Backpack Blessings for God’s Children

As a reminder that Jesus is our source of guidance, love, and protection during the school year, many churches set aside one Sunday to “bless the backpacks.”

Here are some ways to do it:

1. Have children in grades K–5 bring their backpacks to church with them on the Sunday before school begins in your community. During the children’s message, invite the kids in attendance to come forward with their backpacks for a special blessing. Pray a prayer like this:

   Lord Jesus, as our children begin a new school year, bless them. Fill them with excitement as they think about all the adventures you have in store for them. Keep them safe. Guide their learning. Help them be examples of your love for their teachers and classmates. Help them always remember they belong to you. Amen.

2. After the prayer, give each child a small gift to attach to their backpacks or take with them to school. Visit CTA’s website to check out our themes for children, featuring lots of fun, budget-friendly items to choose from. Hover over the Ministry tab and click on Children’s Ministry.

3. Host a prayer vigil for all the children and youth in your church a week or two before school begins. (Consider including students who will be attending college, too, whether in your community or away from home.) Post the names of all the students in your church’s prayer room. Invite parents, grandparents, Sunday school teachers, youth workers, and others who have demonstrated concern for your congregation’s children to come to pray one or more times during the week. Reproduce and send home the parents suggestions at the end of this document.

4. Involve parents in the backpack blessing event. Have them accompany their children to the front of the church during the service. Then use a responsive prayer like the one below. Invite students, parents, and the congregation to speak the words in bold type. Then give each child a small gift to attach to their backpack or backpack zipper as a reminder of Jesus’ presence and power.
Prayer leader: We thank you, Lord Jesus, for the children and young people in our church.

Response: Thank you, Lord Jesus!

Prayer leader: As school begins, please bless all of them with your wisdom and strength.

Response: Bless them, Lord Jesus.

Prayer leader: Help them show your love to their teachers and classmates.

Response: Help them, Lord Jesus.

Prayer leader: Keep them safe and healthy.

Response: Protect them, Lord Jesus.

Prayer leader: Guide them as they learn many helpful skills.

Response: Guide them, Lord Jesus.

Prayer leader: May their lives always honor you.

Response: Thank you, Lord Jesus.
Backpack Blessings

Choose one or more of these Bible verses, prayers, and notes. Or choose one of your own! Print it on a note card and place it in your child’s backpack as an encouragement on the first day of school. Consider creating a new card every week or two throughout the year. Pray for your child(ren) as you create the cards!

Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed,
for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.
Joshua 1:9 ESV

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
Psalm 23:1 KJV

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?
Psalm 27:1 KJV

Commit everything you do to the Lord. Trust him, and he will help you.
Psalm 37:5 NLT

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.
Psalm 46:1 ESV

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.
Psalm 119:105 ESV

Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.
Isaiah 43:1 ESV

Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.
Matthew 6:33 NIV®

[Jesus said,] “I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”
Matthew 28:20 NIV®
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God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.
John 3:16 ESV

[Jesus said,] “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”
John 8:12 ESV
[Jesus said,] “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”
John 14:6 ESV

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.
John 10:27–28 ESV

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.
John 14:27 NIV®

[Jesus said,] “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”
John 15:5 NIV®

We know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.
Romans 8:28 ESV

I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.
Philippians 4:13 NLT

Starter Ideas for Personal Notes

- Share a simple “I love you” and your child’s name. (For example, “I love you, Alysha!”)

- Share an attribute of your child that you appreciate. (For example, “Tom, you are such a kind kid!”)

- Promise to pray for them. (For example, “Beth, I’m praying for you today.”)

- Share what you hope they will learn in the new school year. (For example, “Study hard and do your best, Fiona!”)

- Share a talent or activity you enjoy doing with them. (For example, “Let’s ride bikes after school, Eric!”)

WHAT A FRIEND!

Prayer Ideas

Dear heavenly Father, bless (name) during this school day. Give wisdom to those who will teach (him/her). Keep (him/her) alert and ready with the skills (he/she) needs for learning. May (he/she) always know how much you love (him/her). Amen.

Jesus, help me do my best
As I learn and play and rest.
Teach me, Lord, to show your care
At home, at school, and everywhere. Amen.