



Taste of Missions School Challenge 2026 Teacher Guide

Get involved in the **Taste of Missions School Challenge!** This challenge provides a wonderful opportunity for your students to explore the world of WELS Home and World Missions while participating in our annual event, Taste of Missions.

Participation is easy and flexible— classrooms can use as many activities as they'd like from the 10 provided "challenges", including learning about different mission fields, watching videos, praying for mission work, and playing fun, mission-themed games. Each challenge and activity provides your students another opportunity to connect with the work of sharing the gospel around the world. By completing at least one activity, your class qualifies for entry into the prize drawing. Be sure to fill out the submission form by **April 24, 2026**, to be entered!

Two classrooms (one K-4 and one 5-8) will be randomly selected to win a **Taste of Missions party** for their classroom. Prizes include funds for a mission-inspired lunch, a live Zoom call with a missionary, Taste of Missions t-shirts for students and teachers, classroom decorations, free tickets to Taste of Missions on June 13, 2026, and more surprises. Inspire your students with the joy of spreading the gospel through this exciting challenge!

Challenge #1: Share a video message of encouragement for a missionary

Have your class create a video message of encouragement to send to a home or world missionary! It could be a “thank you” video, encouragement to those in countries struggling with persecution, or a simple message to let missionaries know how your students are praying for them. It can be short – we recommend no more than 2 minutes.

- Meet home missionaries by using the interactive Google map found at wels.net/homemissions.
- Meet world missionaries by reading their biographies found at wels.net/missionarybios.

Submission information:

- Please include your school name and grade in the name of your video.
- Submit your video using this Dropbox link:
<https://www.dropbox.com/request/16lmkpdMTfdLKPyIIAhZ>
- The Missions Promotions team will share your videos directly with the missionaries you speak to at the close of the School Challenge in April 2026.

Questions or concerns? Contact us at missionspromotions@wels.net.

Challenge #2: Watch the Missionary Kid Q&A Video with your class

- [Watch video: 2026 Missionary Kid Q&A - Taste of Missions School Challenge](#)

Challenge #3: Use the Missions-themed coloring pages

- [Download coloring book](#)

Challenge #4: Learn about existing home mission congregations

Use any or all of the activities listed below to learn about existing home mission congregations. Choose whatever will work best in your classroom.

Learn:

Visit wels.net/homemissions and answer the following questions:

- How many Home Missions districts are there?

- A: 14 Home Missions districts
- How many home mission congregations does WELS Home Missions support?
 - A: 151 home mission congregations. *NOTE - This number will change after the Board for Home Missions meets March 19-20, 2026, and approves new mission starts and enhancements.*
- Using the interactive Google map found on the webpage, find a current home mission church in the South Atlantic district. Who is their pastor? Visit their website to learn more about their home mission church.
 - *Note for teachers: Students can click on any of the red icons on the map and find the home mission churches' Home Mission district, pastor, and link to website (when applicable).*
- Using the interactive Google map found on the webpage, find a current home mission church in the Colorado district. Who is their pastor? Visit their website to learn more about their home mission church.
 - *Note for teachers: Students can click on any of the red icons on the map and find the home mission churches' Home Mission district, pastor, and link to website (when applicable).*

Watch:

- [Moments with Missionaries – Paul Biedenbender](#) (Christ, Denver, Colo.)
- [Moments with Missionaries – Andrew Nemmers](#) (Hope, Houston, Texas)
- [Faces of Faith – Jill](#) (Illumine, Rock Hill, S.C.)
- [WELS Connection October 2025](#) – Congregations: Strengthening WELS' backbone
- [Moments with Missionaries – Jeremy Mattek](#) (The Mission – Willis, Texas)

Activities:

- [I Spy](#)
 - [I Spy Answer Key](#)
- Crossword puzzle
 - [Grades K-4](#)
 - [Grades K-4 Answer Key](#)
 - [Grades 5-8](#)
 - [Grades 5-8 Answer Key](#)

Pray:

Lord Jesus, you died for all to forgive our sins and give eternal life to all who believe in you, and we know that you want all people to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth. Bless our home mission churches and missionaries as they work to reach out to the people in their communities. We know that many obstacles can get in the way of their work, but

we also know that you can use those obstacles to get your work done. Give our missionaries and their church members wisdom, patience, strength, and joy in their work, no matter how difficult it might be. Grant success to all their efforts so that more may know the peace and the hope that we have through you. In Jesus' name we ask this, Amen.

Challenge #5: Learn about the WELS 100 Missions in 10 Years initiative

Use any or all of the activities listed below to learn about the 100 Missions in 10 Years initiative. Choose whatever will work best in your classroom.

Learn:

Visit wels100in10.net:

- Click on one of the new missions approved in 2025. Read the description to learn about this new mission church.
 - *NOTE - The website will be updated to reflect new missions for 2026 after the Board for Home Missions meets March 19-20, 2026, and approves new mission starts and enhancements.*
- Click on one of the new enhancements approved in 2025. Read the description to learn about this new ministry.
 - *NOTE - The website will be updated to reflect new missions for 2026 after the Board for Home Missions meets March 19-20, 2026, and approves new mission starts and enhancements.*
- How many new mission starts have been approved so far towards our goal of planting 100 new churches by 2033?
 - *A: See tracker/progress graphic on the wels100in10.net homepage to find number.*
- Go to the interactive timeline found at wels.net/hmtimeline: What year does a home mission church typically begin worship?
 - *A: Year 2*

Watch:

- [Moments with Missionaries - Ethan Schultz](#): Found - Williston, N.D. (Approved as a new mission start in 2024, the second year of the 100 Missions in 10 Years initiative)
- [Moments with Missionaries - Josh Koelpin](#): Harbor - Cambridge/Boston, Mass. (Approved as new mission start in 2023, the first year of the 100 Missions in 10 Years initiative)

- [Moments with Missionaries – Jacob Ungemach](#): Beautiful Savior – Oakley, Cincinnati, Ohio (Approved as new mission start in 2023, the first year of the 100 Missions in 10 Years initiative)
- [Moments with Missionaries – Fred Berger](#): Forgiven, Kronenwetter, Wis. (Approved as new mission start in 2023, the first year of the 100 Missions in 10 Years initiative)
- [Moments with Missionaries – Nathan Savage](#): Heritage – San Tan Valley, Ariz. (Approved as a new mission start in 2025, the third year of the 100 Missions in 10 Years initiative)
- [Faces of Faith – Jett](#): Anchor – Marquette, Mich. (Approved as new mission start in 2023, the first year of the 100 Missions in 10 Years initiative)

Activities:

- Maze
 - [Grades K-4](#)
 - [Grades K-4 Answer Key](#)
 - [Grades 5-8](#)
 - [Grades 5-8 Answer Key](#)
- Word search
 - [Grades K-4](#)
 - [Grades K-4 Answer Key](#)
 - [Grades 5-8](#)
 - [Grades 5-8 Answer Key](#)

Pray:

Lord, you know that countless souls are still searching for the peace that transcends all understanding. You have commissioned us to find the lost and have equipped us with your Word and Sacraments and your faithful promises. You assure us that you are able to do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine. Confident of these truths, we humbly and boldly ask for your rich blessing upon the 100 missions in 10 years initiative. Bless our current missionaries and the fields that they serve. Provide ample manpower, money, and ministry resources. Grant wisdom, strength, perseverance, and joy to all involved in this effort. In all we do, move all of us to see and do our part in spreading the gospel so that more may know your saving peace, all to your glory. Amen.

Challenge #6: Learn about mission work in Africa

Use any or all of the activities listed below to learn about mission work in Africa. Choose whatever will work best in your classroom.

Learn:

Visit wels.net/africa:

- How many missionaries serve on the One Africa Team?
 - A: 8 missionaries
- Name two countries where the One Africa Team works with established church bodies.
 - A: Cameroon, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, or Zambia
- Who is the missionary who works exclusively with the TELL program?
 - A: Missionary Joel Hoff
- Using the interactive Google map found on the webpage, click on one of the blue exploratory mission work locations. Learn about potential mission work in the country and identify which missionary is assigned as their liaison.

Watch:

- [Moments with Missionaries – Ben Foxen](#) (Note: Since this video was recorded, Foxens have moved from Zambia to Tanzania!)
- [Theological education in Africa](#)
- [Moments with Missionaries – Jake Vilhauer](#)
- [Tanzanian Treasures](#): Leia Foxen is six years old and lives in Africa. Listen to her firsthand account of moving to Tanzania with her parents, who serve as WELS World Missionaries.

Activities:

- [Guess who? One Africa Team Missionaries](#)
 - [Guess who? One Africa Team Missionaries – Answer Key](#)
- Maze
 - [K-4](#)
 - [K-4 Answer Key](#)
 - [5-8](#)
 - [5-8 Answer Key](#)
- [Sorting game: Africa or Latin America?](#)
 - [Sorting game: Africa or Latin America? – Answer Key](#)

Pray:

Lord of the nations, you have placed before WELS an enormous opportunity to reach out with the gospel to the people of Africa, who will account for one third of the world's population by the end of this century. Please bless our efforts to train, equip, and facilitate the work of Confessional Lutheran church bodies across the continent. Continue to raise up faithful leaders who preach your gospel to their people and direct their hearts to your salvation which you have graciously prepared for every tribe, language, people, and nation on earth. We ask this in Jesus' name, Amen.

Challenge #7: Learn about mission work in Asia-Oceania

Use any or all of the activities listed below to learn about mission work in Asia-Oceania. Choose whatever will work best in your classroom.

Learn:

Visit wels.net/asia-oceania:

- How many missionaries serve on the Asia-Oceania Team?
 - *A: 17 missionaries*
- In what two countries are the Asia-Oceania Team missionaries largely based in?
 - *A: Thailand and Hong Kong*
- What's the name of the school that provides theological education throughout Asia-Oceania?
 - *A: Asia Lutheran Seminary*
- Which missionary lives in the Philippines?
 - *A: Missionary Justin Steinke*

Watch:

- [Moments with Missionaries - Peter Janke](#)
- [Moments with Missionaries - Jim Brandt](#)
- [Celebrating 20 years of Asia Lutheran Seminary](#)
- [WELS Connection April 2025 - Australia](#)
- [Faces of Faith - Num](#) (Hmong Outreach in Vietnam)
- [Faces of Faith - Zag](#) (Hmong Outreach in Vietnam)

Activities:

- [Guess who? Asia-Oceania Team Missionaries](#)
 - [Guess who? Asia-Oceania Team Missionaries - Answer Key](#)
- [Word Search](#)
 - [Word Search - Answer Key](#)

- [Sorting game: Europe or Asia-Oceania?](#)
 - [Sorting game: Europe or Asia-Oceania? – Answer Key](#)

Pray:

Lord of the Church, around the world there are billions of people still living in darkness. In many places served by the Asia-Oceania Team, fewer than 3% of the population is Christian. We pray that your Word would bring light. Cause Christians to shine brightly with the message of your grace. Give our missionaries and partners boldness and courage to share their faith. Bless the training of church members and leaders that they may be equipped for service in your kingdom. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Challenge #8: Learn about mission work in Europe

Use any or all of the activities listed below to learn about mission work in Europe. Choose whatever will work best in your classroom.

Learn:

Visit wels.net/europe:

- Which husband/wife team serves on the Europe mission team?
 - *A: Luke and Jennifer Wolfgramm*
- Name two countries where the Europe mission team works with mission partners/established church bodies.
 - *A: Albania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Norway, Portugal, Russia, Sweden, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom.*
- Most European mission partners are a part of what worldwide fellowship of Lutherans?
 - *A: Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC)*
- Using the interactive Google map found on the webpage, name the two cities where Holy Word Lutheran Church in the United Kingdom currently hosts weekly worship services.
 - *A: London and Wolverhampton*

Watch:

- [Moments with Missionaries – Luke and Jennifer Wolfgramm](#)
- [Moments with Missionaries – Mike Hartman](#)

Activities:

- [Sorting game: Europe or Asia-Oceania?](#)

- [Sorting game: Europe or Asia-Oceania? – Answer Key](#)
- [Matching Game: European Dishes](#)
 - [Matching Game: European Dishes Answer Key](#)
- [I Spy](#)
 - [I Spy – Answer Key](#)

Pray:

Lord Jesus, we thank you for countless blessings you have given us through European Christians who first sent gospel proclaimers to America. We worship you for crowning their efforts with success as we join in fellowship with believers across Europe. You have united us with brothers and sisters in Europe for one great mission – to share your good news with the world. Fill our souls with such joy that we cannot help but proclaim your promises. Help us find innovative ways to partner with our sister churches and bless our efforts to plant new congregations in London and the U.K. Send more workers into European mission fields, open hearts, and gather a great harvest of souls for eternal life. Hear us and bless us for the sake of your mercy. Amen.

Challenge #9: Learn about mission work in Latin America

Use any or all of the activities listed below to learn about mission work in Latin America. Choose whatever will work best in your classroom.

Learn:

Visit wels.net/latinamerica:

- How many missionaries serve on the One Latin America Team?
 - *A: 11 missionaries*
- Name the three levels of the *Academia Cristo* training program.
 - *A: Self-Study Level, Discipleship Level, and Church Planting Level*
- How many *Academia Cristo* students are actively leading church plants (*Grupos Sembrador*)?
 - *A: 55 students*
- In how many countries do One Latin America Team missionaries reside?
 - *A: 4 countries (Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, and the United States)*

Watch:

- [WELS Connection December 2025](#) – Henry Herrera from Colombia
- [Women’s ministry in Latin America](#)
- [10 years of Academia Cristo](#)

- [Faces of Faith – Argentina](#)

Activities:

- [Sorting game: Africa or Latin America?](#)
 - [Sorting game: Africa or Latin America? – Answer Key](#)
- [Guess who? One Latin America Team Missionaries](#)
 - [Guess who? One Latin America Team Missionaries – Answer Key](#)
- [ISpy](#)
 - [ISpy – Answer Key](#)

Pray:

Lord Jesus, please continue to bless the efforts of *Academia Cristo* to make disciples in Latin America by sharing the message of your saving grace with as many people as possible, training potential leaders, and encouraging those leaders to make disciples who plant churches. In this way we have reached millions of people with God’s Word in Latin America—and we thank you. We pray that you continue to send students who enroll in self-guided courses, then live classes, and then take steps to plant groups. Bless, encourage, and take away all obstacles facing missionaries, national partners, and the group leaders as they share God’s Word with others. We pray this in Jesus’ name. Amen.

Challenge #10: Learn about Native American mission work

Use any or all of the activities listed below to learn about Native American mission work. Choose whatever will work best in your classroom.

Learn:

Visit wels.net/nativeamericanmissions:

- How many missionaries serve on the Native American mission team?
 - *A: 7 missionaries*
- Using the interactive Google map found on the webpage, name the two elementary schools located on the Apache reservations in Arizona.
 - *A: Peridot-Our Savior’s Lutheran School and East Fork Lutheran School*
- What’s the name of the program that provides theological education on the reservation?
 - *A: Apache Christian Training School (ACTS)*
- Which missionary conducts outreach in the Four Corners area of Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, and Colorado?
 - *A: Rev. Nathan Wagenknecht*

Watch:

- [Moments with Missionaries – David Wietzke](#)
- [Moments with Missionaries – Erik Landwehr](#)
- [Get to know Peridot-Our Savior's Lutheran School](#)

Activities:

- [Guess who? Native American Mission Team Missionaries](#)
 - [Guess who? Native American Mission Team Missionaries – Answer Key](#)
- Maze
 - [Grades K-4](#)
 - [Grades K-4 Answer Key](#)
 - [Grades 5-8](#)
 - [Grades 5-8 Answer Key](#)
- [Crossword Puzzle](#)
 - [Crossword Puzzle – Answer Key](#)

Pray:

Lord of the harvest, we see many opportunities for gospel outreach in our country and the world. Please raise up strong Christian leaders among the Native American people for the advancement of your kingdom. Give wisdom to the missionaries as they make plans for outreach efforts. Bless the new Native American outreach to the Four Corners area of Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, and Colorado. Give success to their efforts to reach more Native Americans with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Send your Holy Spirit to open the hearts of those who hear their message to believe your soul-saving Word. We pray this confident of your blessing, through Jesus Christ. Amen.