

# A Backpack Blessing

## What is a Backpack Blessing?

A Backpack Blessing is a segment in a worship service just before students and teachers return to school at the beginning of the year. The aim is to encourage and help students to feel excited and supported, by their church community and by God, as they go back to school. *We know our small actions, like this simple segment, have big impact in kids' lives!*

## How does it work?

Choose a date before children return to school and advertise it, asking students (& teachers) to bring their backpacks to the service. Why backpacks? Because for many children, and adults, there is much excitement about their backpack or new stationery items. Plus backpacks are students' constant companions while at school.

During the service, invite everyone returning to school to the front and say a prayer of blessing over them & their backpacks. Often a special bag tag or item of stationery is also given to remind them that God and their church family go with them.

## Some extra ideas:

- Interview a couple of kids/all the kids: *What is their school year, school, teacher? Subjects, classes? (If older students).*
- Pray for strength, courage and faith. *Include the song: Kia Kaha, Kia Maia, Kia Manawanui (Be strong, be steadfast, be willing).*
- Have a person for each child who gives the little item and prays for them or stands with them during a group prayer.
- Ask the congregation to stand for a prayer (blessing). You may like to download our special Backpack Blessing prayer, project it onscreen and have the congregation share in speaking the prayer aloud.



small  
=  
BIG

## SMALL = BIG

is all about gathering around the smallest members of our communities to support them in a tricky time, returning to school.

AND it's about recognising that our small and simple actions - prayer, a text, a gift, fun together - have big impact in kids' lives!