

Back to School Blessings

Opening When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you.

Prayer God our Father, you see your children growing up in an unsteady and confusing world:
Show them that your ways give more life than the ways of the world, and that following you
is better than chasing after selfish goals. Help them to take failure, not as a measure of their
worth, but as a chance for a fresh start. Give them strength to hold their faith in you, and to
keep alive their joy in your creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Song *A hymn, psalm, anthem, or other meditation may be sung or said.*

Scripture Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the
throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city.

Revelation 22:1 NRSV

Mediation *How do you experience God as a river? How does the river flow through you?*

Action *Youth are invited to bring an item that represents the upcoming year. Here, the items are placed
together somewhere that is visible to the group.*

Prayers Holy God, as we begin a new school year, we ask you to:

Give us your wisdom as we make decisions for our future:

River of life, flow through our lives.

Give us your compassion in our relationships with family and friends:

River of life, flow through our lives.

Give us your safety when we feel vulnerable or hurt:

River of life, flow through our lives.

Give us your courage when anxieties and insecurities take control:

River of life, flow through our lives.

Here, the people may add particular intercessions or thanksgivings.

Give us your grace in all that we do:

River of grace, flow through our lives.

Prayer O Eternal God, bless all schools, colleges and universities, that they may be lively centers for
sound learning, new discovery and the pursuit of wisdom; grant that those who teach and
those who learn may find you to be the source of all truth. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the Kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Here, a youth should lead the final prayer.

Prayer God, you were present at the beginning. Be with us as we begin a new school year. Comfort us when we are unsure of our new surroundings. Strengthen us when we stumble, and help us to remember that your light shines in all places. All this we ask through you, our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer. **Amen.**

Tokens *Here, the youth are given tokens to remind them of these prayers.*

Closing When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you.

Song *Seek ye first*
(Music may be found in Hymnal 1982, #711)

Verse 1

Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness;
and all these things shall be added unto you. Allelu, alleluia!

Refrain: Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia, allelu, alleluia!

Verse 2

Ask, and it shall be given unto you; seek, and ye shall find.
Knock, and the door shall be opened unto you. Allelu, alleluia!

Refrain: Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia, allelu, alleluia!



The Episcopal Church in Arkansas
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Resources for this liturgy are from *The Book of Common Prayer*, *A New Zealand Prayer Book*, and *Call on Me*.