

# Waldensian Trail of Faith

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## 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Lesson: The Waldensians - Coming to America and the Settlement of Valdese, NC

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**Introduction:** The Waldensian Trail of Faith is an 11-acre Outdoor Museum that tells the inspiring history of the Waldensians back to the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The property contains 15 buildings and monuments that portray each phase in their journey. The buildings include homes, an outdoor oven for baking bread, a one-room schoolhouse, churches, and monuments that depict the everyday life of the Waldensians as well as commemorate some of the major milestones of their Journey to America. Feel free to adapt this lesson and resources to meet the needs of your students.

### Goals: Students will

- Understand how events, individuals and ideas have influenced the history of local and regional communities.
- Use historical thinking skills to understand the context of events, people, and places.
- Understand how diverse cultures are visible in local and regional communities.
- Understand the development, structure and function of local government.
- Understand how citizens participate in their communities.
- Understand how the location of regions affects activity in a market economy.
- Understand entrepreneurship in a market economy.
- Understand the Earth's patterns by using the 5 themes of geography: (location, place, human-environment interaction, movement and regions.)

**Third Grade NC Essential Standards for Social Studies** – The following standards will be addressed in the pre-visit activities, the tour of the Waldensian Trail of Faith, and post-visit activities.

- 3.H.1.1 Explain key historical events that occurred in the local community and regions over time.
- 3.H.1.2 Analyze the impact of contributions made by diverse historical figures in local communities and regions over time.
- 3.H.1.3 Exemplify the ideas that were significant in the development of local communities and regions.
- 3.H.2.1 Explain change over time through historical narratives (events, people and places).
- 3.H.2.2 Explain how multiple perspectives are portrayed through historical narratives.
- 3.C.1.1 Compare languages, foods and traditions of various groups living in local and regional communities.
- 3.C.1.2 Exemplify how various groups show artistic expression within the local and regional communities.
- 3.C&G.1.1 Summarize the historical development of local governments.
- 3.C&G.2.1 Exemplify how citizens contribute politically, socially and economically to their community.
- 3.E.1.1 Explain how location impacts supply and demand.
- 3.E.1.2 Explain how locations of regions and natural resources influence economic development (industries developed around natural resources, rivers and coastal towns).
- 3.E.2.1 Explain why people become entrepreneurs.
- 3.E.2.2 Give examples of entrepreneurship in various regions of our state.
- 3.G.1.1 Find absolute and relative locations of places within the local community and region.
- 3.G.1.3 Exemplify how people adapt to, change and protect the environment to meet their needs.
- 3.G.1.4 Explain how the movement of goods, people and ideas impact the community.
- 3.G.1.5 Summarize the elements (cultural, demographic, economic and geographic) that define regions (community, state, nation and world).

### Pre-Visit [PowerPoint Presentation](#)

- Many teachers find it helpful to introduce the history of the Waldensians prior to touring the Waldensian Trail of Faith. Feel free to adapt this PowerPoint to meet the needs of your students.

### Pre-Visit Videos

- PBS Weekend Now - Historic Valdese Special - 5 minutes: <http://video.unc.tv/video/2295510816/>
- PBS Weekend Now - Valdese Outdoor Drama - 5 minutes: <http://video.pbs.org/video/2365051305/>

### Pre- or Post-Visit Activity – [The Diary of Maddalena Pons](#)

- Students will find it very interesting to read the diary entries of Maddalena Pons, an 11 year old Waldensian girl making the journey to North Carolina. This text is historical fiction based on documented historical facts.
- Students can read this before or after the tour of the Waldensian Trail of Faith.
- After reading the text, instruct students to complete additional diary entries for Maddalena's adventures here in Burke County.

### Waldensian Trail of Faith Tour Activity

- While touring the Waldensian Trail of Faith, students will complete the [Waldensian Trail of Faith Scavenger Hunt](#). Mini-clipboards, pencils, and the scavenger hunt worksheets will be provided for students upon arrival at the Waldensian Trail of Faith.

**Other suggested activities:** Below are ideas for additional activities that you may want to incorporate into your Waldensian studies.

- [Post-Visit Assessment Items](#) – Forty-six multiple choice items are provided for you to create your own age appropriate post assessment.
- Map study of the Piedmont area of Northern Italy <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Piedmont> and the Piedmont area of NC [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Piedmont \(United States\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Piedmont_(United_States)) (Examine the similarities and differences of the two areas using a Venn diagram or other graphic organizer)
- Provide students with a list of events in Waldensian history. Instruct students to place the events on a timeline. A detailed timeline has been created as a learning tool [Valdese Timeline](#).
- Technology: On-line search for clothing, foods, and traditions of the Waldensian people

### Websites:

- Waldensian Trail of Faith Website [www.waldensiantrailoffaith.com](http://www.waldensiantrailoffaith.com)
- Learn NC <http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/7830?ref=search>
- Wikipedia <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Waldensians>
- Le Phare des Alpes (LPDA) Society <http://lpda.us>
- Courenta (Waldensian dance) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=feSUWptogxY>

**Vocabulary Development:** A comprehensive [Glossary of terms](#) is provided to help teachers and students during their Waldensian studies. Here are a few terms that might be helpful to 3<sup>rd</sup> graders for understanding the life of the Waldensians.

- **Waldensian** - a person belonging to a protestant Christian movement from the Piedmont region of NW Italy. Waldensian is the English word for Valdese (Italian) and Vaudois (French). All three are the same word in the different languages
- **Waldenses** – plural for Waldensian (also acceptable in English is the plural form Waldensians)
- **Valdese** - Italian word for Waldensian
- **courenta** - a Waldensian folk dance
- **sautisso** - a spicy sausage (also soutisso or sautisso)
- **Boccie** - an ancient form of bowling from Europe (also bocci or bocce)
- **Abacus** - counting tool used in mathematics for early learners
- **Coifs** - traditional handmade head wear of Waldensian women (also coife, coiffe, coiffeur, or coiffeuse)

***Some of the 3<sup>d</sup> grade pacing guide essential questions have been answered as they relate to the history of the Waldensians.***

### **History Essential Questions:**

#### **What diverse historical people have influenced local communities and regions over time?**

The Waldensians settled, established and developed the town of Valdese over the last 120 years. Despite being the most recently developed town in Burke County it quickly became the second largest in the county. From the 1930's through the 1980's, Valdese factories employed more people from surrounding communities than actually lived in the town.

#### **What contributions have these diverse historical people made in our communities?**

In the surrounding communities, the exterior stonework of Waldensian stone masons is apparent on homes, buildings, schools, fences and churches. Their Italian style techniques became so popular that Waldensian stone masons were hired to lay the stonework at the world renowned Grove Park Inn in Asheville.

Another Waldensian contribution is certainly the daily baked fresh bread from the Waldensian Bakery. It's been served in every Burke county community since 1915.

#### **What impact have these historical people made in our region and nation?**

Valdese became the largest settlement of Waldensians in North America. The residents of the town have incorporated several non-profit organizations that exist to preserve the history of the Waldensians. These museums and attractions now receive thousands of visitors each year. This tourism brings in business for many surrounding towns and cities. The tourism efforts have attracted visitors from over 32 states and over 9 foreign countries within the last year.

#### **How do you explain from multiple points of view, the events of what have happened in the past?**

This lesson is well suited to provide opportunities for students to explain the history of the Waldensians from multiple points of view. The *Dairy of Maddalena Pons* activity allows students to complete diary entries from the perspective of a young Waldensian girl. Students could also write diary entries for young boys, parents, local children, local adults, family members remaining in Italy, etc.

### **Culture Essential Questions:**

#### **Why is it important to share cultural differences in our community?**

The Waldensians were a devout religious community from a foreign land who spoke a foreign language. They never allowed their cultural differences to conflict with Americans already settled in the surrounding towns. They quickly reached out for help and were willing to give when they could. They gained respect in Burke County as hard workers and built positive relationships throughout the region. There were never disputes between the towns due to cultural differences. When cultural differences are understood, communities operate in harmony.

#### **In what ways can people express their beliefs and values in the community?**

The beliefs and values of the Waldensians are incorporated in their history. Before the Waldensians came to America, they suffered persecution and discrimination because of their beliefs and values. Their expression of these are represented in the Italian architecture of the Waldensian Church (built in the center of the town) and with two local museums that tell their history. The Waldensians valued hard work, and their work ethic was evidenced by their reputation in the community and the success of their businesses.

#### **How are others influenced by the values, beliefs, and traditions of others' cultures?**

The story of the Waldensians reminds all Americans of the democracy that governs our United States, and how it offers freedom of values and beliefs to everyone.

#### **How can you explore the various ways the early cultures borrowed and shared from each other?**

When the Waldensians first arrived in Burke County, they were unfamiliar with the resources available in the area. They were uncertain about many things including which crops could be grown in the area, what kind of farm animals lived here, and how they would build their first houses. A local Burke County pastor saw the needs of the early settlers and sought help from many local farmers. They shared food and showed the Waldensians how to grow the food. Each Waldensian family was given a cow and several chickens. They also shared mules. The pastor and the farmers were able to gather enough so that every four Waldensian farms would have a mule to share.