

# CELEBRATION & BLESSING FOR A PLAYGROUND

*Begin at the entrance to the playground. Prayers for each piece of play equipment may be used in any convenient sequence. The people join in the responses, which are in **bold italics**.*

**Lesson:** A Reading from Zechariah (8:3-6)

Thus says the Lord: I will return to Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem, and Jerusalem shall be called the faithful city...the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing...(and) it is marvelous in my sight.

The Lord be with you.

***And also with you.***

Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, grant to this playground and all who gather here the grace of your presence, that you may be experienced through refreshment and play; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever.  
***Amen.***

## At the Garden

**Lesson:** A reading from Genesis (1:11-13)  
*The story of Creation.*

*And God said, "Let the earth put forth vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, upon the earth." And it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.*

Lead a life worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him;  
***Bear fruit in every good work and increase in the knowledge of God.***

*Let us pray:* Lord God, you alone created the universe in which we live. Help us to take care of the earth which you have given us and to be thankful for the beauty of flowers and the nourishment of vegetables. May they be reminders that you promise to provide for all our needs, through Jesus Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

## At the Sandbox

A reading from Exodus (taken from chapter 14)  
*God is with us no matter what!*

*After years of enslavement in Egypt, Moses said to the Pharaoh, 'Let my people go.' Pharaoh let the Israelites go but then changed his mind and sent his soldiers to chase them. The soldiers caught up with the Israelites at the Red Sea and they had no way to turn to escape. The people cried 'surely we will die' but Moses said 'the Lord will deliver you'. Then Moses lifted up his rod and stretched his hand over the sea and divided it. And the people of Israel crossed the sea on dry ground with a wall of water on their right and on their left. When the last Israelite had crossed the sea on dry ground, Moses stretched out his hand again and the waters came back upon the Egyptians and their horsemen. Thus the Lord saved Israel from the hand of the Egyptians.*

Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his Name;  
***make known his deeds among the peoples.***

*Let us pray:* Almighty God, you are with us each moment of our day: Grant that in all our doubts and uncertainties, we may trust in your goodness and have the grace to ask what you would have us do. Save us from all false choices that we may follow where you lead us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

## At the Climber

**Lesson:** A reading from Luke (19:2-5)  
*Jesus wants to come home with you!*

*There was a man named Zacchaeus...who wanted to see Jesus, but couldn't because the crowd was in his way and he was a short man. So he ran ahead and climbed up in a sycamore tree so he could see Jesus when he came by. When Jesus got to the tree, he looked up and said, "Zacchaeus, come down. Today I will be a guest in your house."*

Open your homes to each other without complaining;  
***Use the gifts you have received from God for the good of others.***

*Let us pray:* Jesus, you have taught us to welcome one another as Christ welcomed us: Bless those who visit us in our homes. Help us to look for all that is good in them even if that means going to great lengths, just as Zacchaeus did when he climbed the tree to see you, through Jesus Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

## At the Play House

A reading from John's Gospel (14:1-3)

*God has a place for each of us!*

*Let not your hearts be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.*

Seek the Lord your God, and you will find him:

***Search for him with all your heart and with all your soul.***

*Let us pray:* O God of truth, you know our fears of being alone, of being left behind, of losing someone close to us and of dying; help us to know that you will care for us now matter what happens. We thank you for preparing a place for us in heaven, through Jesus Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

## At the Picnic Tables

**Lesson:** A reading from Mark (6:41-42)

*A Big Picnic with a Bigger Surprise!*

*Jesus took the five loaves and two fish given to him by the small boy...he lifted his face to heaven in prayer and blessed and broke the bread. Then he gave the bread to the disciples and they gave it to the people and they all ate their fill and were satisfied. There were 5,000 people, not counting women and children.*

The eyes of all wait upon you, O Lord;

***And you give them their food in due season.***

*Let us pray:* O God, in the course of this busy life, you give us times of refreshment like picnics; help us to remember that you are our source of life and food and make us mindful of those who don't have enough to eat; through Jesus Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

## At the Play Cars

**Lesson:** A reading from Matthew (21:6-9)

*Traveling with Jesus!*

*The disciples went and did exactly what Jesus told them to do. They led the donkey and colt out, laid some of their clothes on them and Jesus climbed on them. Many of the people threw their garments down on the road, giving Jesus a royal welcome. ...and they called out, "Hosanna to David's son!" "Blessed is he who comes in God's name!" "Hosanna in highest heaven!"*

For the Lord is a great God,  
***and a great King above all gods.***

*Let us pray:* O God, whose presence we find wherever we go: Preserve our children and families as they travel; surround them with your loving care and bring them in safety to their journey's end; through Jesus Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

## The Gravel We Stand On

**Lesson:** A reading from Matthew (7:24-27)

*Get a solid foundation with Jesus!*

*Everyone who hears Jesus' words and does them will be like a wise man who built his house upon the rock. When the rain fell, the floods came, and winds blew the house did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. Everyone who hears Jesus' words and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand. Then when the rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, it fell; and great was the fall of it.*

Come, let us sing to the Lord;

***Let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation.***

*Let us pray:* Almighty God, you see your children growing up in an unsteady and confusing world: help us to show them that your ways give more life than the ways of the world and to provide them with the solid foundation that comes from you alone; through Jesus Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

## The Blessing of the Playground

**Lesson:** A Reading from Luke (18:16,17)

*Jesus said, Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to those like them belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.*

Praise the Lord, you children of the Lord;

***Praise the Name of the Lord.***

*Let us pray:* Almighty God, you have blessed all parents and all who work at Grace Day Care Center with the joy and care of children: Give us calm strength and patient wisdom as we bring them up, that we may teach them to love whatever is just and true and good, following the example of our Savior Jesus Christ. ***Amen.***

Almighty God, your Son took young children into his arms and blessed them: Bless now our new playground with your unfailing love and protect all who play here from all danger, that each new day may be filled with

joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The Blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon this playground and all who play here, now and for evermore. *Amen.*