Lake Nokomis
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

2022 Back to School Outdoor Blessing Liturgy
Mandala – Fidget Circles
(by Kara Root)

This circle is like a picture of God's love, holding the whole world. God's world is filled with beauty and we get to be part of that beauty – just like we are making this mandala beautiful together, God uses our hands and our lives to bring beauty into the world!

God's love is the circle holding everything, holding the whole world, and all who are alive, and all who are dead, and everything that exists.

We all belong to God, and we all belong to each other. That is the truth that cannot change.

This picture on the patio won't last, it will wash away, just like so many things in our life come and go. But what stays always is God's love that holds us.

The center of all things is this: You belong to God, no matter what and always. You belong to all others, no matter what and always.
You belong in this life. You are loved. You are a beloved child of God.
That is your identity. You can return to this center inside you any time.

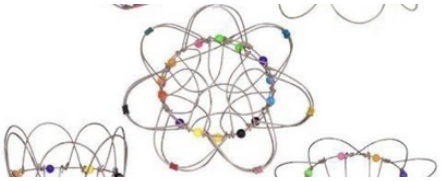
Maybe it's with a deep breath. Or a song in your head.
Or your hand on your chest. Or a hug from someone you love.
What are some ways we can come back to our center in God's love?

We also help each other remember our center.
So we are going to invite you to stand in the center as we remind you of that today.

Put your hand on your heart.
God loves you.
That is your identity and it will never ever change. You belong to God.

We all live in the circle of God's love, we all belong to God, and we all belong to each other.
Even if we forget it, and we forget it a lot, it never stops being true.
So we help each other remember it. We will help you remember it as you go to school.

So we are going to bless you now.



BLESSING
I will say a phrase and then together, then you will respond, **God loves me, I belong.**

When you are nervicited – nervous and excited at the same time –
God loves me. I belong.
When you make a new friend. **God loves me. I belong.**
When you meet your teacher or your students. **God loves me. I belong.**
At lunch time. At recess. In math and in music. **God loves me. I belong.**
On the bus, in the car. Walking or biking. **God loves me. I belong.**
When something you were looking forward to gets canceled. **God loves me. I belong.**
When you do awesome on a project. **God loves me. I belong.**
When you don't know how to do something. **God loves me. I belong.**
When you're having fun at school. **God loves me. I belong.**
When you are sad or lonely. **God loves me. I belong.**
When you're anxious or afraid. **God loves me. I belong.**

When you're bored or annoyed. **God loves me. I belong.**
When you're angry or frustrated. **God loves me. I belong.**
When you're happy or confident. **God loves me. I belong.**
When you forget to do your homework. **God loves me. I belong.**
When you get a bad grade. **God loves me. I belong.**
When you get a good grade. **God loves me. I belong.**

7- When…(things we are looking forward to about school) **God loves me. I belong.**
8- When… (things we are dreading about school) **God loves me. I belong.**
No matter what and always, **God loves me. I belong.**

And we all belong to each other! We're here to share life with other people.
So for these next reminders, the response will be, *God loves them, they belong*.
When you see someone is crying. **God loves them. They belong.**
When you see someone who seems lonely or anxious. **God loves them. They belong.**
When someone is being mean or obnoxious, **God loves them. They belong.**
When someone is being kind and caring, **God loves them. They belong.**
When someone needs a friend. **God loves them. They belong.**
When someone makes you laugh. **God loves them. They belong.**
When someone forgets to share. **God loves them. They belong.**
When someone helps you out. **God loves them. The belong.**
When someone is really different than you. **God loves them. They belong.**

Every person in your school, and every person in this world,
God loves them. They belong.

Prayer
Thank you God, for these people who are going to be students and teachers.
Bless them as they return to school.
We love them. Thank you that we get to share life with them.
Every day, may they trust that you love them and that they belong.
Every day, may they trust that you love everyone else,
and that we all belong to each other and to you.
Surprise them with joy. Fill them with courage.
Bless them with friendship, and grow in them confidence.
Help them learn, and teach, and play and rest.
Through each one of these beloved ones,
pour your love into the world.
Amen.