



# Scouting In Baptist Churches

## Background

- The Baptist denomination is considered to be the largest world communion of evangelical Protestants. In the United States, about one in five Christians reports membership in a Baptist church.
  - There are over 220,000 congregations worldwide, representing over 110 million members.
  - According to the 2008 American Religious Identification Survey, there are 36.1 million U.S. members, including 45 percent of members who are African American.
- There is no central governing authority for Baptist churches. Most Baptist churches are members of regional associations of Baptist churches.
- There are more than 60 separate regional Baptist associations in the United States. According to the 2010 *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches*, 89 percent of members are represented in seven of those groups:
  - Southern Baptist Convention, the largest Baptist association with 16.2 million members
  - National Baptist Convention, the oldest and largest African American religious convention with five million members
  - National Baptist Convention of America Inc., an African American Baptist convention with 3.5 million members
  - National Missionary Baptist Convention of America, an African American Baptist convention with 2.5 million members
  - Progressive National Baptist Convention Inc., an African American Baptist convention with 2.5 million members
  - American Baptist Churches in the USA, 1.3 million members
  - Baptist Bible Fellowship International, 1.2 million members
- At the end of 2010, the Baptist denomination's involvement in Scouting included:
  - 71,324 Cub Scouts in 2,045 packs
  - 34,062 Boy Scouts in 1,900 troops
  - 3,049 Venturers in 337 crews

## Role of Scouting in the Baptist Churches

- The Association of Baptists for Scouting (ABS) was formed in 1954 to support the mission of Baptist churches by offering a positive youth program with a spiritual emphasis.
- The Association of Baptists for Scouting's mission is to help strengthen Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting and Venturing as an integral part of local Baptist congregations' ministry to youth. The mission:
  - Assist BSA local councils with registering new units
  - Help churches in their mission of outreach, Christian citizenship, education, and lay leader development
- Goals of the Association of Baptists for Scouting include:
  - Have 5,000 Scout units chartered to Baptist churches
  - Have at least 5,000 religious emblems completed by Baptist youth through P.R.A.Y.
  - Recognize at least 150 Baptist pastors and laypersons with the Good Shepherd Award
  - Have a fully functioning Joe C. Carrington Society in support of Baptist Scouting



# Scouting In Baptist Churches

## Scouting Religious Emblems and Recognitions

According to P.R.A.Y.'s 2010 Religious Emblems Report, religious emblems were earned in 2010 by:

- \* 1,659 Cub Scouts
- \* 1,417 Webelos
- \* 553 Boy Scouts
- \* 204 Venturers
- \* 111 adults

### **Youth emblems**

GOD AND ME



#### **God and Me**

##### **Purpose**

- Encourages children to become best friends with Jesus and tell their story of "God and Me" together

##### **Eligibility**

- Youth in first through third grade

#### **Requirements**

- Designed to be completed in four to five sessions
- Youth completes sessions on God Created Me, Jesus Is God's Gift to Me, I Can Talk With God, Because God Cares for Me, I Can Care for Others

GOD AND FAMILY



#### **God and Family**

##### **Purpose**

- Help youth understand the importance of family and God's role in a healthy family

##### **Eligibility**

- Youth in fourth and fifth grade

#### **Requirements**

- Designed to be completed in six to seven sessions
- Sessions include:
  - We are God's Family
  - Family Heritage, Spiritual Heritage
  - Our Talents and Gifts Strengthen Our Families
  - In God's Family We're Loved No Matter What! Because We're Loved, We Follow Rules
  - Being in God's Family Helps Us When Things Are Tough
  - In God's Family, We Share as a Response to God's Love



# Scouting In Baptist Churches



## God and Church

### **Purpose**

- Gives youth an opportunity to understand the church's structure and objectives, and to participate in service projects that will give them a better understanding of the mission of the church

### **Eligibility**

- Youth in sixth through eighth grade

### **Requirements**

- Designed to take three to five months to complete
- Sessions include Meeting Christ, Worshipping God, and Witnessing and Ministering for Christ
- Must complete a video or photo album to share what they learned



## God and Life

### **Purpose**

- Teaches youth to study the lives of men and women in the Bible, discovering what their lives teach them about God, and challenging them to integrate the faith of those in the Bible into their daily lives

### **Eligibility**

- Youth in ninth through twelfth grades who do not necessarily have to belong to a Boy Scout troop

### **Requirements**

- Completion of five sections covering:
  - How God calls all kinds of people
  - God doesn't expect us to do it on our own
  - Each of us must make a personal response to the call of God
  - God gives strength to face adversities
  - God can accomplish great things through those who are willing to do God's will



# Scouting In Baptist Churches



## **Four Star Award**

### **Purpose**

- Recognize Scouts who have earned all four religious emblems

### **Eligibility**

- Earn all four religious emblems

### **Requirements**

- Candidates must submit a special application form to P.R.A.Y. in order to be confirmed as "Four Star Recipients"
- P.R.A.Y. will verify that candidates have earned all four levels of the P.R.A.Y. program and then send a letter and certificate of special recognition

### ***Adult emblems***



## **Mentor Program**

### **Purpose**

- Provides an adult with additional opportunities to model his or her Christian faith and to help a young child talk about his or her belief in God

### **Eligibility**

- Parent or guardian of a youth in the P.R.A.Y. program series

### **Requirements**

- Completion of the P.R.A.Y. curriculum working alongside youth for whom parent or guardian is responsible



# Scouting In Baptist Churches



## The Good Shepherd

### **Purpose**

- Recognize outstanding adult service to Baptist youth through their church and Boy Scouts of America

### **Eligibility**

- Be 18 years or older
- Demonstrate leadership as a “Good Shepherd” in his or her service to youth
- Have at least 5 years of active service in local church ministry
- Have a minimum of five years of active service in Boy Scouts of America
- Actively participate in the worship life and program of his or her congregation and be of substantial Christian character
- Assist and encourage youth to serve their Lord through the P.R.A.Y. program
- Display outstanding service in organizing, promoting, and strengthening youth-serving agency units operated by Baptist churches
- Cooperate with youth-serving agencies in promoting a “Duty to God” emphasis
- Live the Christ-like life in other community affairs and organizations (Colossians 1:10)

## **Requirements**

- Nomination application and letter of recommendation must be submitted to P.R.A.Y.



## Baptist Unit Awards of Excellence

### **Purpose**

- Three-level program that recognizes exemplary units chartered to Baptist churches

### **Eligibility**



- Must meet eight of the following requirements during the current charter year, including the first five.
  - A unit must complete the BSA Journey to Excellence program in the charter year just completed
  - 30 percent or more of the registered youth members in the unit must be actively enrolled in or have completed the appropriate religious emblem for their age and religious affiliation
  - The unit must provide regular worship opportunities when away from home on Sundays
- Either the unit leader or committee chairman must be an active member of a Baptist church
- At least once a year, members must be instructed in the meaning and responsibilities embodied in the “Duty to God” principle of the Cub Scout Promise, Boy Scout Oath and Scout Law, or Explorer Code
- The minister or qualified pastoral appointee must be involved as a counselor in the P.R.A.Y. religious emblems program
- The unit must participate in Scout Sunday at the Baptist Church where it is operated
- At least half of the unit committee members must be active in a Baptist church



# Scouting In Baptist Churches

- The unit must have completed at least one service project for the chartered organization during the last 12 months
- Boy Scout troops and Varsity Scout teams must also have at least one Chaplain-Aide. The unit must have a designated adult serving as unit Chaplain.

## Requirements

- In the first year, units earn the level one recognition. In the succeeding years, they may earn level two and level three recognitions.
- Each successive award must be earned within two chartered years of the previous recognition level (not more than 6 years)



## Organization Information

For more information, contact:

- For more information and materials concerning the religious growth programs, contact P.R.A.Y. (Programs of Religious Activities With Youth)
  - Write to P.R.A.Y., 11123 S Town Square, Suite B, St. Louis, MO 63123-7816;  
toll-free phone: 1-800-933-7729
  - Website: [www.praypub.org](http://www.praypub.org)
- Association of Baptist Scouters
  - P.O. Box 152079, Irving, TX 75015-2079
  - Website: [www.baptistscouters.org](http://www.baptistscouters.org)