

# Jennifer in North Macedonia

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*Brainstorming lesson ideas during seminar for Sunday school teachers*

*“I thank God for this training, we learned a lot, and I also enjoyed hanging out.”*

*~ anonymous response from one of the attendees*

**I was enjoying teaching so much; I didn't want the seminar to end!** On Saturday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, the acting Commission for Work with Children and Youth sponsored a one-day seminar for all our children's Sunday school teachers across the district. Fourteen teachers and teachers' assistants were able to attend the seminar representing six of our churches across North Macedonia. The seminar was well received and the teachers said they would like to have more seminars like this one.

In the first session of the seminar, I covered how to structure a Sunday school class so the children would know what to expect each Sunday even if the teacher changes. We talked about how children need stability and predictability in order to function well in their environment and how a classroom schedule with regular routines can provide that stability.

In the second and third sessions, we discussed how to prepare lessons for our classes. First, we talked about how to choose a Bible story or lesson topic and then how to determine the main point or “key takeaway” from the lesson. We said it was very important to spend time praying about this, so our lessons are clear, effective and cohesive. Once we know the main point God wants us to teach the children that week, we can then design all of the other activities to flow out of that main point. We talked about making the song choices, Bible verse,



*Participants with Bible verse fish puzzle*

prayer time, craft activity or game and even the snack align with the key point in some way. Second, we talked about how children need variety in order to stay interested and engaged in learning. We brainstormed multiple ways we can teach these parts of our lessons to provide that variety.

In the final session, we discussed everyone's favorite topic: classroom management. We talked about the importance of preparing well, having an organized classroom and creating an atmosphere of mutual respect. I shared that creating an atmosphere of mutual respect in our classrooms often starts with respecting and managing ourselves. I told them that it is ineffective to try and demand, beg, fight or barter for respect, but we can calmly insist on it because our worthiness to be respected comes from God. Then I had them journal on what it means that our calling and authority to take responsibility for the management of our classrooms comes from God.



Lastly, we talked about positive ways to redirect children's behavior and I had them play a game where one participant was the "teacher" and the others were "children". Each "child" had a card with a disruptive behavior such as not sitting properly and was directed only to stop if the "teacher" employed a certain positive correction. These techniques, such as commenting on another "child" who was sitting properly, were new for a lot

of the teachers and there was a lot of laughter as they gained experience practicing them!



I cannot say thank you enough for Dejan and Simona who helped put on this seminar. Simona translated the workbook I created and helped me with translation throughout the seminar as well as with logistics. Dejan secured the location at his church in Murtino and took care of providing the lunch for everyone. I hope you have amazing coworkers around you helping you accomplish the tasks God is calling you to do. And if not, I pray God would send more workers into His field. Amen!

In Him,

*Jennifer Moore*

### ***Celebration of growth!***

This past Sunday, the congregation in Skopje celebrated the addition of ten new members.

After experiencing two years of social distancing and limited programs, it was so encouraging to see that God is still calling people to be a committed part of the United Methodist Church.

