

Back-To-School Litanies

Bold signifies congregational participation.

Back-to-School Liturgy for Children

When it's the night before going to school, and you're picking out your clothes and making sure you have all your school supplies...

Children: Jesus is with me.

When you're waking up and eating a healthy breakfast to start the day...

Children: Jesus is with me.

When you're getting on the school bus or being driven to school...

Children: Jesus is with me.

When you meet your teachers and new friends in your class...

Children: Jesus is with me.

When you're playing with your friends at recess...

Children: Jesus is with me.

When you're finding the right school bus to ride home...

Children: Jesus is with me.

When you're telling your family about your day at school...

Children: Jesus is with me.

When you're praying at night and thanking God for your family, your friends and your school...

Children: Jesus is with me.

Back-to-School Liturgy for Youth

It is the beginning of a new school year, and God is a God of new beginnings.

We thank you for our youth who see the wonder of your world unfold before them. We thank you for teachers, textbooks and technology that help them explore those wonders.

During this year, we will get overwhelmed by tests, homework, and activities, and we will wonder how we will make it through.

Grant our youth quiet confidence and calm, bear their stress with them, help them to ask for help when it gets to be too much.

We will be measured, tested, and judged, and we will be asked to measure our worth in how well we perform, the grades we make, and the friends we have.

Comfort them in the knowledge that you have already judged them and found them to be good, made them worthy, and called them by name.

We will want popularity: we will want to fit in, and we will wish to be people other than ourselves, the people you created us to be.

Remind them of their identity, given in baptism, to be your sons and daughters.

Even with our worries, we are excited to return to friends we haven't seen in months, activities that engage our passions, and learning that challenges us to grow.

Bless our youth with the possibilities held in new beginnings, and help them to know that when their student days are over, you will show them where to serve you further, using what they have learned to meet the challenges of your world.

Back-to-School Liturgy for Educators

A new school year is about to begin, and school doors will soon open to the students you've assigned to my care.

Open all educators' minds and hearts to each of their students and especially to the ones who will challenge them the most.

Help me challenge my students, all of them, to study, to learn, to grow in knowledge and wisdom.

Help them remember, Lord, the stage of life their students are at: give them patience to help their students grow and insight to know the help they need.

Help me to understand that sometimes my students may not understand me: may I be clear in the things I say and do, and in how I say and do them.

Remind them that their students don't know the burdens and worries they bring to the classroom, and help them remember, Lord, how anxious and heavy their students' hearts may be.

Keep me from favouring any particular students, Lord, except for those who most need my help. Let my decisions at school be fair and just, honest and true.

Send your Spirit to fill them with gifts of knowledge and understanding, counsel and wisdom.

Lord, open my mind and heart to my students' parents, especially those who will challenge me the most. Help me challenge parents to challenge their children to study, to learn and to grow.

Help them to teach as you would, Lord: help them to be understanding, to know when they need to be firm, how to be gentle in all things, and to be patient until the last bell rings.

These liturgies are adapted from liturgies by Rev. Karin Fowler at *Worshiping with Children*, by David R. Henson at *Edges of Faith*, by Sherri Dunham Haan at *Reformed Worship*, and by Greg Kandra at *The Deacon's Bench*.