



Summer session!



During the summer, congregations have the flexibility to adjust their schedules. While maintaining the usual Sunday School, Religious Instruction, and Youth programs can be beneficial, taking a break from the regular routine offers valuable opportunities for children, youth, teachers, and families. While the structured spiritual education provided in these programs is invaluable, the summer break allows everyone to recharge, explore new experiences, and deepen their faith in more relaxed settings. It fosters creativity and personal reflection for children and youth, rejuvenates teachers and leaders, and strengthens family bonds through shared activities.

Embracing this break doesn't mean stepping away from church; rather, it's an opportunity to enrich one's spiritual journey in different ways, ultimately enhancing the overall experience when regular classes resume. Planning monthly activities for families to connect and share faith can maintain bonds and strengthen faith. Organizing a Vacation Bible School is a wonderful opportunity to keep children and youth engaged and connected during the summer months. However, we understand it may not be feasible for every congregation to host one. In such cases, there are several other ways for children, youth, families, and teachers to gather and stay connected over the summer. Here are a few ideas for the summer session:





1 DAY VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Organize a 1 day Vacation Bible School experience that includes several stations that provide activities focused around a central theme such as “It’s Time to Do Good!”. Stations could include an interactive Bible story, Art, Games, STEM, & Worship.

VBS Theme: “It’s Time to Do Good”

Key Verse: “Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all...” – Galatians 6:10

Main Message: God gives us chances every day to do good. When we follow Jesus, we can choose to love, serve, and help others—right now!

Bible Story Station – “Ruth and Boaz” (Ruth 2)

After Ruth and her mother-in-law Naomi move to a new land, Ruth chooses to work hard in the fields to gather food. Boaz, a kind man who owns the field, notices her and makes sure she is safe and has enough to eat. Both Ruth and Boaz show what it means to do good for others without expecting anything in return.

Big Idea: Doing good means helping others, especially those in need.

- Interactive Storytelling: Act out the story with simple props or puppets. Let the kids take turns being Ruth, Naomi, Boaz, etc.
- Discussion: Ask, “Why were Ruth and Naomi in need?” and “How did Boaz show kindness and generosity?”
- Prayer: Encourage kids to pray and ask Jesus to help them notice people in need and give them courage to do good.





Art Station – “Clocks of Kindness”

Big Idea: We don’t have to wait to do good—now is the time!

Craft Options:

- Paper Plate Clock Craft: Create a clock with decorated labels on each hour like “Be kind,” “Share,” “Forgive,” “Help,” etc.
- Good Deed Calendar: Kids decorate a mini one-week calendar and write in 1 good deed to try each day.

Bonus Add-On: Have a space for kids to write or draw one way they will “do good” today.

Games Station – “Goodness in Action”

Big Idea: Doing good can be active, cooperative, and fun!

Game Ideas:

- “Help the Neighbor” Relay: Teams race while completing small acts of kindness (carry a friend’s backpack, give a high five, share a water bottle, etc.).
- “Freeze Dance”: Play Chris Tomlin’s *I Will Follow You*, and when the music stops kids must freeze in place, until someone shouts out a good deed.
- “Goodness Tag”: Tagged players freeze, and another player must come “do good” (say something kind or give a compliment) to unfreeze them.

STEM Station – “Building to Bless”

Big Idea: Use creativity and problem-solving to think about how we can help others.

Activities:

- Bridge of Kindness Challenge: Using craft sticks, string, or LEGO® bricks, kids build a “bridge” and talk about how doing good can connect people.
- Help-In-A-Bag: Kids design and assemble a small “blessing bag” with hygiene items, snacks, and a kindness note for someone in need (can be donated or taken home to give away).
- “Chain Reaction of Good”: Use simple chain-reaction materials (dominoes, ramps, cups) to illustrate how one good action can inspire another.





Worship Station – “Sing and Shine for Jesus”

Big Idea: Worship is one way we show our love for God—and that helps us do good, too.

Activities:

- **Theme Song:** Create a simple chorus like: (use the melody to “God is so Good”)
*It’s time to do good, right where I am,
To love like Jesus and follow His plan!*
- **Praise Songs:** Include fun and meaningful songs such as:
 - “This Little Light of Mine”
 - “I Will Follow” (Chris Tomlin)
 - “God is So Good”
- **Heart Moment:** Share how worship fills our hearts with God's love—so we can go out and share it with others. Invite kids to pray or write a thank-you to God.

Take-Home Piece: “Do Good Challenge Card”

Each child gets a colorful card with:

- The memory verse
- 3 personal ways to “do good” this week (they write or draw them)
- A space to check them off as they go!





"It's Time to Do Good!" Snack Ideas

"Fruit of Goodness" Cups

Snack: Mixed fruit cups (grapes, strawberries, oranges, etc.)

Message: Goodness is a fruit of the Spirit! Doing good is something that grows in us when we stay close to God.

Verse tie-in: Galatians 5:22-23

"Give a Helping Hand-wich"

Snack: Mini sandwiches cut with a hand-shaped cookie cutter

Message: Our hands can be used to do good—like helping, sharing, or praying for others.

Optional: Have kids decorate the baggie with the words "Helping Hands Do Good!"

"Be Kind Hearted" Cookies

Snack: Heart-shaped sugar cookies

Message: When we do good things for others, we're sharing the love of Jesus.

Activity option: Let kids decorate with red/pink icing and sprinkles.

"Kindness Pops Up" Bags

Snack: Popcorn in individual bags or cups with a label that says "Kindness Pops Up!"

Message: Even small good deeds can make a big impact—just like popcorn starts small and becomes something fun and good!

"Be a Light" Cupcakes

Snack: Mini cupcakes with a small candle (just for decoration—not lit!) or candy lightbulb

Message: Doing good shines God's light into the world.

Verse tie-in: Matthew 5:16 – "Let your light shine..."





Sample Schedule

Suggested Schedule (Approx. 4–5 Hours Total)

9:00–9:30 AM - Welcome & Opening Worship (Theme song, intro, memory verse)

9:30–10:00 AM - Station 1 – Bible Story

10:00–10:30 AM - Station 2 – Art

10:30–11:00 AM - Station 3 – STEM

11:00–11:30 AM - Snack & Fellowship Break (with quiet games or “do good” journaling)

11:30–12:00 PM - Station 4 – Games

12:00–12:30 PM - Station 5 – Worship Time

12:30–1:00 PM - Closing Celebration (Recap lessons, memory verse, send-off challenge, prayer)

*Add an additional 35 minutes to the schedule to allow for 5 minutes of transition time between each activity.





OTHER IDEAS...

- Invite families to a local park to participate in a small group discussion, enjoy a picnic lunch/dinner, and play games.
- Invite families to hike a trail and engage in a prayer walk, praying for the things you see, feel, and/or things that come to mind while walking. Share a picnic lunch and your prayers at the end of the hike.
- Invite families to participate in a local outreach program such as a food drive, park/beach clean-up, or a fund-raising event in your or your congregation's neighborhood.
- Invite families for a movie night in your backyard. Choose an inspirational film for all ages and show the movie on the side of your house or on a large screen made from a sheet. Encourage families to bring a picnic dinner.
- Plan a summer sunset worship evening, where families sing, read scripture, or share experiences of faith. The congregation can sit on blankets and lawn chairs and praise and worship together as they watch the sunset.
- Plan an ice cream social after midweek service...and to make it more interesting and interactive, research how to make your ice cream using simple ingredients and materials.
- Plan a "CAR-nival" on a Sunday afternoon where the church parking lot becomes a place of fun and faith. Each car's trunk hosts a game booth, from ring toss to balloon darts, to Bible Trivia, manned by enthusiastic volunteers of all ages. Children dart from one game to another, earning small prizes for their efforts. Begin the day or end the day with a picnic lunch and be sure to rope off the area to ensure everyone is safe.
- Plan a congregational outreach program by working in collaboration with the local school district to collect school supplies over the summer. Members could then gather one evening for fellowship and to sort supplies or pack backpacks, to be delivered to the local school at a later date. Families could write inspirational notes or make tags for the backpacks so the recipients know from whom the backpacks came. Notes such as "Have a great school year" or "Study hard and stay safe" signed with your local congregation's name show the community you care.

