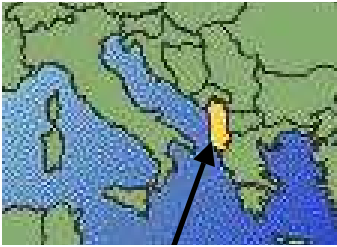




World Champions

OM New Zealand's newsletter for children who want to make a difference in God's World!



Country focus: Albania

Albania, known as 'The Land of the Eagle', is one of the poorest countries in Europe. The population is similar in size to New Zealand's, but the people live very different lives.

Topic: Who are a Father in heaven

Bible reading:

Do you know that God is our Father and He cares SO much for us? Jesus explains how much:

Matthew 6:25-34

For many years, Albania was a Communist country, with an atheist government. This means that they didn't believe in God. No religions were allowed. People were not allowed to go to church or even pray! They could not read the Bible or other books about God, or even give their children names from their religion. Churches were turned into movie theatres.

There were many other things people weren't allowed. They could not travel or have cars. They got very little food and hospitals ran out of medicine.

In 1991, the Communist government was taken out of power and people could be more free again. But the many years of bad rule had left people very poor. This is still a problem today.

Now, many Christians, including people from OM, work in Albania, helping poor people and telling them about God's love for them. About 7 out of 10 people in Albania are Muslims, and there are not very many Christians.



Albania's flag is red with a black eagle with two heads on it.

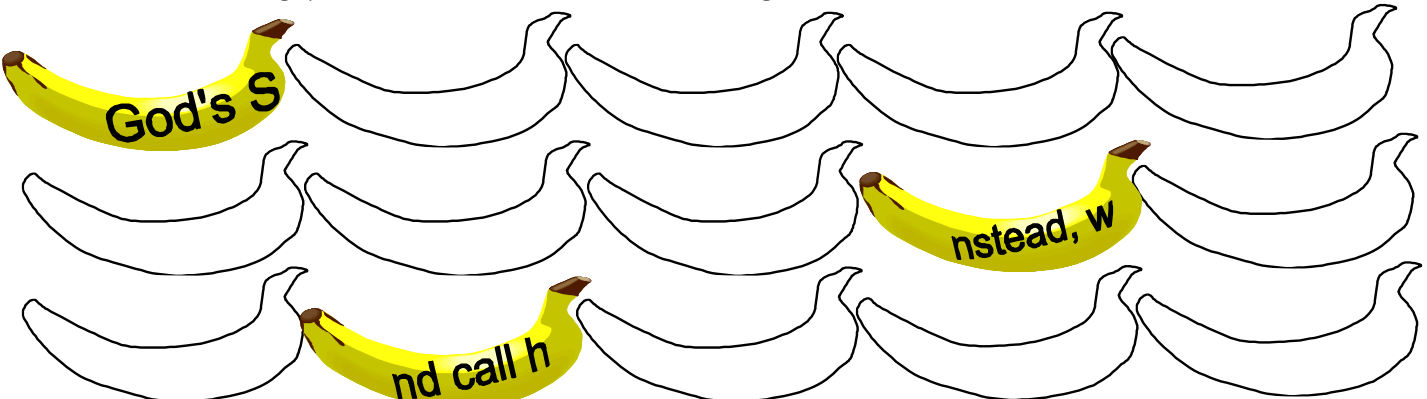
Albania is a country that really needs World Champions to show people that God is their Father and He cares for them!!



This month's memory verse... Have we all gone bananas?!

You will see a lot of bananas in this newsletter. What do bananas have to do with Albania? Well, nothing really, but read the story on the next page and you may understand! Find all the bananas in this newsletter and figure out how they line up in the right order to spell this month's memory verse. This one's a bit tricky, but you're a World Champion, so no worries! We've put a few bananas in for you to help.

Put the 'banana writing' you find onto these bananas in the right order. Then write the verse on the bottom:



Blank box for writing the memory verse

It all started with a bag of bananas... World Champions in Albania

What would you do if you were given a bag of bananas? Early last year a man was visiting a ship in Albania to tell the sailors about Jesus. One of them gave him a big bag of bananas.

As he walked off the ship, he wondered what to do with them. Then he saw a group of children sitting between containers. He went over to them and gave them the bananas. Suddenly more and more children came out from behind the containers. He asked them what they were all doing there at 11 at night, and found out that these children lived here. They had either run away from home or had no homes, so they lived together, begging during the day, and sleeping in huddles on the ground to keep warm at night.

The man decided that something must be done. Right then he had the idea to open a centre for street children.

OM has been working with the centre now for nine months. They rent a house in the centre of the city and about 50 children come 3 times a week. They get a warm meal and clothes, and some medical help. They also hear stories of Jesus. Some of them sleep at the centre at night, but unfortunately there isn't enough for all who would like to come.

When they are not at the centre, the children have a difficult life. Sometimes adults hurt them, or want to sell them, and some have even had a leg cut off by their parents so they could make more money by begging.

But now there is a safe place to go to, where children will be loved, not hurt. More and more come to the centre every time.

The children love to hear about Jesus and to learn new memory verses. Some of them have asked Jesus to be king of their lives and they now understand that they are not alone. They know that God is their Father who loves them and takes care of them.

All this because someone gave a bag of bananas away!



Boys at the OM Centre for street children in Albania.



These children are using crayons for the first time in their lives! They are colouring in a poster that says 'Jesus Loves the Little Children'.



Toni is the youngest child that comes to the centre. She is one year old and her mum is also a street child.

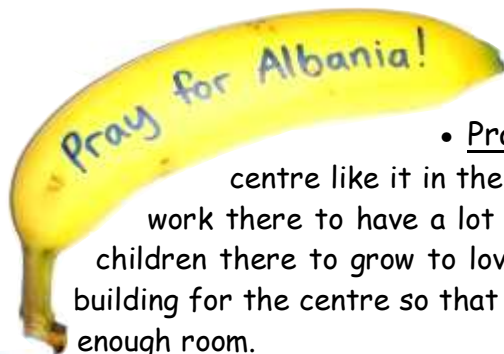
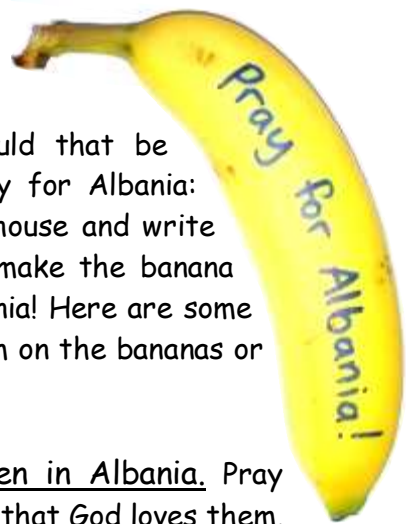
Colour in the same words that the children in the centre did:

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THE LITTLE CHILDREN

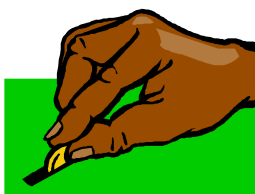


World Champions... Pray!

Yes, we really have gone bananas this month—or should that be 'Albanias'! Here's a creative way to remember to pray for Albania: (Check with an adult first.) Find all the bananas in the house and write 'Pray for Albania!' with vivid on the skins. This doesn't make the banana taste bad and it can remind everyone who sees them to pray for Albania! Here are some things you can remember to pray for. You may even want to write them on the bananas or draw a picture to remind you if there's not enough room.



- Pray for all the street children in Albania. Pray that they stay safe and will find out that God loves them.
- Pray for OM's centre for street kids. There is only one other centre like it in the country, and so many children need help. Pray for the people who work there to have a lot of love for the kids and energy to work with them! Pray for the children there to grow to love God more and not feel alone. Pray for God to provide a bigger building for the centre so that they don't have to turn any children away because they don't have enough room.
- Thank God that there is more freedom in Albania now. Pray for all the Christians there.



World Champions... Give!



So many kids are coming to the centre for street children in Albania, that it is getting too small. Money is needed to get a bigger building and hopefully start a kind of school for them as well. If you would like to help with some money, you can send it to us and we will send it straight to them.

Remember that giving is not just money. Remember how the street kids centre started? All because someone gave a bag of bananas away!

We never know how God works, and He can use even the small things that we give to do amazing things!

Think of people where you live. What can you give them to help them? Even what may seem a small thing can be used by God, our Father in heaven.

Did you know...
In Albania, nodding the head means no and shaking it means yes!

Learn to speak Albanian!

Amaze you friends by speaking in Albanian. Try to find the Albanian words in the word-find.

I	A	R	E	P	J	O	K	H	S	H	N
R	M	I	R	U	P	A	F	S	H	I	M
D	O	S	H	Q	I	P	E	R	I	M	B
I	T	H	S	I	R	K	U	Z	E	J	A
B	N	I	N	E	J	E	S	L	O	U	N
J	A	P	C	G	U	Z	A	C	T	D	A
U	J	C	B	H	Z	F	Z	J	X	B	N
T	U	N	G	J	A	T	J	E	T	A	E

Hello: tungjatjeta

Goodbye: mirupafshim

Albania: Shqiperi

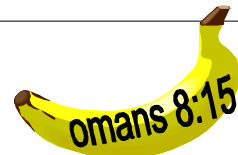
Jesus Christ: Jezu Krishti

Pray: falem

Give: jap

Go: shkoj

Banana: banane



Did you know:
Albania is in the Bible! In Bible times, that area was known as Illyricum and Dalmatia. We can read that Paul went there in Romans 15:19 and Titus went there in 2 Timothy 4:10.





World Champions... Go for it!

Some street children in Albania have no parents. When they come to the centre for street kids, they learn that God is their Father in heaven, so they don't need to feel alone.



It's pretty amazing to think that God is your Father in Heaven. He sees you as His child! Sometimes our dads get things wrong or may seem unfair. But God is perfect and He loves you with a perfect love. All the time!

So any time you feel alone or that nobody understands you, remember that God does!

Read Matthew 7:9-11. God is a loving Father who gives you what you need. Remember this month's Bible reading as well. You must never worry, because God, your Father in heaven, cares for you!

You can see how much God loves you. Do you love Him back? How do you show Him? Why not tell others about how much God loves them as well?



Meet Dylan - A World Champion in Albania!

Dylan is 8 and has just returned to Tauranga from four weeks in Albania with his family. His dad is Albanian and his family used to live there, being World Champions for God. We asked him some questions about his visit:

What was your favourite thing about Albania?

The nice food + spending time with my grandparents.

What type of food did you eat?

We ate fish.

How is Albania different to New Zealand?

People are poor. Kids go to bed way later than us—11 o'clock! My mum and dad once went to bed at 5 in the morning!

How is Albania similar to New Zealand?

Mainly everything's opposite.

What about the language?

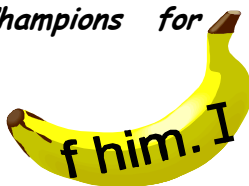
I know the language but it's quite hard. It took me ages to learn. It's like tongue twisters to me.

How can we be World Champions for Albania?

Pray for it. 50% is Muslim, 1% is Christian.



Dylan with some children from a Kids Club in Albania. He is the one sitting down with the lady in front.



'World Champions' is made by OM New Zealand, where we want people of all ages to be a part of the wonderful things God is doing around the world. Why not contact us and see how else you can get involved?

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