



Learn about . . . The Children's Service at Ho-Kpodzi Dela Chapel, Ghana

The girl in the picture, Ernestine, attends the "Children's Sunday Service" of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ho-Kpodzi Dela Chapel. She is a committed child to the "Children's Service." The service takes place in an old chapel building without shutters and is therefore open to environmental hazards. This girl leads a group of young ones to clean, dust, and arrange the pews. She also goes for drinking water before service begins at 9 A.M.

Due to the large number of the children, they are divided into different groups to be effectively handled by various teachers. Ernestine again helps organize her group, prays with them, and leads them to sing as they wait for their teacher to teach them under a tree. She is very motivated, loving, and hardworking. She participates

fully and actively through questions and answers. Besides the above, Ernestine takes delight in Bible reading and singing. She is also a member of the Children's Sunday Service drama troupe.



Ho-Kpodzi Dela Chapel

SESSION 1

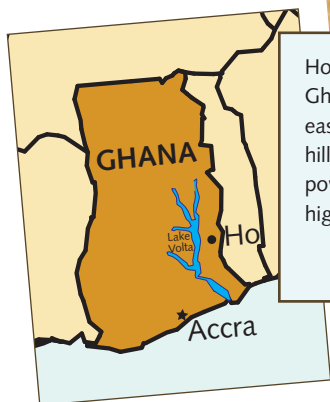
Micah 6:8

The Children's Service at Ho-Kpodzi Dela Chapel
Ho, Ghana

MEET . . . ERNESTINE



HO, GHANA



Ho, Ghana is the municipal seat of the Volta District of Ghana. The Volta District runs north and south along the eastern side of Lake Volta. The Volta Region has rolling hills, lagoons, rivers, and waterfalls. The lake is a source of power and water for the region and also acts as a water highway between the north and south of Ghana.

Name: Ernestine
Hometown: Lume Kporoave, near Ho
Home Church: Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana
Parents: Grace and Manfred
Birthday: December 22
Favorite Food: Jollof Rice
Favorite Game: Ludo (an indoor game like *Parcheesi*)
Favorite Subjects: Mathematics and English

Contributed by Lydia Adajawah, Presbyterian Executive of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana

Today's Memory Verse

God has shown all you people what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

—Micah 6:8 (*Today's New International Version*)

About Today's Memory Verse

The prophet Micah reminds God's people that their worship alone is insufficient for a devoted life. Micah uses hyperbole, or exaggeration, when he asks in verse 7 if thousands of rams or ten thousand rivers of oil would be satisfactory to worship God. Micah responds to his own question, claiming that God has shown us what is good and what is required; to live in ways that honor others and God. We are told that what God wants of us is to act justly treating others fairly, to love mercy being kind and generous to others even when they may not deserve it, and to walk humbly with God acknowledging that God is in charge and seeking God's will.

You Will Need

- Bibles
- Copy of Children's Pages 1-1 and 1-2 for each child
- World map
- Star sticker
- Paper
- Pencils
- Markers and/or crayons
- Several sheets of newsprint
- Storybook—see suggestions under Making Connections



Ernestine carrying water

1. INTRODUCTION

Display a world map. Give the participants copies of Children's Pages 1-1 and 1-2. Have them look at the map of Africa on Children's Page 1-2 and locate Ghana. Invite a child to put a star sticker on Ghana on the world map. Draw the children's attention to "Fast Facts about Ghana" on Children's Page 1-1 and ask them to share any insights they gain from these facts, such as "there are a lot of Christians in Ghana" or "English must be the official language because Ghana was once a colony of the United Kingdom."

2. OPENING PRAYER

Pray the following prayer:

Gracious God, help us to understand what it is you require of us and to live our lives accordingly, treating others with fairness, showing kindness and generosity, and always, always understanding that you are God, you are in charge, and there is no other except for God. Amen.

3. HEAR GOD'S WORD

Invite the children to open their Bibles to Micah 6:8. You may want to suggest that they look at the Table of Contents of their Bible to find out where Micah is, since it is a small book in the Old Testament. Ask a volunteer to read the verse aloud to the group or read the passage aloud to the children. Share the information found under "About Today's Memory Verse" on page 2 with the children.

Have the children read the verse aloud together from Children's Page 1-2. To help the children memorize the verse, divide the class into two groups. Have one group say the first half of the verse, including the question. Have the other group respond with the answer. Instruct the children to say their parts again, this time in a quiet voice. Then have them say their parts a third time, this time in a loud voice. Have the groups switch parts and repeat the verse, saying it quietly first and then loudly.

4. MAKING CONNECTIONS

Choose one or more of the following activities to do with the children.

Say Hello!

Teach the children how people say "Hello" in Ghana in the Akan language. Explain that greeting people is very important because it shows that you respect another person and acknowledge his or her presence. Greetings are used with everyone all the time, but different greetings are used for different times of the day.

- In the early morning until before noon, people use the word *kye*, which is the word for "daybreak." They say "Maakye."
- In the middle of the day, until about 3:00 in the afternoon, people use the word for "tired," which is *ha*. People say "Maha." This means "I am tired." Ask the children why they think this might be a greeting for the afternoon.
- The third greeting is used for the evening and through the night and uses the word *dwo*, which means "cool, peaceful, calm, or gentle." In the evening, people say "Maadwo," which means "I wish you a cool or peaceful evening."

Call out times of the day, such as breakfast time, after school, and bedtime, or hours of the day, such as 8:00 A.M., 2:00 P.M., and 11:00 P.M., and have the children respond with the proper greeting.

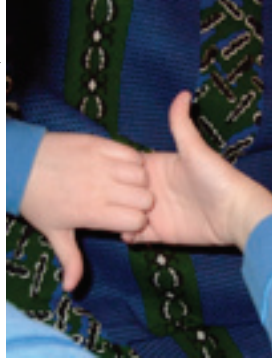
Gye Nyame

Have the children look at the symbol on Children's Page 1-2. Explain that this symbol, pronounced "gin yame," is found all over Ghana, and it means "except for God." Ask the children what they think this phrase means. Explain, if necessary, that it shows the supremacy or—to use a church word—the *sovereignty* of God. This means that we acknowledge that God is in charge! This symbol is used in decoration, carved into wood, painted on items, and used in adinkra cloth, a cloth made by the Ashanti people of Ghana that uses symbols carved into blocks and printed as repetitive patterns on cloth.



Show the children how to make their hands look like the *gye nyame* symbol using the following directions:

- Hold your right hand with your palm facing toward you and your right thumb up.
- Hold your left hand with your palm facing away from you and your left thumb down.
- Hook or latch your fingers together and see the *gye nyame* symbol.



Give the children paper, pencils, and markers and/or crayons and invite them to draw a picture of *gye nyame*. Have them write the words “except for God” under their symbols.

Share a Story

Storytelling is an important tradition in the Ashanti culture of Ghana.

- Invite the children to share a story they may know about justice, kindness, or acknowledging God as the one in charge.
- Read a Bible story, such as the parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25–37. Ask the children to share examples in the parable of justice, kindness, and where God is in charge.
- Read a storybook and talk about the attributes God requires of us as shown in one of the following stories:

Jaffe, Nina and Steve Zeitlin. *The Cow of No Color: Riddle Stories and Justice Tales from Around the World*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1998.

McDermott, Gerald. *Anansi the Spider: A Tale from the Ashanti*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1987.

Seuss, Dr. *Yertle the Turtle and Other Stories*. New York: Random House, 1958.

5. MISSION CHALLENGE

Share with the children the information about Ernestine and how she helps around her church from page 1. Have the children look at the Mission Challenge on Children’s Page 1-2. Explain that each session includes a Mission Challenge, a way that each of them may be involved in mission in the coming week. Read the Mission Challenge aloud to the children and discuss specific ways that they might work on this Mission Challenge. Brainstorm ideas and write them on a sheet of newsprint. Invite the children to write any ideas that they like on their copies of Children’s Page 1-2.

6. CLOSING PRAYER

Invite participants to share any prayer requests—joys, concerns, thanksgivings, praises—that they might have. Record them on a sheet of newsprint. Gather the participants in a circle and pray the following prayer, inserting the recorded prayer requests as indicated.

God, there is no one except for you who is holy and powerful, loving and kind. We thank you for Ernestine and the congregation of Ho-Kpodzi Dela Chapel. Hear the prayers of your children: (*include prayer requests*). Help us to act justly, to show others kindness, and to walk humbly with you day by day. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.

7. CONNECTING WITH PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

Encourage the participants to take Children’s Pages 1-1 and 1-2 home with them and to share them with their parents or caregivers, or e-mail them to the children’s homes.