

Back to School

→ with God ←



An Overview of Resources

Back to School with God Sunday: the vision

Back to School with God resources are provided for you to hold a special Sunday all-age service to mark the start of a new school year, on a date that suits you. At the time of writing schools are off and we are all in lockdown due to COVID-19. It is unclear how long this will last – but whenever schools do return, we are sure that as God’s people we want to recognise this milestone and celebrate the start of a new school year, committing our children, young people and school communities to God in prayer. The vision of Back to School with God is to:

- remind children, young people, teachers and other staff that they go back to school *with God*;
- demonstrate that the church family values them, prays for them and cares about their daily life at school;
- challenge Christian pupils and staff to live out their faith in the school context, supporting any Christian witness in the school (such as an SU Group or similar);
- raise awareness among the church family of the ongoing need for prayer for local schools. If you haven’t already registered your commitment to pray for local schools we would invite you to consider doing so!

www.prayforschoolsscotland.org.uk for Scottish participants;

www.prayforschools.org for those elsewhere in the UK.

As we write, churches are unable to meet for public worship. We don’t know what the situation will be at the end of the summer or when schools finally return. We pray that once again we may be able to gather as a church family. However if this is not the case, then please do consider if there is a virtual option of delivering this service in support of the children, young people and staff returning.

What resources are provided?

Our core resource is the **All-age Service**. This is supported by accompanying resources as detailed below. All resources are free to download upon initial registration.

All-age Service (download *BSG20 All-Age Service*)

The 2020 service theme is **Prayer Shapes, Prayer Saves**. We explore the Bible story of Daniel in Daniel 6. The Bible teaching is applied to everyone, not just to the school context, with a particular challenge to allow prayer to shape our character and make prayer a priority in daily life. The service ends with a time of prayer for children, young people and local schools.

The service is timed to last approximately one hour. Feel free to adapt by selecting your own praise items and the activity options that work best for your church. A Microsoft Word copy is provided to enable editing.

BEFORE the service

- If you have downloaded the resources and are not the church leader, do speak to the minister, leader or elders to seek permission to hold a *Back to School with God* service.
- Decide when you want to hold it. The service can be held on any Sunday around the start of a new school year, which will vary according to where you live. For the UK this will be any time from mid-August to mid-September.
- Decide on the length of service and select what you want to include. Approximate timings are given for each section.
- A little preparation will be needed.
 - We suggest that you involve children, young people and adults from the school community wherever possible, for example by reading the Bible passage, setting the scene of Daniel using the **BSG20 Introducing Daniel Script** and leading prayers. The service contains a responsive prayer which is available to download separately so it can be copied for those taking part. (**BSG20 Responsive Prayer**). Invite individuals in plenty of time and support them in what you are asking them to do.
 - Download the accompanying set of PPT slides (**BSG20 PPT Slides**), if desired.
 - Check the videos are able to be streamed live from YouTube. If you are using videos from YouTube for public use you need to be aware of your church's copyright policy.
 - The bookmark requires some pre-planning – see below.
- If you are planning to take photographs or video, make sure you have permission in place from parents to do so.

Accompanying Resources

- **BSG20 All-age Service PPT Slides.** A set of PowerPoint slides to accompany the service. These are available in both standard and widescreen formats.
- **BSG20 Bookmark.** A printable bookmark you can copy onto card and cut up.
- **BSG20 Children's Crafts.** These can be used during the service for younger children or older children who may have difficulty joining in or concentrating. They can also be used in midweek clubs or in children's activities at a subsequent date. We suggest two crafts: one to encourage prayer at home and the other as a reminder of the Bible story.
- **BSG20 Children's Talk.** Recognising that not everyone can hold a full all-age service, the children's talk suits those who are looking to hold a shorter slot within a wider service.
- **BSG20 Responsive Prayer.** A separate copy of the prayer featured in the All-age Service, ready to print for each person taking part. The prayer involves parents, children, teenagers and a representative of the church family praying in turn for nursery, primary school, secondary school, and the community.
- **BSG20 Script – Introducing Daniel.** The script matches that of the BSG20 Video and suits churches who have budding thespians who would like to act it out!

- **BSG20 Video – Introducing Daniel.** The video explains who Daniel is and sets the context for what happens in Daniel 6.

AFTER the Service

We appreciate you using our resources! Your comments can help shape future material, so we will email you after the service asking for feedback. We also love to hear stories of how children and adults responded to the teaching. Please do share your comments. If you have any encouraging stories, please do pass these on and bless others.

E: pray@suscotland.org.uk.