

CITY Back-to-School Bash – September 6-7, 2025

RAFFLE: have kids fill out raffle ticket as they come in

Note: LG is around 10 minutes. Start about 5 minutes after service starts

SLIDE: *Back to School*

Opening

What's up Parkview Kids?!?! Welcome to our Back-to-school bash! Are you guys as excited as I am? Great! Well, my name is (your name), and I can't wait to kick off this school year with some fun and games, Parkview style! Now I want to know, what is your favorite part of school and why? (Take 3-5 answers) My favorite subject was (*your answer and why you loved it*). BUT I also loved LUNCH TIME! It was a time I could sit and eat my favorite snacks and talk to my friends.

Today we are going to start with a game called Snack Attack. To begin each round everyone has to shout as loud as possible when the vending machine shakes so that the snack choices for each round will fall down. When the two snacks appear on the screen, run to the side of the room for the one you prefer. Let's play snack attack!

VIDEO: *Snack attack (3 min)*

SLIDE: *Back to school*

Well, it's back to school season. Whether you go to a school or do school at home, summer is over, and we are back to learning! I'm going to read to you a list of activities that happen in a given school week. Tell me if these are things that make you happy or sad by giving a thumb's up or a thumb's down.

Getting good grades on your paper.
Forgetting to study for a test.
Spending time on the playground.
Indoor recess.
Spending time in art class.
Reading a new story.
Doing a science project.
Solving math problems.
Taking a test.
Having a spelling bee.
Getting a pop quiz.
Going home at the end of the day.

Every day brings good and bad. Some days are more good than bad; other days are more bad than good. And just like the unpredictable weather outside, you never know when a day's going to be good, bad... or go from bad to worse.

But there is one thing you can do - you can rely on God. Whatever kind of day you're facing, you can have joy that only comes from the Lord. Wait? I can have joy even when I'm having a bad day? How does that even work?

Let's open the Bible and read what a man named Paul wrote in the book of Philippians.

SLIDE: Philippians 4:4

Philippians 4:4 says, "Always be joyful because you belong to the Lord. I will say it again, Be joyful!"

Then if we keep reading, he tells us how we can have that joy.

SLIDE: Philippians 4:6-7a

"Don't worry about anything. No matter what happens, tell God about everything. Ask and pray and give thanks to Him. Then God's peace will watch over your hearts and minds."

This is a great passage that reminds us to focus on God and find our joy in him, but it becomes even more amazing when you learn when it was written. Paul didn't speak these words preaching at a church. He didn't write them in his home, or in a pastor's office. He was in prison! Paul was in jail for his faith, and he already knew he would one day be put to death for that same faith. Yet in spite of his circumstances, Paul found the words to tell his brothers and sisters in Christ to REJOICE and have JOY!

Joy isn't an emotion like happiness. It's knowing that God loves us, that Jesus died for us, and no matter how bad things get, no one can take God from us. Bad times will pass. So will good times. But God remains in our hearts, and his joy can stay with us always.

Paul gives us three things that we can do to find that joy.

SLIDE: 3 steps

First, we need to **remember God**. We need to remember who he is and what he's done for us. We need to rejoice that we know God, thank him for his goodness, and praise him for who he is.

Second, we need to **give our worries to God**. We need to tell him why we are sad, stressed out or frustrated. Give God all the bad stuff. Tell him to take it from you, and ask him to give you joy.

Third, we need to **thank God for the good things**. Thank God for your family. Thank him for your church. Thank him for good friends. Focus on the good gifts God gives us - sunshines, rainbows, flowers, puppies, football games, Oreos. Anything good that makes you happy, think about those things. Remember all of the good God has given you, and you'll find the joy of the Lord welling up in you.

When you have that joy in your heart, you can share it with others. Share God's love with someone else having a bad day. Tell them what Jesus did for you, and them, and encourage them to ask God for joy. God can use your joy to spread his good news to others, and that's a recipe for making even more joy in your life!

It isn't always easy to remember to seek joy when times are bad. When the teacher says the words, "Pop quiz," we tend to get a chill down our spine. When a friend says something hurtful, the last thing on our mind is rejoicing in the Lord. But these are the very things Paul says we need to give to God. Tell him about the pop quiz, the cruel remarks, the name calling, the bad days. Give them to God and ask for joy.

Having the best year ever isn't going to just happen. It happens one day at a time.

Rejoice in the good days. Rejoice through the bad days. Share your joy with others who need it. Day by day, make this a year of joy, the best year ever!

Let's end with a video blessing as you start this school year.

VIDEO: Back to school (:48)

Let's pray.

Dear God,

Thank you for all you have done for us. Help us to remember you in the bad times, and give us your joy when we need it.

In Jesus' name,

Amen

Now, it's time for FUN!

**Give instructions to the group that you get from your coordinator.*

**Dismiss to activities by dividing children into 1- 4 groups (depending on number of kids) – send groups to a station to rotate.*

**Have a timekeeper so that kids rotate on time, and are done with the 4 stations at the 5 minute call*

Approx 10 Minutes Per Station

CLOSING

**At the 5-minute Call*

Did you all have a blast at OUR BACK-TO-SCHOOL BASH? Me too! Are you ready to see who are raffle winner is? (pull a name and take a picture of the raffle winner for each service) No worries kids, today everyone is a winner. Each of you will be going home with this Back-to-School treat bag filled with goodies! (*Campus coordinator will decide how these are passed out.*)

Closing prayer- pray over the school year

Extra Time: LG Screen games

STATION 1: Back to School Minute to Win It Games

**All of the kids can stand around rectangle table(s) to play these games together.*

Game #1: Picture Day Smiley Face

Supplies: Skittles (10 per kid), small cups, large paper plates, straws (all 1 per kid)

Instructions: Give each child a cup with 10 skittles, an empty plate and a straw. Players will use the straw to suck up the skittles, then move them over to the empty plate to make a smiley face. The first person to complete their picture day smile, wins!

**Make sure kids throw their skittles (if they don't eat them), cups, plates, and straws in the garbage.*

Game #2: School of Fish

Supplies: Goldfish crackers, Styrofoam bowls, chopsticks

Instructions: Give each child a bowl with the same number of goldfish crackers (10-20) and one empty bowl. Each player uses chopsticks to move their goldfish one at a time to their empty bowl. The key is that they must hold both of their chopsticks in one hand. The first one to complete the task wins!

**Don't let kids eat goldfish as they have been touched by many fingers!*

Game #3: Dice Stack

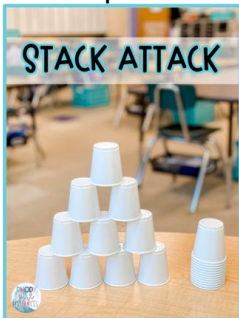
Supplies: Dice, large craft sticks

Instructions: Pair kids in teams of two. One player holds a stick in their closed mouth. The other player has a handful of dice. The second player tries to stack as many die as possible on the stick in 60 seconds. Dice must stay 3 seconds to count. Reverse roles and let the other player stack the dice.

Game #4: Stack Attack

Supplies: Plastic cups

Instructions: Give each kid 10 plastic cups in a stack. When you say go, players will make a pyramid with their cups (see below), then stack them back up. The first kid to make the pyramid then stack their cups wins!



STATION 2: Pencil Bags

Supplies: Pencil bags, permanent markers, cardboard inserts, tablecloth, instruction sheet w/ bible verse print out

Set-Up: Put down tablecloth, put markers and cardboard insert in center of table

Note: Some of the glitter markers may need to be “primed”

Instructions: Give each kid a bag and have them insert the cardboard. Give kids time to decorate their bags. Bible verse will be on the table if kids want to copy down the verse.



STATION 3: Lunch Bag Relay

Supplies: Lunch bag (2), lunch item pictures (2 sets of 16 per campus), floor tape for starting line, cones (10 per campus)

Set Up: Have the food items facing up and on one side of the room, and the starting line on the other side. Make sure the kids DO NOT see the challenges on the back of the food items. Set up cones between starting lines and food items.

Instructions: Have one child go at a time to run in and out of the cones and grab any food item of their choice at the end. When they get back to their team, they have to complete the challenge that is on the back of the food item. Once the challenge is completed, place the food item in the lunch bag. The next child runs to grab another food item. Once everyone has had a turn and completes their challenges, the first team that fills the bag and sits down, wins. If time allows, play again.

Hint: healthier choices make for shorter challenges give a team a lead.

STATION 4: Back-to-School Bingo

Supplies: *Bingo Cards (1 per kid), Bingo chips (1 container per Campus), Call Cards (1 set per Campus), Prizes in bin*

What to Do: Hand each child a Bingo Card and place Bingo chips in the center of your group. Shuffle your call cards and call them out one at a time.

If any child gets a “Bingo!” let them pick a prize.

**Kids should only get ONE prize (even if they win more than once).*