

BACK TO SCHOOL BLESSINGS 2020

School looks different this year...so many changes

The rhythm of the day may feel different...

If you're going to a new building...

If you're staying home and learning...

You may be excited. You may feel scared or worried. Maybe all of it?

My mom reminded me that when I was getting ready to go to kindergarten, I practiced walking to the bus – literally walking down our driveway.

So we're here to pray for ourselves and everyone going back to school.

Mark 10: 13-16

Little Children Are Brought to Jesus

¹³ People were bringing little children to Jesus. They wanted him to place his hands on them to bless them. But the disciples told them to stop. ¹⁴ When Jesus saw this, he was angry. He said to his disciples, "Let the little children come to me. Don't keep them away. God's kingdom belongs to people like them." ¹⁵ What I'm about to tell you is true. Anyone who will not receive God's kingdom like a little child will never enter it." ¹⁶ Then he took the children in his arms. He placed his hands on them to bless them.

¹³ People were bringing little children to Jesus. **MOVE YOUR ARMS LIKE YOU'RE RUNNING.** They wanted him to place his hands on them to bless them.

But the disciples told them to stop. **MAKE A STOP SIGN WITH YOUR HAND.**

¹⁴ When Jesus saw this, he was angry. He said to his disciples, "Let the little children come to me. Don't keep them away. God's kingdom belongs to people like them. **MOVE YOUR HAND LIKE YOU'RE WAVING SOMEONE TOWARD YOU.**

¹⁵ What I'm about to tell you is true. Anyone who will not receive God's kingdom like a little child will never enter it." ¹⁶ Then he took the children in his arms. He placed his hands on them to bless them. **GIVE YOURSELF A HUG LIKE JESUS DOES.**

We want you to know that Jesus loves you so much and that we care about you, and we're praying for you. The promise we want you to remember is that Jesus is with us - in our hearts - anywhere we go. You can take Jesus' love with you just like you carry your backpack or lunchbox.

We have a special bag for each of you with lots of goodies, including a tag that says, "You are loved."

We're want to offer a special prayer for all of you and your stuff, including your backpacks and devices.

Dear God, we ask your blessing on these backpacks and bags. They will hold our school work, and we'll carry them from home to school and back again. As we carry them, remind us that we've never alone. Help us to remember that you love us and care for us and that our church family does, too. Amen.

Dear God, we ask your blessing on these tools that will help us do our work. Thank you for the ways that we can stay connected to our teachers and classmates – to listen to each other and learn with each other. Help us not to be distracted from what we have to do, but give us focus and wisdom as we use them. Help us to make good decisions about how we communicate with each other. Amen.

Learning is a gift from God. As we begin this new school year, we give thanks that God has given us the ability to learn many things in many ways.

Sometimes a new school year seems exciting or scary or both. I'm praying for all of us to do our best every day. And we know how important it is to pray for you, but we also want to pray for all of the people who help us learn...and so we pray...

For our schools to be safe, healthy places for everyone

For parents, grandparents, caregivers, and day care providers

For our friends and classmates

For teachers and paraprofessionals and support staff in a time of change

For administrators and support staff

For those in the lunchroom who make meals that nourish kids' bodies

For those on the playground

For custodial and maintenance staff who keep the building clean and safe

For bus drivers who get our children to and from school safely

For coaches and mentors who guide our children

For our school board members who make the decisions

For everyone who plays a role in education at every level

We thank you, God, for them.