Hey, Teachers! The manual on CD contains Slideshow Presentations for the True Missions Story. There are two versions to choose from, including one version with audio built in! For more information, see the “PptInstructions” file. Click here to open it.

GYPSY CHILDREN RECEIVE HOPE

(Picture 1)

A garbage truck pulls up and dumps its load, half on the road and half off, adding to the accumulating stench made worse by the hot summer sun. People and animals scour through the debris to try to find something that will help them survive. Welcome to Shutka, a town in Macedonia. Roughly translated, Shutka means “trash heap.”

(Picture 2)

Yet some 500 yards further up the road there is something very different going on. A huge yellow and white striped tent has been erected near a truck that says “Convoy of Hope.” A steady stream of people walk past the garbage to get to the tent. From the tent there is joyful music and a long line of Gypsies eager to get in.

(Picture 3)

Gypsies are Europe’s despised people. They are usually banished to the worst living conditions, the worst jobs, and the worst treatment. In Shutka, 45,000 of these Gypsies are concentrated together in probably the largest Gypsy neighborhood in all of Europe.

(Picture 4)

Assemblies of God workers Brian & Colleen Thomas have felt led to do something for Shutka’s Gypsies that no one else has done. During the Convoy of Hope outreach, they treat the Gypsies like royal guests.

(Picture 5)

There are carnival games and face painting for the children. Each child receives a toy from Europe’s Children, who is co-sponsoring the outreach. BGMC provided funds to help with this event.
A Christian medical clinic examines the hurting. There are free snacks for all, and each family goes home with two bags of groceries.

In the tent, Gypsies from Macedonia are singing and testifying of the joy they have found in Jesus, and of God's healing and saving power.

Every night for a week, evangelistic services are held and people are invited to respond. And Shutka's Gypsies do respond. The first evening, around 20 people came forward to receive Christ. Others come on each succeeding night.

In the mornings, children's outreaches are held. Convoy of Hope and Europe's Children hand out 600 school bags to the children.

Many of these children never go to any kind of school, but up to 800 come to this outreach to learn songs about Jesus and His love for them, to hear Bible stories, and to understand God's love for all mankind—even Gypsies.

The Shutka outreach continues on even after the weeklong event has finished. The goal from the beginning has been to strengthen the new Gypsy church in Shutka. Brian and Colleen Thomas will continue to give leadership to this new endeavor. A permanent building has now replaced the yellow and white striped tent. Education classes are organized for the Gypsy children of Shutka. The mobile clinic attends to many health needs. And the gospel of Jesus goes forward. Shutka is beginning to change!

Thank you, boys and girls, for giving to BGMC so that events like this can take place and many people can hear the gospel message.

Information for this story was provided by Europe's Children and is used with permission from Assemblies of God World Missions.