

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.

We want to facilitate the church family coming together to pray for children, young people and school communities. 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 and there is space on the registration form to mark which schools you wish to pray for (*please note that someone from Pray for Schools will respond to you at some future point if you are registering prayer for local schools for the first time*).

What resources are provided?

Our core resource is the **BSG22 All-age Service**. This is supported by accompanying resources as outlined below. All resources are free to download upon initial registration.

Our 2022 theme is **God's Golden Rules**. We are exploring the Bible story found in Luke 10:25-37 where an Expert in the Law asks Jesus a question about how he receives eternal life, and who is his neighbour. 'Love God' and 'Love your neighbour' could be called 'God's Golden Rules' and this is explored through the Parable of the Good Samaritan. The Bible teaching is applied to everyone, not just to the school context, with a particular challenge to consider our motives in helping others, and to actively consider who might need our help. The service ends with a time of prayer for children, young people and local schools.

The service is flexible and can be adapted to the time you have available. Suggestions are given for praise items and activities. Choose ones that work best for your church. A Microsoft Word copy of the **All-age service** is provided to enable editing. The materials are suitable for use both in church and online.

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. Download **BSG22 All-age Service PPT Slides Compressed** and delete the slides you don't need. Edit the Word version of **BSG22 All-age Service** to reflect your changes and send with the updated slide set to whoever operates the tech.
- Identify others to take part. We suggest you involve children, young people, students and adults from the school community wherever possible, for example:
 - welcoming at the door if meeting physically, uplifting an offering, joining an adult at the tech desk to operate the PowerPoint slides.
 - reading the Bible passage. Either invite someone to read straight from the Bible in a version of your choice, or else narrate the story as PowerPoint images are shared (**BSG22 PPT Bible Story Script & BSG22 PPT Bible Story Images**).
 - taking part in the prayer for schools and young people. You will need to allocate people to take part and share **BSG22 Prayers for Schools** with them.
- 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.
- If you are planning to take photographs or video of under 16s, make sure you have permission from parents to do so – particularly if you plan to share on social media.
- On special Sundays many churches take the opportunity to uplift an offering towards the ministry that has been highlighted. Your fellowship may wish to consider doing this for local youth ministry, or wider ministry to children and young people. If you don't already support an organisation that works with youth, then you might like to consider a thanksgiving gift to:
 - [SU Scotland](#)
 - [SU Northern Ireland](#)
 - [Pray for Schools](#) (England & Wales)

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- **BSG22 All-age Service PPT Slides Compressed.** A set of PowerPoint slides to accompany the service. Slides that accompany optional activities are provided in **BSG22 Activity PPT Slides.**

- **BSG22 PPT Bible Story Script.** An option for reading Luke 10:25-37 using different voices – a narrator, the Expert in the Law, and Jesus. Images are provided in **BSG22 PPT Bible Story Images.**
- **BSG22 Children’s Prayers, Activities & Crafts.** All-age games and prayer activities are contained in the **All-age service**, but these are further ideas for use in a Sunday School or Kids’ Church following the **BSG22 Children’s Talk**, or in a midweek club. Supporting resources are the **BSG22 Donkey Craft Template**, **BSG22 Good Samaritan Story Pictures**, **BSG22 Sticking Plaster Prayer Template**, **BSG22 Who is my Neighbour Prayer Chooser.**
- **BSG22 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.
- **BSG22 Prayers for Schools.** A copy of the prayer featured at the end of the **All-age Service**, for emailing to each person taking part. The prayer involves an adult, a student and a child saying a prayer in turn.

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 pass these on and bless others. Drop an email to Elizabeth.McDowall@suscotland.org.uk.

Here are a few ideas to take this beyond the service:

Bless pupils and teachers: you might suggest people make a card and deliver it to a pupil or a teacher to encourage them as they return to school. If you are a small church, people may know or live near church teachers or teachers within the congregation and could deliver them personally. If a larger church, you may wish to change the focus to ‘Bless the school’ and organise some tasty treats or a special lunch that could be delivered to the school to bless them and express the love of the church family.

Church buddies: where volunteers commit to pray for a particular child. Parents or Children’s Church leaders could help them make a card with their photo, age, school year, and what they like to do. These could be given to those ‘buddying’ to pray for them and updated on an annual basis.

Schools prayer: encourage people towards ongoing prayer for schools. Mention schools regularly in corporate prayer, remembering to pray for teachers and pupils within the fellowship. Check out school websites to pray for the Head teacher and school events. Suggest that individuals might pray for the schools they walk past, drive past or live beside. They may wish to register their prayers at www.prayforschoolsscotland (if in Scotland) or www.prayforschools.org (rest of UK). There is an option to link up with others and to join with others to pray for schools.