



Children's ministry activities

This is not a complete lesson but instead a series of activities that can be chosen from to create a Sunday morning that continues the theme from the children's address materials produced.

Listed below are a series of activities that look at the theme of school, being thankful and what that might mean in relation to Nepal, where Blaze the Bee has been visiting with Helen Johnston (PCI's Mission Support Officer). If the video was not shown in church as the children's address, you will want to show the Digital Dispatch video which Helen has done, featuring Blaze and telling something of what is happening in schools in Nepal.

Video can be found at www.presbyterianireland.org/blaze

ACTIVITY 1

Display a world map and see if the children can find Nepal on it. Let's learn some facts about Nepal and make some Nepalese flag bunting.

Ten facts about Nepal:

1. The country of Nepal is in the continent of **Asia**. The South Asian country is landlocked and borders two countries: China to the North and India to the East, South and West. The longer border is between Nepal and India. It has a **population** of 30.9 million people (2023).
2. Its capital city is **Kathmandu** with about 3 million inhabitants and is Nepal's largest city. The capital city is known for the huge stupa in the city's old town centre. The Hindu stupa is decorated with prayer flags and Buddha eyes.
3. The main religion in Nepal is **Hinduism** (about 81% of the population). The Nepali are known as very welcoming people who are friendly and open towards visitors. The '**Namaste**' gesture is the common greeting and handshakes are rarely given. For the Nepali greeting put your palms together and bow your head saying "Namaste". 'Namaste' means 'Salute to the God in you'. The Christians in Nepal have a different greeting. They put their palms together and bow their heads, saying "**jai mashihā**", which means Victory in the name of Jesus.

4. The official language of Nepal is **Nepali**. However, there are more than 100 different ethnic groups and over 90 languages are spoken in Nepal. English is taught and spoken by many people as a foreign language.
5. Nepal enjoys mainly a **temperate climate**. The landscape is dominated by the Himalayan mountains in the north, alpine pastures, fertile valleys and temperate forests in the middle hill region and the Tarai plains in the south. Nepal's highest mountain is **Mount Everest**, the world's highest peak and is 8,848m or 29,028ft high. The country is known to have the **widest range of elevations** in the world. **Eight of the world's fourteen highest peaks** above 8,000m/ 26,246ft are located in Nepal.
6. Nepal is one of the **poorest and least developed** countries in the world. Many people live in poor conditions and especially young people try to find better life in other countries. About 1 in 4 Nepali live below the poverty line.
7. The country frequently experiences **earthquakes**. The latest major earthquakes in 2022 and 2015 destroyed many old temples, buildings and monuments and killed many people.
8. The **economy** in Nepal is mainly driven by agriculture, the textile industry and tourism. Rice is grown in Nepal in the fertile valleys.
9. **Nepali food** uses similar spices as the Indian cuisine, such as cumin and coriander, but is less spicy than Indian food and some ingredients that are also used in Chinese cuisine, such as bamboo shoots. Many Nepali dishes are vegetarian and do not use meat. Potatoes (aloo), *roti* (flatbreads) and *dhedo* (stiff boiled flour porridge) are common staple foods in Nepal. Another Nepali staple food is rice which is eaten with every meal.
10. **Cows** are considered sacred in Nepal. They can be seen wandering in the streets everywhere. It is illegal to slaughter cows in Nepal.

Make some Nepali flag bunting. Download the printable template from the link and give each child a flag to colour. Then attach to string/ribbon and hang it up in your children's ministry space. Ask the children if they notice anything unusual about the flag? The Nepali flag is the only country flag that is not rectangular.

Download Nepali free printable flag www.freeprintableflags.com

ACTIVITY 2

This activity thinks about schools here in Ireland and compares them to the schools in Nepal that are seen on the Digital Dispatch.

School around the corner

1. What do you like about your school? What are your favourite things about being at school?

Watch video of local Northern Ireland school.

<https://vimeo.com/840760626/8f29d8d57e>

What is similar to your school?

2. What would you change about your school if you were able? Imagine money was no limit and you could change or add one thing, what would it be?

3. *Look at the photos of the school in Nepal. These can be downloaded from the side panel on the webpage.*

What can you see that is different about the schools in Nepal?

4. What have you learnt about schools in different countries from comparing the photos and the video?

School is a place where everyone goes – both children now and adults have in the past. Maybe leaders could share something that is different about their school experience to children today.

ACTIVITY 3

This activity looks at what the Bible says and relates it to theme of the Digital Dispatch and this set of resources.

Bible teaching

Although it may not always feel like it, we are very fortunate to be able to go to school. Things like homework and exams may not always be fun but having access to good education is a blessing that we get to experience as we grow up in this country.

Because of that blessing, we want to take time to be thankful for something that we take for granted and thankful for the people that teach us every day.

The Bible says in **Ephesians 5:1–2&20**

You are God's children whom he loves. So, try to be like God. Live a life of love. Love other people just as Christ loved us. . . Always give thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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As we follow Jesus every day and try our best to live the way God asks us to, with his help, we are to be thankful for everything. And that includes school!

- What would it look like to be more thankful for what we experience in school?
- What would it mean to live a life of love in your school classroom? Dinner hall? ICT suite? Playground?
- What would be different if we showed more thankfulness to teachers, classroom assistants and other school staff?

Could the children learn this verse (or even part of it) by heart? Hiding God's word in children's hearts is a great way to help them remember verses when they need to and are not with you or have their Bibles available.

Maybe you could encourage the children to make thank you cards to give to their teachers before the end of the year.

Example of a template can be found here [Giggly.co.uk](https://giggly.co.uk) or they could design and make their own.