



G U I D E L I N E S



# **Scouting & Civic Youth-Serving Ministry**

**Build Effective Scouting Ministry in Your Church**



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**Build Effective Scouting Ministry in Your Church**

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The General Commission on United Methodist Men

## SCOUTING AND CIVIC YOUTH-SERVING MINISTRY

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# Blessed to Be a Blessing

If you are reading this Guideline, you have said yes to servant leadership in your church. You are blessed to be a blessing. What does that mean?

By virtue of our baptism by water and the Spirit, God calls all Christians to faithful discipleship, to grow to maturity in faith (see Ephesians 4). The United Methodist Church expresses that call in our shared mission “to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world” (*The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*, or the *Discipline*, ¶120). Each local congregation and community of faith lives out that call in response to its own context—the wonderful and unique combination of God-given human and material resources with the needs of the community, within and beyond the congregation.

The work of servant leaders—your work—is to open a way for God to work through you and the resources available to you in a particular ministry area, for you are about God’s work. As stewards of the mysteries of God (see 1 Corinthians 4:1), servant leaders are entrusted with the precious and vital task of managing and using God’s gifts in the ongoing work of transformation.

In The United Methodist Church, we envision transformation occurring through a cycle of discipleship (see the *Discipline*, ¶122). With God’s help and guidance, we

- reach out and receive people into the body of Christ,
- help people relate to Christ through their unique gifts and circumstances,
- nurture and strengthen people in their relationships with God and with others,
- send transformed people out into the world to lead transformed and transforming lives,
- continue to reach out, relate, nurture, and send disciples...

Every ministry area and group, from finance to missions, engages in all aspects of this cycle. This Guideline will help you see how that is true for the ministry area or group you now lead. When you begin to consider all of the work you do as ministry to fulfill God’s mission through your congregation, each task, report, and conversation becomes a step toward transforming the world into the kingdom of God.

Invite Christ into the process to guide your ministry. You are doing powerful and wonderful work. Allow missteps to become learning opportunities; rejoice in success. Fill your work with the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

God blesses you with gifts, skills, and experience. You are a blessing when you allow God to work through you to make disciples and transform the world. Thank you.

(Find additional help in the “Resources” section at the end of this Guideline, in *The Book of Discipline*, and through <http://www.umc.org>.)

# An Overview

**T**he mission of The United Methodist Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. For almost a century, scouting ministries has been part of our concern for the spiritual formation of children in the Christian faith.

Scouting has been part of our reach to children and youth within the church and community since 1920, according to *Scouting in Methodist Episcopal Sunday Schools*, published by The Board of Sunday Schools of the Methodist Episcopal Church. This publication states: “Scouting is presented to the church as a proved and approved week-day program for the boys of the Sunday School.” Throughout the years, scouting ministry grew to include other youth-serving agencies. The 1948 *Book of Discipline*, ¶182 states, “Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts and similar organizations and clubs may be included in the church school.”





In the early 1980s, in an effort to strengthen our reach to children and youth, the United Methodist Men along with concerned Methodist scouters set a goal to establish an Office of Civic Youth-Serving Agencies/Scouting Ministries with a full-time director. This goal was achieved through a significant fundraising campaign that established an endowment through the United Methodist Men Foundation.

Since its inception in 1996, the General Commission on United Methodist Men has continued its historic purpose as a lay movement “to win men and boys to Christ and the Church,” as stated in the 1948 *Book of Discipline*, ¶1514.3. Today, scouting ministries in The United Methodist Church include Boy Scouts of America (BSA), Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA), Camp Fire, and Big Brothers Big Sisters of America.

An estimated total of 1.5 million participants and family members are impacted by scouting ministries in The United Methodist Church.

Scouting ministries provide local congregations with an opportunity to mentor the spiritual and character development of children and youth in their communities through work on service projects, studying Bible-based resources like Religious Emblems through Programs of Religious Activities with Youth,,, learning and exploring new skills in science, technology, engineering, and math. Scouting also connects children to nature, provides leadership opportunities and citizenship training, and builds healthy peer and intergenerational relationships.

# Youth Agency Programs at a Glance

|                          | <b>Boy Scouts of America</b><br>                      | <b>Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.</b><br>               | <b>Camp Fire</b><br>            | <b>Big Brothers Big Sisters</b><br>  |
|--------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| <b>Target Audience</b>   | Boys, ages 6–20, and boys and girls in Venturing, ages 13–20   | Girls, ages 5–17, or in kindergarten through 12th grade  | Boys and girls, preschool through high school age and beyond (1–21 years of age)                                 | Boys and girls, ages 6–18   |
| <b>Primary Emphasis</b>  | Development of character, citizenship, and self-reliance through small-group activity  | Leadership development, service to others, skill development and career exploration  | Development of the whole child through goal-setting and problem-solving  | Promote positive youth development through one-on-one relationship with caring adult  |
| <b>Program Structure</b> | Small-group structure, youth interaction with adult role modeling  | Small-group structure with girl/adult partnership  | Small-group structure, youth interaction with adult role modeling  | Volunteer supported in one-on-one mentoring relationship with child   |
| <b>Special Features</b>  | Extensive drug prevention and youth protection programs and high adventure bases   | Contemporary issues series, leadership institutes, math and science partnerships, and Girl-Sports, a multi-faceted sports initiative | Community service, camping and school-age child-care in addition to club programs                                | BBBS Amachi focuses on church partnerships to serve children with an incarcerated parent  |
| <b>National Office</b>   | Boy Scouts of America<br>1325 W. Walnut Hill Lane<br>PO Box 152079<br>Irving, TX 75015-2079<br>Phone: (972) 580-2000<br>www.scouting.org | Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.<br>420 Fifth Ave.<br>New York, NY 10018<br>Phone: (212) 852-8000<br>www.girlscouts.org                     | Camp Fire<br>1801 Main Street<br>Suite 200<br>Kansas City, MO 64108<br>Phone: (816) 285-2010<br>www.campfire.org | Big Brothers Big Sisters<br>2202 N. Westshore Blvd., Suite 455,<br>Tampa, FL 33607<br>Phone: (813) 720-8778<br>Fax: (813) 749-9446<br>www.BigBrothersBigSisters.org |



# Ten Reasons to Consider Scouting and Civic Youth-Serving Agencies as a Ministry of the Local Church

**1. Outreach.** The ministry of Christ revolved around the profound concept of reaching out to others. Modeling Christ's example, scouting and civic/youth-serving agencies seek to touch lives with the compassion of Christ. We have found that when we reach out to others, the blessings of God are returned to us.

**2. Evangelism.** Statistics indicate that of all the youth who join scouting through the church, 25 percent are United Methodists, 25 percent are members of other denominations or faiths, and 50 percent come from families with no church affiliation. Reaching out to families that do not have a church home is not a new concept. Scouting is one potential entry point for persons to join the church.. The church then has the opportunity to introduce, nurture, and strengthen their relationship with Jesus Christ. Scouting provides a great way for the local church to serve its local community and, in the process, offer new and exciting programs that the church may transform into ministry to, with, and through youth.

**3. Intergenerational.** Scouting and civic youth ministry offer opportunities for older adults as well as youth. Church members may become isolated from one another because we tend to spend time with people of similar age groups. Scouting offers older adults a chance to become merit-badge counselors, mentors, or committee members who plan activities with and for youth. In these ways, and more, older adults can become an integral part of a youth's life. The experiences will be cherished for a lifetime.

**4. Coeducational.** Some scouting programs exist for both girls and boys. Camp Fire is coeducational for ages 1 to 21, while Boy Scouts of America's (BSA) Venturing division is for boys and girls ages 13 to 20. These programs are a great complement to any church's United Methodist youth ministry and also serve to encourage older Boy Scouts to participate in scouting for a longer period of time. Girls may participate in the same high-adventure activities that boys do.

BSA Venturing crews offer a high degree of flexibility for their members. Some crews focus on helping others through activities like building homes for Habitat for Humanity; other crews enjoy the benefits of camping, hiking, and high adventure. Local BSA councils offer the use of their youth-protection training and leadership training in addition to low-cost liability and accident insurance for their members.

**5. United Methodist Men.** United Methodist Men's groups have traditionally been the "standard bearers" of scouting and civic-youth ministry. United Methodist Men's units have been a source of manpower and volunteer leadership as well as a link between the congregation and the youth agency. United Methodist Men have assisted in fundraising events, work days, special events, and a variety of mentoring opportunities.

**6. Mission.** A variety of mission opportunities are made available through the four youth agencies. Camp Fire—through Gift of Giving, Teens in Action, and Extending Our Reach—educate and nurture children in projects that encourage their participation and commitment to volunteerism in a uniquely spiritual atmosphere. Similar opportunities exist within the various programs of the BSA, GSUSA, and Big Brothers Big Sisters of America.

**7. PRAY Program.** Programs of Religious Activities with Youth (PRAY) offers age-appropriate studies that focus on discipleship, family, and service. Young people are drawn closer to Christ and invited to become better acquainted with their church and pastor. The PRAY series is a Bible-based resource that emphasizes service to others and brings recognition and increased self-esteem to the youth and teenagers who work closely with adult counselors and/or mentors. The PRAY program also serves as an effective outreach tool to youth agency members in the community.

**8. Develop Servant Leaders.** Each youth organization that we work with has inherent "building blocks" that the local church can transform into effective ministry. For example, they require service projects that offer opportunities to begin to cultivate effective servant leaders. By starting as "friends" (members of a troop or club), progressing to "followers" of Christ (older youth who are setting the example), and culminating in "fishermen" (youth who do service projects to meet requirements), we can envision how this is a true beginning for servant leadership in the church, community, state, and nation.

**9. Intentionality.** The scouting program can be an effective, intentional outreach ministry of the local church. Through intentional planning, the church has the ability to transform these scouting programs into important youth ministries similar to other important ministries and initiatives. As a result, scouting always should be on a level with other church ministries. It has the potential to be a far-reaching, positive outreach youth ministry for the immediate community.

**10. Make Disciples.** By considering one or a combination of the previous reasons, a local church may develop a consistent list of prospects for the Lord. Nurturing children, teens, and families through outreach and evangelism and incorporating them into the life of the church may have tremendous, eternal results for the youth, their families, and the church.

# Child and Youth Protection

The United Methodist Church and our partner civic youth-serving agencies have the goal of keeping every child safe. This is the job of everyone involved in Scouting Ministry.

## SAFE SANCTUARIES

Reducing the Risk of Abuse in the Church for Children and Youth



A report of child abuse is made every ten seconds in the United States according to the Tennyson Center for Children. The problem of child abuse has become one of the most significant social problems facing our nation. Recent public opinion polls rank the problem of child abuse second only to drug abuse as a national concern. The depth and breadth of this problem is great, but our churches can be proactive in prevention of abuse and uphold the teachings of Jesus.

*Child abuse* is the injury of a child by an adult or older child. The abuse that might not be intentional but is not accidental. Abuse can be physical, emotional, neglect, sexual, and/or ritual.

Safe Sanctuaries® is the name commonly given by United Methodist annual conferences and local churches to their individual efforts to make conference, district and local church programs welcoming and safe for children, youth, and vulnerable adults. Safe Sanctuaries® is more than implementing guidelines, policies, and procedures. Safe Sanctuaries® creates an environment with boundaries of safe space for children, youth, and vulnerable adults, and the adults who work with them. United Methodist Church resources are available at the following websites:

- <http://www.umcdiscipleship.org/leadership-resources/safe-sanctuaries>
- <http://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/getting-started-safesantuaries>

Congregations should require not only training but also the practice of youth protection policies within their units. The civic youth-serving agencies require all adults to complete their youth protection training. In addition to the required youth agency youth protection training, leaders involved in scouting ministries within your congregation should be familiar with the current Safe Sanctuaries® policy of your church. If these policies vary, the strictest policy takes precedence within your unit.

Report all suspected child abuse, neglect, or violation of youth protection policies immediately to the appropriate leader or legal authority following the procedures prescribed by the Safe Sanctuaries®/Youth Protection policies governing the unit and the congregation.

Safe Sanctuaries provide churches and leaders accountability while providing a safe haven for ministry with children and youth. Youth protection begins with you!

# Your Ministry as Coordinator for Civic Youth-Serving Agencies/ Scouting

**A**ll local churches should elect or appoint a coordinator to see that young people involved in the agencies' programs are recognized.

An effective coordinator

- affirms Christian values by lifestyle,
- understands The United Methodist Church and is encouraged to be a member,
- understands faith role modeling,
- leads and works well with volunteer groups,
- desires to grow and improve in the position,
- delegates work to others with sensitivity and understanding,
- has planning skills,
- communicates well with others through writing and speaking,
- supports people and their need to grow and improve,
- believes in service to young people,
- is elected or appointed by the appropriate conference (charge, district, annual, and jurisdictional) within which the coordinator serves.

## Responsibilities of the Local Church Coordinator

1. Interprets scouting ministry as an intentional ministry of the church, providing nurture, service, mission, and outreach.
2. Coordinates scouting ministries with other programs in the church and publicizes those programs.
3. Encourages dialogue and understanding between the pastor or church leaders and adult leaders in the scouting ministry.
4. Serves as a member of the church council and reports monthly to that body.
5. Ensures that there is a signed charter or partnership agreement with the agencies.
6. Promotes the P.R.A.Y. religious education program for all youth in the church and provides information about the programs available for those of other faiths who are in our United Methodist Church youth agencies.
7. Works with the pastor in planning and observing Scouting Ministries Sunday or separate special Sundays for each of the agencies that are represented in the churches.

8. Sees that leaders become fully trained, by the agencies for their positions and by the church for youth protection.

9. Ensures that recognitions are awarded as appropriate, including the Bishop's Award of Excellence for units, the Cross and Flame, and Torch Awards for leadership, the Good Samaritan for youth who have provided service to the church or community, and other recognitions as needed, including public gratitude and agency awards.

10. Cultivates resources to support the organization's programs, recruits Boy Scout leaders, assists in recruiting leaders for other agencies, and assists in recruiting young people.

11. Assists the pastor in preparing a report of unit designation numbers, the number of young people registered, and the names and contact information of the leadership.

12. Represents the church on the district scouting committee.

## **Link with the Local Church**

In order for any of these programs or approaches to be effective within the ministry of the church, the congregation must become intentional in its use of the youth-serving programs. All too often civic youth-serving agency ministries simply exist within the physical facilities of the church, while the leadership of the church has little or nothing to do with either the program or its leaders.

The church should give the same prayerful and careful preparation to the planning of its civic youth-serving agency ministries as it gives to its church school or vacation Bible school. Properly used, these programs can provide an arena in which young people can have wholesome experiences with their peers. This seldom takes place without planning and preparation. In short, the church must plan and operate the programs intentionally.

As the coordinator, you are the link between the church and the troop or club. You may be a scout or club leader who relates to the church that sponsors your group, or you may be a representative from the church who relates to the troop or club. In this coordinating position, you will find that meeting regularly with the church council and the troop or club ensures that leaders of each group are aware of each other's concerns and needs. This Guideline will help you understand how you, as coordinator, relate to the church. Direction and instruction on relating to the troop or club will come from the youth-serving agency.

# Faith Modeling and Servant Leadership

There is a difference between faith *modeling* and faith *teaching*. Faith teaching is instruction about a particular faith (for example, Christianity, Judaism, Islam, and so forth) or a specific doctrinal stance (such as one's beliefs about God or Holy Scriptures). The Office of Civic Youth-Serving Agencies/Scouting emphasizes faith modeling, while clearly stating that faith teaching is the responsibility of the home or the religious institution or organization.

Jesus constantly provided a faith model for his followers. When the disciples asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" Jesus, the ultimate servant leader, called a child into their midst and talked about becoming like children. Then he said, "As for whoever causes these little ones who believe in me to trip and fall into sin, it would be better for them to have a huge stone hung around their necks and be drowned in the bottom of the lake" (Matthew 18:1-6). This passage conveys the high calling of those who inspire youth by modeling their faith.

As a servant leader and scouting leader, you are entrusted with the precious gift of young lives. Parents, who have experienced the miracle of a new life, are sharing that miracle with you. They are expecting you to model your faith and to help their children grow. Civic youth-serving agency programs stress citizenship, character development, and physical fitness. These programs encourage you as a servant leader and are designed to promote these values.

Young people learn a great deal about lifestyle by observing others and by practicing the behaviors they witness. Most parents can tell stories of how and when their children imitated them. Just as you have learned that personal skills are better taught by demonstration, followed by a chance to practice the skills, so faith development is encouraged by demonstration, with encouragement and opportunities to practice faith skills. As a servant leader, you are expected to abide by the policy that specific religious instruction is the responsibility of the home or the religious institution. However, you can let young people know that God is important in your life by the way you live in their midst. You can live a faith-oriented lifestyle.

If you are a scouting leader in The United Methodist Church, you have committed yourself to holding a belief in God. You have committed yourself to a principle that says, "No person can grow into the best kind of citizen without recognizing his or her obligation to God." You have committed yourself to teaching young people both the words and meaning of the Girl Scout Promise, the Boy Scout Oath, or the Camp Fire Code. The best way to

teach the words and meaning is to make them real in your life! If you are a member of and representative from the church to the troop or club, you have also declared in your membership vows to uphold your beliefs through prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness.

What is faith modeling? It is doing, thinking, and talking out of a faith-strengthened stance. It is letting faith determine your lifestyle. One aspect of faith modeling is respect for one's physical body. Inasmuch as civic youth-serving agencies do not allow alcoholic beverages on outdoor trips (teenage alcohol abuse is on the increase), a good leader will observe the practice of no alcoholic beverages, without exception. The same is true regarding other drugs and other health-damaging substances. Listed below are several other characteristics of a good leader.

## **A Good Leader**

**A good leader will demonstrate love and concern** for the young people in the unit, troop, or club. You will find opportunities to listen to them as individuals. You will learn to share their excitement, their joy, their sorrow, and their concerns. You will recognize that they have one foot in childhood and the other in adulthood, hopping back and forth; and you will accept them for who they are.

**A good leader will demonstrate the importance of his or her faith** through active participation in the church, including personal study and devotions. You may be the best model many young people will ever observe. Your faith life may well serve to encourage them to live their own faith commitments.

**A good leader will foster spiritual growth** by encouraging young people to plan and participate in religious observances in meetings, campouts, and more. You will want to plan activities to allow youth to participate in their own communities of faith and to schedule programs and travel that do not conflict with such participation.

**A good leader will encourage faith development** by urging young people to enroll in appropriate religious study programs. Just as young people need encouragement to work on advancement, so they need encouragement to grow spiritually.

**A good leader knows that cursing is not a sign of maturity** but is an attempt to disguise immaturity. Off-color stories or prejudice-loaded words will be avoided because they demonstrate a lack of value for persons (see James 3:5-12; also see the section above on abuse).

# You Are the Salt of the Earth

**C**onsider salt for a moment. Salt is inconspicuous and ordinary. Salt does not deteriorate, though it can lose its saltiness through adulteration. Salt is a preservative—remember that salted ham! Salt is an astringent that stings. Salt will stop bleeding! Salt gives zest to food and makes you thirsty! Remember that a pinch of salt has a great effect on its surroundings. When Jesus said, “You are the salt of the earth” (Matthew 5:13), he was saying that you are important. As a leader, you can live a faith-oriented lifestyle that encourages faith development in the young people with whom you work.

One of our bishops stated that he is a United Methodist today largely because of the efforts of his scoutmaster. When he was a young boy, his family was not active in the church. He attended one of two different Sunday schools, depending upon which of his friends came by for him on Sunday morning. One Sunday, the class teacher announced that he was starting a new program on the following Monday night and invited all of the boys to come back to the church. The new program was a Boy Scout troop. In a few short months, this young man had advanced through the ranks of the Boy Scouts and had also become a member of The Methodist Church. In the bishop’s words, “I joined that church because it provided me the opportunity to do the things I enjoyed doing.” The scoutmaster provided the “salt” necessary to season the life of a future bishop!

A number of United Methodist pastors report that they have reached many families through the “salty” scouting ministry of their churches. One deacon related the story of how a whole family was reunited with the church because of their son’s participation in a P.R.A.Y. class offered by the church. The family had become inactive to the point that their name had been removed from the church rolls by action of the charge conference. The young scout became so involved in the P.R.A.Y. program that he professed his faith and expressed his desire to unite with the church. As a result, his entire family was reunited with the church. Remember the words of our Lord, “You are the salt of the earth.”

## Positive Peer Pressure

Traditional youth organizations bring young people together for regularly scheduled meetings and activities that help to develop a sense of identity and a feeling of belonging. Scouting programs offer the opportunity for youth to learn and grow by planning their own program of activity, electing officers, and practicing leadership. Leadership development happens unobtrusively and naturally.



While youth members of civic youth-serving agency ministries learn by doing in small groups, they are also exposed to the virtues of peer leadership and constructive fellowship. Young people feel the effects of peer pressure today more than ever before; consequently, it is the duty of the church to provide an atmosphere in which that pressure can become a positive force. Civic youth-serving agency ministries can provide such an atmosphere.

# Relate to the Church Council

**Y**our role as coordinator or scouting leader places you on the church council, where you will represent the issues of scouting and youth-serving ministries along with other church staff or lay persons who lead youth ministries. The following tips will help cultivate that relationship and help you develop your leadership skills and effectiveness as well.

- Talk with the pastor, lay leader, or the Christian education leader about considering one or more civic youth-serving agency programs such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Camp Fire, or Big Brothers Big Sisters.
- Talk with the church council about community-based outreach ministries to children and youth in your community.
- Work with the committee on nominations and leader development to nominate other adult leaders for a Civic Youth-Serving Agencies/Scouting Task Group to be elected at a church council meeting. Provide support for a task-force budget. Ensure that the coordinator or committee positions continue through annual elections at charge conferences.
- Work with the Civic Youth-Serving Agencies/Scouting Task Group to form a plan of action and timetable.
- Report the plan and timetables to the church council for input, approval, and implementation.
- Survey the church and community to assess interest as to what type(s) of unit or troops could or should be formed: Camp Fire, Girl Scout, or Boy Scout groups. Consider starting a mentoring ministry such as Amachi, a program of Big Brothers Big Sisters.
- Seek professional help from local civic youth-serving agencies to form units, troops, clubs, or mentoring programs.
- Schedule a children and youth recruiting night. Draft an agenda, secure leaders, organize units and troops, and set meeting dates. Let this become a regularly scheduled night for Civic Youth-Serving Agencies/Scouting Ministries.
- Form needed units and troops that will be supported by the church and community.
- Report success to the church council. Set a date for a Civic Youth-Serving Agencies/Scouting Ministries Sunday worship celebration. Have a consecration service for leaders.

# Events and Programs

## **Bishop’s Dinner for Scouting**

One of the most successful methods of helping local congregations understand the potential of civic youth-serving ministry is the Bishop’s Dinner for Scouting. These dinners have been held at both the conference and district levels.

The initiation of a Bishop’s Dinner can come from the conference scouting committee or the local office of one of the youth-serving agencies. In all cases, it is mandatory that the program be developed through the conference scouting coordinator, the conference president of United Methodist Men, and in cooperation with the conference director of connectional ministries.

These dinners begin with invitations from the bishop to leaders of all churches in a district or the conference. All four youth-serving agencies should be invited to make presentations.

The dinner provides an excellent forum to showcase the programs offered by the four youth-serving agencies and encourages local congregations to incorporate one or more of them into their ministry.

To ensure success, at least three months of lead time should be provided for the proper planning and organization of the program. “Guidelines for Organizing a United Methodist Bishop’s Dinner for Scouting” is available from the Office of Civic Youth-Serving Agencies/Scouting in Nashville to assist you in your planning efforts (see Resources, page 29).

## **P.R.A.Y. Program**

Programs of Religious Activities with Youth (P.R.A.Y.) is a discipleship and outreach resource. It is also the religious recognition program designed for use by the Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of the USA, and Camp Fire.

Congregations have used the P.R.A.Y. curriculum in their Sunday school classes, vacation Bible schools, confirmation classes, and other small-group settings in addition to using it as an outreach program to scouting groups in the community.

To earn a P.R.A.Y. award, youth need to complete the requirements in the student workbook under the supervision of a counselor (either the pastor or someone appointed by the pastor). There are four programs. Each program has its own student workbook, counselor manual, and adult mentor workbook (see <http://www.praypub.org/>).

## **God and Me (Grades 1–3)**

The God and Me curriculum is designed to help children become best friends with Jesus and tell their story of “God and Me” together. Children will make a game in each

lesson and keep their games in a GAME Box (God and Me Exploring Box). These games will reinforce the Bible lessons and provide opportunities for families to explore God’s love together. There are four lessons:

1. God Created Me
2. Jesus Is God’s Gift to Me
3. I Can Talk with God
4. Because God Cares for Me, I Can Care for Others

### **God and Family (Grades 4–6)**

The God and Family curriculum is designed to help children understand the importance of family and God’s role in a healthy family. Families are compared to pizza: the layers of a pizza illustrate God’s plan for strengthening families. Students will make a pizza as they study how families can grow together in God’s love, and they will choose “family projects” to be done with their families at home.

1. Crust-Foundation—We are God’s Family
2. Sauce—Family Heritage, Spiritual Heritage
3. Toppings—Our Talents and Gifts Strengthen Our Families
4. Cheese—In God’s Family We’re Loved No Matter What! Because We’re Loved, We Follow Rules
5. Bake—Being in God’s Family Helps Us When Things Are Tough
6. Eat, Share, Enjoy!—In God’s Family, We Share as a Response to God’s Love

### **God and Church (Grades 6–8)**

The God and Church program will lead young people on a three-part faith journey: meeting Jesus, worshiping God, and witnessing and ministering for Christ. Participants will create either a video or a photo album to share what they have learned on their faith journeys. Young people will have the opportunity to work with their pastor or other Christian adult as they study the church’s structures and objectives and participate in service projects that will give them a better understanding of the mission of the church.

#### *My Journey: Meeting Christ*

1. Meeting Jesus, the Person
2. Meeting Jesus, the Son of God
3. Meeting Jesus, the Head of the Church

#### *Project: Daily Bible Reading*

#### *My Journey: Worshiping God*

1. Learning How Christ Worshiped God
2. Exploring How My Congregation Worships God

#### *Project: Discovering How I Can Worship God*

### *My Journey: Witnessing and Ministering for Christ*

1. Learning How Christ Witnessed and Ministered to Others
2. Exploring How My Congregation Witnesses and Ministers to Others

*Project: Discovering How I Can Witness and Minister to Others*

### **God and Life (Grades 9–12)**

The God and Life program will help students understand their call to discipleship. The curriculum focuses on the life of the apostle Paul as recorded in Acts 9:1-31. This brief account describes how Paul encountered Christ and was changed forever. Five chronological “events” from this story will be highlighted and used as the focus for the five different sections in this program. Each section will illustrate a key element in learning how to live one’s life for Christ:

1. God Calls All Kinds of People
2. God Doesn’t Expect Us to Do It on Our Own
3. Each of Us Must Make a Personal Response to the Call of God
4. God Gives Strength to Face Adversities
5. God Can Accomplish Great Things Through Those Who Are Willing to Do God’s Will

### **Bible Patch Series**

“Bible Basics RP3” is a patch series from P.R.A.Y. designed to help families, Sunday school classes, and scouting groups get into the Bible. Bible Basics RP3 will guide participants to:

1. **R**ead the Bible,
2. visualize or **P**icture the passage,
3. **P**onder its meaning, and
4. **P**ut it into action.

The series consists of three patches: “The Good Book,” “Out of the Water,” and “Birds of the Air.” “The Good Book” is generally first. It focuses on getting to know the Bible and why it is important to read. All patches feature three Bible stories. Requirements are posted on the P.R.A.Y. website and are available at no cost. The patches may be earned by people of all ages. Each patch includes questions for younger children, older youth, and adults. They are designed to be done in a family or group setting with all participants earning the patch. New patches will be added to the series each year.

These patches do not have the same strict guidelines as other P.R.A.Y. awards, so the studies are perfect for campouts and retreats. See [www.praypub.org](http://www.praypub.org) for details.

### **P.R.A.Y. Mentor Program**

The P.R.A.Y. Mentor Program for adults is designed for parents to work side-by-side with their children sharing in the work of the P.R.A.Y. Program. As the child examines his or her faith, the parent will be there, learning about God’s love, sharing new experiences, and

making discoveries with the child. To participate in this program, parents need a copy of the mentor workbook, and they need to work under the supervision of the pastor (or someone appointed by the pastor). Please note that the adult mentor does not take the place of the counselor.

Visit the P.R.A.Y. website ([www.praypub.org](http://www.praypub.org)) to view the P.R.A.Y. Start-Up Kit, PowerPoint presentations, sample lessons, and other important resources. You can also sign up to receive the P.R.A.Y. News Bulletin.

# Recognitions and Awards

It is important that we recognize those who make the civic youth-serving agency ministry possible. Volunteer leadership is vital, just as it is in any other branch of the church's ministry. Several awards and recognition programs have been developed to recognize levels of performance that surpass the ordinary. Complete information relating to all of these awards is available through the Office of Civic Youth-Serving Agencies/Scouting at the General Commission on United Methodist Men in Nashville, Tennessee. The brochures, applications, and reference materials can be found at [www.umcscouting.org](http://www.umcscouting.org).

## The Bishop's Award of Excellence

The Bishop's Award of Excellence (BAE) recognizes congregations and units within The United Methodist Church that extend their ministries to children and youth by creating a faith-based environment for children, youth, families, and leaders to participate in the following civic youth-serving agencies: Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of the USA, and Camp Fire.



The award requires the election of a local scouting coordinator by the local church, the promotion and use of the P.R.A.Y. religious emblem programs, celebration of the ministry, and encourages the use of signed partnership agreements (the *Discipline*, ¶256.4a). See the application for the complete criteria. The Bishop's Award of Excellence is authorized for the purpose of recognizing outstanding United Methodist church troops, units, or clubs that have met the established criteria.

Upon nomination by the local scouting coordinator and approval by a proper committee or representative of the annual conference, the Bishop's Award of Excellence is presented by the presiding bishop to the pastor, the unit leader, and at least one member of the unit at the next regular session of the annual conference. The award application should be forwarded from the local congregation at least six to eight weeks before the annual conference session. The award recognizes activity of one year and may be earned again.

## The Cross and Flame Award

The Cross and Flame Award gives recognition to adult leaders who have given exceptional service in the use and promotion of scouting ministries for young people.



The Cross and Flame Award is awarded by the local congregation. The award is authorized for recognizing leaders with outstanding service to youth at the local church level. In order to qualify, a person must have provided three years of service with a youth-serving agency (Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Big Brothers Big Sisters, or Camp Fire). The candidate must also be an active member of a recognized Christian church.

## The Torch Award

The Torch Award recognizes adult leaders who have given exceptional service in the use and promotion of scouting ministries beyond the local church. Presented by the annual conference, the award recognizes adult leaders with outstanding service to youth at the annual conference level.



In order to qualify, a person must be an active member of a recognized Christian church who has given four years of outstanding leadership to children and youth through one of the following youth-serving agency programs: Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Big Brothers Big Sisters, or Camp Fire. The person must be nominated for the award.

## The Silver Torch Award

The Silver Torch may be awarded to an adult for exemplary service to scouting and/or youth ministry beyond the annual conference. The award may be presented to an individual who has served at the central conference (international), general church (national), or jurisdictional (regional) levels.





Unlike the Cross and Flame and Torch awards, the Silver Torch has no tenure requirement. Recipients must be Christian but not necessarily a member of The United Methodist Church.

Examples of service include the following: (1) Candidates may be leaders of the BSA National Jamboree or International Jamboree (2) Candidates may have provided leadership for mission trips to a central conference, or perhaps they directed efforts to raise funds to support central conference evangelistic initiatives for youth and/or scouting (3) Nominees may have performed significant acts of mission and/or ministry in response to the Connectional Table areas of collaboration supported and advocated by the general agencies: (a) leadership development, (b) new church development, (c) global health, and (d) ministry with the poor.

## **The Good Samaritan Award**

The Good Samaritan Award is based on the attributes of the parable of the good Samaritan, Luke 10:25-37, and our responsibility as Christians to reach out to people in need of a “helping hand” as exemplified by the good Samaritan and related to us in various passages in the Gospels.

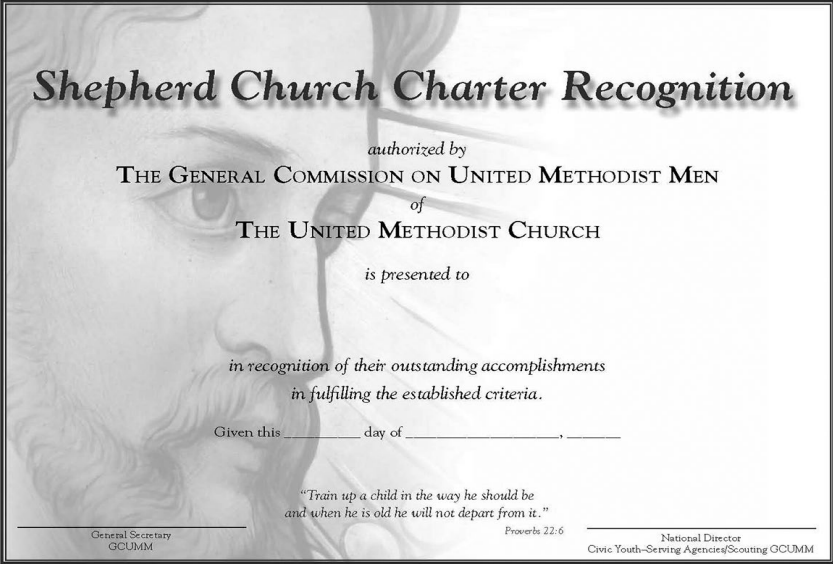


The purpose of this award is to recognize individual youth who demonstrate the attributes of servant leadership to others through outreach, humanitarian assistance, or advocacy.

The youth candidate must be a registered member of a civic youth-serving agency unit (Boy Scout troop, Girl Scout troop, Venture crew, or Camp Fire club) meeting in a United Methodist church or chartered/sponsored by the church; or an active member of a United Methodist youth group, or an active youth member of a United Methodist congregation. Candidates must be between the ages of 6 and 30 (not yet reached 31st birthday). Recipients may be participants in an outreach ministry of a local United Methodist church giving the award. It is not necessary for them to be members of the denomination.

## **The Shepherd Church Charter Recognition**

The Shepherd Church Charter Recognition is given annually to recognize churches that provide outstanding ministry to their communities through sponsorship of one or more of the following civic youth-serving agencies: Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of the USA, Camp Fire and/or Big Brothers Big Sisters. These churches welcome all youth and children, nurture them as they grow to become good citizens with a deeper relationship with God, and work with them in service to others.



**Shepherd Church Charter Recognition**

authorized by  
**THE GENERAL COMMISSION ON UNITED METHODIST MEN**  
of  
**THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

is presented to

*in recognition of their outstanding accomplishments  
in fulfilling the established criteria.*

Given this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

*“Train up a child in the way he should be  
and when he is old he will not depart from it.”*

General Secretary  
GCUUMM

Proverbs 22:6

National Director  
Civic Youth-Serving Agencies/Scouting GCUUMM

“Train children in the way they should go;  
when they grow old, they won’t depart from it.” —Proverbs 22:6

# Supportive Organization and Training

## United Methodist Men Foundation

The National Association of Conference Presidents founded the United Methodist Men Foundation in 1981. The foundation was organized to:

- operate exclusively for charitable and religious purposes.
- provide support funds for program development and maintenance for the purpose and objectives of United Methodist Men.

The foundation has created endowments to fund a variety of United Methodist Men ministries. Endowment gifts help create financial security for Christian programs. Endowment gifts are a testimony by donors to the quality and worthiness of the charitable organization receiving gifts. Endowment gifts are our way of providing for those who will follow in years to come.

Thirty-five years ago, the foundation raised funds for a full-time staff person in scouting ministries. In addition, gifts have funded administrative costs of The Upper Room Living Prayer Center, a toll-free telephone line, and numerous national and international mission projects.

Gifts may be dedicated in honor or memory of a family member, friend, or loved one. Endowment fund gifts may be announced or they may be given anonymously at the donor's discretion.

## Training at BSA High Adventure Bases

Each year the Office of Scouting Ministries conducts a week-long training session for United Methodist leaders at one of three BSA high adventure bases: the Philmont Training Center, the Summit Bechtel Reserve, or the Florida Sea Base.

Each site provides a relaxed atmosphere in which the scouting program of the church may be studied. Attendees are expected to return to their annual conferences, districts, and local churches and conduct similar sessions for United Methodist leaders.

## Other Training Programs

Other training in civic youth-serving/scouting ministry may be held in conjunction with United Methodist Men's rallies and workshops. These may be national or international (National Gathering of United Methodist Men, a quadrennial event); jurisdictional (regional) conferences; or conference and district events and meetings.

# Volunteer Opportunities

## Scouting Ministry Specialists

A scouting ministry specialist helps neighboring churches understand how scouting expands their ministry to youth in their communities. The need for this position is based on statistics indicating that only 6,700 of the 34,000 United Methodist churches have scouting units. The specialists help churches understand the value of scouting and provide information related to training, awards, and recognitions.

Specialists provide information to neighboring churches with the support of the Office of Scouting Ministry of the General Commission on United Methodist Men and annual and district scouting coordinators. Specialists are recruited and registered with the Office of Scouting Ministry and they are responsible for up to three churches. They are not necessarily liaisons to youth agencies or councils as are local church scouting coordinators. Since scouting ministry specialists are volunteers, the amount of time they give to this ministry is self-determined.

### Qualifications

- Must be at least 18 years of age
- Must present proof of having completed the BSA Youth Protection Training or an online course at [www.umscouting.org](http://www.umscouting.org)
- Must provide an annual registration fee (multi-year registrations are available) to receive ongoing information and training
- Must read this Scouting Guideline
- Must complete an application that authorizes a criminal background check

### Roles and responsibilities of Scouting Ministry Specialists

- Visit and communicate with up to three United Methodist churches
- Assist the annual and district scouting coordinators
- Promote scouting ministry training events and workshops, including Philmont Training Center, Florida Sea Base, and The Summit
- Promote scouting recognition awards
- Promote P.R.A.Y. awards
- Enroll each church as a “Shepherd Church”
- Promote Scout Sunday
- Support pastors

- Consider serving on Council Relationships/Religious Committees for the various scouting agencies
- Recruit one additional scouting ministry specialist.

To become a scouting ministry specialist, visit [www.umscouting.org](http://www.umscouting.org) and complete the “interest form” or call (866) 297-4312.

## **Big Brothers Big Sisters Amachi Partnership**

America faces the growing crisis of multigenerational incarceration. We have already witnessed grandfathers, fathers, and sons waiting together in prison for the arrival of the great-grandson. There is a specific way that we, as United Methodists, can help break this intergenerational cycle of incarceration.

Research confirms the common-sense notion that the more caring adults engaged in a child’s life, the more likely that child is to succeed. Big Brothers Big Sisters is the youth-serving agency partnering with United Methodist Men to increase the number of men mentoring children with an incarcerated parent. Participation in the United Methodist Men/Big Brothers Big Sisters Amachi partnership requires the following:

1. Commitment from the United Methodist Men conference president
2. Support and commitment from the bishop and the district superintendent
3. Orientation to Big Brothers Big Sisters and Amachi
4. Partnership agreement with local Big Brothers Big Sisters agency
5. Selection and development of United Methodist congregations to participate in the partnership
6. Setting, meeting, reporting progress toward, and reevaluating goal of number of children matched to a member of the partnering congregations
7. Sharing successful practices and lessons learned with other congregations, conferences, and Big Brothers Big Sisters agencies.

# Resources

## Resources from the Office of Civic Youth-Serving Agencies/Scouting

To access resources and training material and/ events, visit the resource (scouting) section of [www.gcumm.org](http://www.gcumm.org) for current information.

### Brochures and Packets

“Bishop’s Award of Excellence” (brochure)

Civic Youth-Serving Agencies/Scouting (information packet)

“The Cross and Flame Award” (brochure)

“Faith in Scouting” The United Methodist Church DVD

“The Good Samaritan Award” (brochure)

Guidelines for Organizing a Bishop’s Dinner for Scouting (packet) (Limit 1 per order) DVD

“Impact the Lives of Children and Youth in Our Communities” (brochure)

“The Shepherd Church Charter Recognition” (brochure)

“The Silver Torch Award” (brochure)

“The Torch Award” (brochure)

## Resources from Cokesbury

*Guidelines: Scouting and Civic Youth-Serving Ministry* (2017–2020 ). This resource.

The P.R.A.Y. Program. This church program provides the basis for the P.R.A.Y. award earned by members of the Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of the USA, and Camp Fire. Includes four age levels: grades 1–3, 4–6, 6–8, and 9–12. Order through Cokesbury (800-672-1789; <https://www.cokesbury.com>).

## Resources from the General Commission on United Methodist Men

*Strength for Service to God and Country*, the Scout edition a historic book designed for military troops or *Strength for Service to God and Community*, the Scout edition of a book for first responders. Order by calling 615-620-7262.

## **Organization Addresses**

### **Big Brothers Big Sisters of America**

2202 N. Westshore Blvd, Suite 455  
Tampa, FL 33607  
Main phone (813) 720-8778  
fax (813) 749-9446  
[www.BigBrothersBigSisters.org](http://www.BigBrothersBigSisters.org)

### **Boy Scouts of America**

1325 Walnut Hill Lane  
P.O. Box 152079  
Irving, TX 75015-2079  
phone (972) 580-2000  
[www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org)

### **Camp Fire**

Camp Fire National Headquarters  
1801 Main Street, Suite 200  
Kansas City, MO 64108  
main phone: (816) 285-2010  
[www.campfire.org](http://www.campfire.org)

### **Girl Scouts of the USA**

420 Fifth Avenue  
New York, NY 10018  
phone (212) 852-8000  
[www.girlscouts.org](http://www.girlscouts.org)

### **Office of Civic Youth-Serving Agencies/Scouting**

1000 17th Ave. South  
Nashville, TN 37212  
phone (615) 340-7145  
fax (615) 340-1770  
[lcoppock@gcumm.org](mailto:lcoppock@gcumm.org)  
[www.umscouting.org](http://www.umscouting.org)

### **P.R.A.Y.**

11123 S. Towne Square, Suite B  
St. Louis, MO 63123-7816

phone (800) 933 PRAY (7729)  
fax (314) 845-0038  
info@praypub.org  
www.praypub.org

## **UMC Agencies & Helpful Links**

General Board of Church and Society, [www.umc-gbcs.org](http://www.umc-gbcs.org), 202-488-5600; Service Center, 1-800-967-0880

General Board of Discipleship (d/b/a Discipleship Ministries), [www.umcdiscipleship.org](http://www.umcdiscipleship.org), 877-899-2780; Discipleship Resources, <http://bookstore.upperroom.org>, 1-800-972-0433; The Upper Room, [www.upperroom.org](http://www.upperroom.org), 1-800-972-0433; email: [info@umcdiscipleship.org](mailto:info@umcdiscipleship.org)

General Board of Global Ministries, [www.umcmmission.org](http://www.umcmmission.org), 1-800-862-4246 or 212-870-3600; email: [info@umcmmission.org](mailto:info@umcmmission.org)

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, [www.gbhem.org](http://www.gbhem.org), 615-340-7400

General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, [www.gbophb.org](http://www.gbophb.org), 847-869-4550

General Commission on Archives and History, [www.gcah.org](http://www.gcah.org), 973-408-3189

General Commission on Religion & Race, [www.gcorr.org](http://www.gcorr.org), 202-547-2271; email: [info@gcorr.org](mailto:info@gcorr.org)

General Commission on the Status & Role of Women, [www.gcsrw.org](http://www.gcsrw.org), 1-800-523-8390

General Commission on United Methodist Men, [www.gcumm.org](http://www.gcumm.org), 615-340-7145

General Council on Finance and Administration, [www.gcfa.org](http://www.gcfa.org), 866-367-4232 or 615-329-3393

Office of Civic Youth-Serving Agencies/Scouting (General Commission on United Methodist Men), [www.gcumm.org](http://www.gcumm.org), 615-340-7145

The United Methodist Publishing House, [www.umph.org](http://www.umph.org), 615-749-6000; Curric-U-Phone, 1-800-251-8591; Cokesbury, [www.cokesbury.com](http://www.cokesbury.com), 1-800-672-1789

United Methodist Communications, [www.umcom.org](http://www.umcom.org), 615-742-5400; EcuFilm, 1-888-346-3862; InfoServ, email: [infoserv@umcom.org](mailto:infoserv@umcom.org); *Interpreter Magazine*, [www.interpretermagazine.org](http://www.interpretermagazine.org), 615-742-5441

United Methodist Women, [www.unitedmethodistwomen.org](http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org); 212-870-3900

**For additional resources, contact your annual conference office.**