clicks on your device.

NOTE: Some smartphones will not open zip files but will open PDFs. Save the zip files to your computer and then send the PDF to your phone.

Teaching Wall 2: Faith Walk Wall

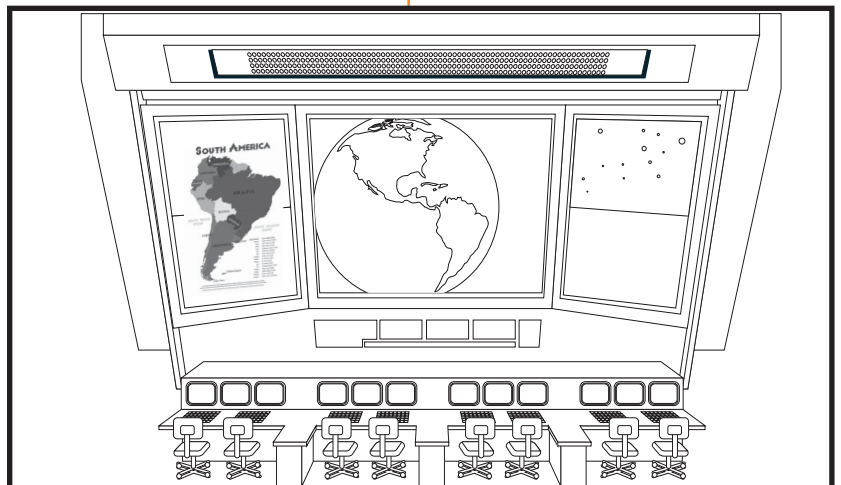
Traveling to the moon seemed impossible, but one man took one small step and it became a giant leap for humanity. Through faith, the mission was accomplished. Cover this wall with dark paper or a purchased moonscape scene. Add a large cutout of earth in the distance and an astronaut or space rover in the forefront. Display the New Birth poster (TRP) and refer to it weekly.

Add a 3-D element by purchasing an inflatable rocket to hang from the ceiling. Along the floor, place moon rocks (random, various-sized rocks painted gray or brown colors).

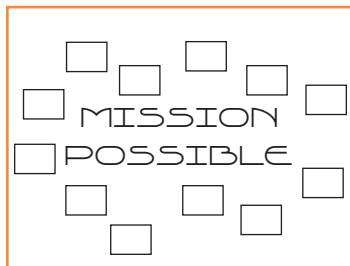
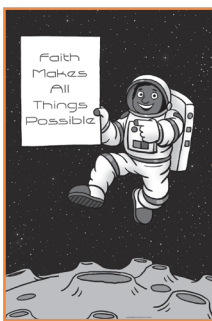


Teaching Wall 3: Mission Control Wall

Flight controllers monitor various aspects of a space mission. They are experts at communication, engineering, and navigation. Their goal is to ensure the success and safety of the mission. To become experts in this faith walk, we must fine-tune our communication skills with Jesus. He must control the mission and guide us to Heaven.



Remember to change the unit verse poster when the new unit begins.



The Mission Control Center displays active mission areas. Divide this wall into two screens. Place a world map on one side and indicate your location with a sticker or star. Mount the *Kids in Missions* map (TRP) on the opposite side and focus on the missions that are occurring across the world. Encourage students to be a part of the mission by praying for each other, the missionaries, and the country of South America.

To create a 3-D center, place a desk against the wall. Add an old computer, keyboards, and headphones. Make a control panel by gluing various colored bottle caps to a piece of cardboard. Make this an interactive wall by writing names or prayer requests on each bottle cap and allowing students to touch each cap while praying.

Teaching Wall 4: Flight Controller's Wall

Make this an interactive memory wall by placing star constellations with the memory verse words 📍 on the wall. Students move the constellations into verse sequence when practicing each unit verse. Mount each unit MV poster (TRP) and the Special Memory Passage poster (TRP) on this wall.

Excellent control centers employ excellent flight controllers. Make a name card for each student. On a table near the wall, tape the name cards and a memory chart below each name card.

Additional Bulletin Board Ideas

Faith Makes All Things Possible

Mount the bulletin board poster (TRP). Use sticky notes to attach prayer requests/ answers to the poster.

Faith Blast

From the theme art 📍, make a shuttle taking off. Take pictures of students and place their faces in the windows of the shuttle.

MISSION POSSIBLE!

Using the theme art letters 📍, cut out and mount large letters spelling MISSION POSSIBLE. Around the letters, mount pictures showing your students and church congregation at work for God's kingdom.

Black-Hole Offering Box

Cover a shoe box in black paper. Stand it up on end and cut a hole in the top half of the lid. On the inside of the lid, tape strips of black garbage bag. Students reach into the black hole to place their offering in the orbit of God's kingdom.

Volunteer Space Controllers

Purchase neon Ping-Pong balls to represent planets. Label each with a student's name and place the balls in a bag. When a volunteer is needed, select one planet from the bag and use that student as a helper. Place the balls back in the bag after all students have an opportunity to help.

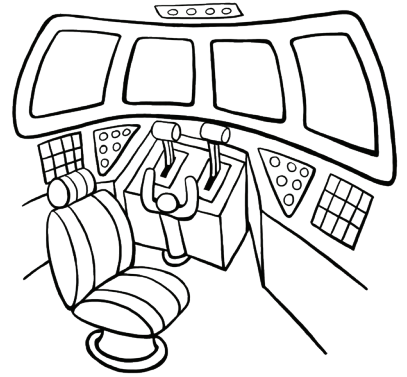
Additional Space Center Ideas

- Party supply stores offer fun, space props—spaceship favor boxes, solar system cutouts, inflatable spaceships and rockets.
- Consider serving space-food snacks: rocket kabobs made of fruit chunks; cosmic brownies and Goldfish Space Adventure crackers; star constellations made from miniature marshmallows and pretzel sticks.
- Transform the room into a mission control center. Create large screens on the walls, tables with computers or panels, and signage relating to space missions (e.g., ground control, flight director). For ideas, visit internet picture galleries of space sites.

Facebook

Join our Facebook group, “Word Aflame Beginner Curriculum Teachers.” Interact with editors and Sunday school teachers. Share tips and gather ideas. Post pictures of your class (with parental permission) and encourage others by posting what God is doing in your students’ lives.

Note: Before posting pictures of students, get parental permission using the model release form 📄 or child information form 📄.





GOD WORKS THROUGH US



CORE SUPPLIES

Excite and Engage

Welcome: Play the space sounds  on a loop as students enter the classroom. Purchase one or more inflatable space shuttles. Visit the public library for picture books of astronauts in training or print the Astronauts in Training photos .

Attendance charts (AP) , markers, glue, cotton balls, black-hole offering box

Opening Activity: Make a sample chenille-wire figure. See sketch on page 11.

Chenille wire (2 wires per student); *optional:* background scenes (TRP) , crayons

Relate and Receive

Bible Lesson: Prepare the background scenes (TRP)

Bible, chenille-wire figures from Opening Activity, tape

Apply and Act

Life Application: Bible Art: Paul's Nephew (TRP) , jumbo craft sticks (1 per student), markers

Prayer and Call to Action: Craft sticks from Life Application



Home Connection: Unit 1 Home Connection calendar (TRP) , lesson 1 Home Connection devotion , child information forms 

EXPANDED SUPPLIES

Worship and the Word

Worship: Suggested songs: “Lord, I Give You My Heart” by Hillsong, “Use Me” by Ken Blount Ministries

Memory Work: Cut out and assemble the number cube (TRP).



Unit 1 MV poster (TRP), memory charts (AP) , star stickers (TRP) , markers, activity papers (page 1), pennies (1 per student)

Reinforce and Review


Activity Paper: Activity papers (page 2), crayons

Option 1: Purchase two boxes of markers. Within each box, swap the marker tops so they do not match the color of marker.

Option 2: Cover a table with white Kraft paper. Write the Life Application in large lettering without the first letter of each word: ___ill ___ork ___or ___od. Students will need markers.

Option 3: Copy the Global Missions cards  highlighting South America, at least 1 card per student. Print the *KiM* handout  to send home with students.

Kids in Missions map (TRP) 

Items marked with (TRP) can be found in the teacher's resource packet. Items marked with  can be downloaded by following the instructions on the cover sheet in the teacher's resource packet. Items marked with (AP) can be found in the activity paper.

Unit 1

Paul's Testimony

Unit Aim

Students will determine and share their personal testimonies.

Unit Bible Verse

Philippians 3:14

Scripture Text

Acts 23:11–24

Bible Lesson Verse

Acts 23:11

Bible Point

God uses us to complete His plan.

Life Application

I will work for God.

Teacher Devotional

Read Acts 23:11–24. Prayerfully consider what this passage says:

About God

Throughout Scripture, does God only use spiritual superheroes like Elijah, Peter, and Paul? Consider the unnamed servant girl who directed Naaman to the prophet Elisha. How about the unnamed boy who brought the loaves and fishes? When God has a plan, He uses anyone who is willing, be they superhero or civilian.

To You as a Teacher

It is easy to assume the biblical men and women who were active in God’s work fell into their greatness. Yet nearly every story proves otherwise. Joseph was given a dream, but he had to work to fulfill it. Paul had to earn his learning before God could put it to even greater use. Abraham’s story seems full of only highlights until you realize there are years of faithfulness in between most chapters. People are not preordained; rather, they chose to do God’s work.

To Your Students

A father installed a basketball hoop beside the driveway. He envisioned many exciting father-son games, but after several games his son lost interest. The dad was puzzled until he realized he had set the goal too high. He lowered it so the little boy could, with some stretching, make a basket. Soon his son was begging, “One more game, Dad, please.” As the child grew, the basket was raised.

Bottom line: Set reasonable goals that will stretch your students, but not discourage them. That is what our heavenly Father does for us.

CORE *(designed for a teaching period around 45 minutes)*

EXCITE AND ENGAGE

Welcome

With a new quarter comes new adventures and excitement. Engage your students with a smile and fun actions as they arrive. Take a tour of the room as space sounds 📻 resonate. Show them the black-hole offering box and explain how it relates to space. Collect offering.

Distribute attendance charts (AP) 📄 and write students’ names on the charts before attaching them to the wall. Students glue one cloud (a cotton ball) on their charts.

Allow students to fly the inflatable space shuttle and pretend they are flight controllers while listening to space shuttle sound bites. **The mission control center prepares, guides, and tracks everything that happens with a space shuttle. One mistake can cause tremendous problems. It is important for the mission control team to work together.**

- Discuss how teams work together. Give an example of teamwork.

Show pictures of astronauts in training 📺. **The astronaut depends on mission control. Everyone on the team is important. Each person has a job to do.** Compare this example to God’s kingdom.

God’s plan is to work through us. Introduce the Bible Point: **God uses us to complete His plan.** Instruct students to point to themselves and say the Life Application: **I will work for God.**



Opening Activity: Assembling the Cast

Use chenille wire to help students make figures. See sketch. You will need a minimum of nine figures (Paul, nephew, 3 or more guards, captain, 3 or more Jewish leaders).

- **What are some ways God might use us in His work?**

Ask students to demonstrate these ideas with the figures.

RELATE AND RECEIVE

Access Prior Experience:

- **What is something you do very well?**
- **How can you help others with what you do well?**

Bible Lesson: God Works through Us (Paul's Nephew)

Gather students in the story area and give each a chenille-wire figure. If you have enough students, let several groups assemble a chenille-wire cast to tell the story. Each group will need the three background scenes and at least nine chenille-wire figures.

Show the Book of Acts in a Bible. **Paul was a missionary. He worked for God and told people about the gospel.**

- **What kind of work do you think Paul did for God?**

Outdoor scene / Paul: **Paul wanted everyone to go to Heaven, so he preached the gospel—that Jesus died, was buried, and rose again. He preached that people must repent, be baptized in Jesus' name, and receive the Holy Ghost to be saved.**

Jewish leaders hated Paul because he preached about Jesus. He was arrested and placed in prison.

- **Do you think God could work through Paul when he was in prison?**

God planned to use Paul to reach other people. God could use Paul on the streets, in the temples, in houses, and yes, even in prison.

Prison scene / Paul: **That night, God spoke to Paul while he was in prison. He said, "Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome" (Acts 23:11).**

As Paul waited in prison, his enemies made a plan to kill him.

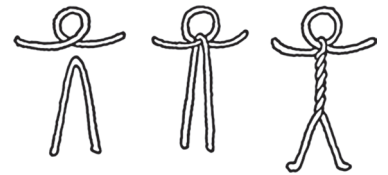
Outdoor scene / Jewish Leaders / Nephew: **Outside the prison, the Jewish leaders talked about their plans. They wanted the soldiers to bring Paul outside where they would attack Paul.** Jewish leader wire figures whisper phrases in different voices. Encourage students to repeat these sentences in a whisper.


LEADER 1: Let's tell the captain we want to ask Paul questions.

LEADER 2: We will kill Paul when they bring him near us.

Paul's nephew heard them talking about their plan to kill Paul.

- **What would you do if you were Paul's nephew and heard this terrible plan?**



If you have time, consider printing the background scenes  as coloring pages and let students color them for use during the Bible lesson.

Place the figures in the story area to use during the Bible lesson.

Bible Lesson Verse

"And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome" (Acts 23:11).



Prison scene / Paul / Nephew / Soldier: **The nephew hurried to visit his uncle in the castle's prison.**

NEPHEW: Uncle Paul! I need to tell you what I heard.

PAUL: What is it, nephew?

NEPHEW: I heard your enemies say they are planning to kill you.

PAUL: How will they do that?

NEPHEW: They will ask the soldiers to bring you outside to ask you questions. Then they plan to kill you.

Paul called for a soldier. He asked the soldier to take his nephew to the captain.

Captain's Office / Nephew / Soldier / Captain: **The captain listened carefully as Paul's nephew explained the plot to kill his uncle.**

CAPTAIN: Do not tell anyone what you heard.

Outdoor scene / Soldiers / Paul: **The captain sent 470 soldiers to guard Paul. They left in the middle of the night and took Paul to Rome. They kept him safe from his enemies.**

- Think how God used Paul's nephew. What did the nephew do for God?



APPLY AND ACT

Life Application: I will work for God.

Show the Bible art of Paul's Nephew (TRP) 📌. Distribute paper plates and markers. Instruct students to draw a face on the stick. **These sticks represent you and me.** Ask students to say, "I will work for God."

- We can do God's work just as Paul did God's work.
- We can help God's work like Paul's nephew did.

Just like God used Paul's nephew to save Paul, we can be used by God to do His work. I will work for God.

Ask students to think of a way we can do God's work. With their craft-stick puppets, have them act out what they are thinking as other students guess what they are doing.

Prayer and Call to Action

- What is something you can do for Jesus right now as a young person?

Ask students to kneel by their chairs and tell God the thing they know they can do for Him. Provide a starter sentence for them to repeat to Jesus. **"Jesus, I know I can work for You by _____."**

Ask students to stand and hold their craft-stick puppets at eye level. **God wants to use you now, while you are young.** Ask students to say, "I will work for God."

Next have students hold their craft-stick puppets above their heads. **He also wants to use you when you are a teenager.** Ask students to say, "I will work for God."

Have students hold their craft-stick puppets as high as possible. **Jesus wants you to work for Him when you are a grown-up.** Ask students to say, "I will work for God."

Hold your craft-stick puppets high while we tell Jesus that we want Him to use us for His work. Lead an echo prayer:

Dear God, help me work for You now and guide my life as I grow. I want to be the best I can be for You.

Encourage students to pray in this fashion throughout the week.

Home Connection

- For each student, send home a copy of the unit 1 Home Connection calendar (TRP) and the lesson 1 devotion, or point out the URL on page 2 of the activity paper to parents so they can download it themselves.
- Send home the cover of the activity paper, showing parents that the backside contains the memory work posters for the entire quarter.
- Use the child information forms to get contact information for parents. This will be used to establish a home connection throughout the quarter.

EXPANDED (designed for a teaching period over 45 minutes)

WORSHIP AND THE WORD

Worship

While singing, use motions that offer hands, feet, and voices to Jesus. Suggested songs:

- “Lord, I Give You My Heart” by Hillsong
- “Use Me” by Ken Blount Ministries

Memory Work

Unit 1 Memory Verse: “I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:14).

Gather students at the unit 1 MV poster (TRP) and read the verse phrase by phrase with students echoing the words. Show the basketball hoop.

- **Have you ever been in a race? How did it feel to cross the finish line?**

Distribute activity papers and pennies. **In a race, there are starting and finishing points. Racers run toward the finish, hoping to get the prize. Our verse says that I press (run) toward the mark (finish line) for the prize.**

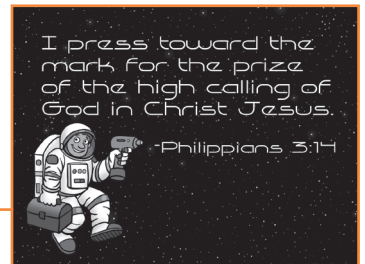
- **What kind of prize do you think we have from Jesus?**
- **Can you name some things that help get us to that prize?** *Salvation, prayer, Bible reading, worship, and so on*

Students take turns rolling the number cube, moving their pennies that number of spaces on their activity papers, and reciting the verse from the beginning to the landing space. Play until all students cross the finish line.

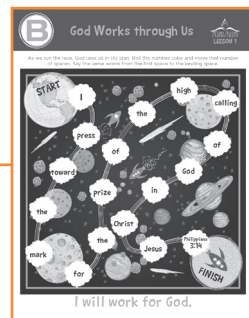
This number cube will be used in later lessons.

Have students write their names on the memory charts (AP) and attach them to the wall. Let students put a star sticker (TRP) by the unit 1 verse.

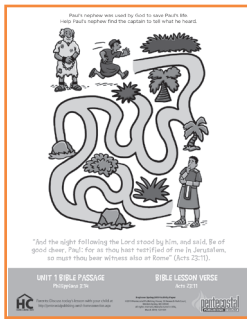
An *echo prayer* is a valuable tool in teaching prayer to children. Lead in short phrases and pause while students repeat the prayer.



The unit MV posters are printed on the backside of the AP cover. Send this cover page home with parents the first week so families can study the unit memory posters throughout the quarter.



The Special Memory Passage, Ephesians 6:11–18, will be introduced next week. This passage—and lesson 10—focus on the armor of God. We suggest you order several sets of play armor for interactive learning.



REINFORCE AND REVIEW

Activity Paper

On the back of the activity paper, students help Paul's nephew find the Roman captain. Discuss how God used the nephew to save Paul.

Did You Know?

After accounting for all maintenance and supply expenses, it costs a church more to make boring gray-scale copies of the activity paper than it does to buy a full-color activity paper for each student? Churches may think they are saving money by buying one activity paper and making copies, but in reality it is costing them more.

Not to mention that copying the activity paper violates copyright laws. Permission is only granted to make copies for visitors. Avoid the need to copy. Order extras to allow for class growth and a few visitors.

Option 1: Marker Mix-Up

Form two teams. Give each team a box of markers. Students empty the box onto the table and answer the following:

- **What is wrong with these markers?** *The tops do not match the markers.*
- **What needs to happen for these to be complete?** *Someone needs to match the tops to the markers.*

Have a relay. Each team tries to be the first to put all the marker tops on the correct markers and place the markers back in the box.

After the relay, lead a discussion. **At times, life seems mixed up. Those markers were not complete until all were matched and in the box. It took your team working together to make the marker box complete.**

God uses us to complete His plan. He needs every one of us on His team. When we work together, He works through us to complete His plan.

Option 2: Fill-in-the-Blanks Mural

Show the prepared table containing the Life Application with missing letters. Review ways that God can use us in His plan.

__ __ill __ork __or __od.

Lead students in saying the Life Application. Help students fill in the missing letters on the paper and then draw pictures of how God uses us for His work.

Option 3: Kids in Missions

Gather students at the *Kids in Missions* map (TRP). Introduce the missionaries for that region. Give each child a Global Missions card 📄 and a *KiM* handout 📄 to take home. Encourage students to pray for the missionaries on their cards.

