



The Scouting unit is church-owned and -operated.

A church that has its own Scouting unit (Boy Scout troop, Cub Scout pack, Varsity Scout team, or Venturing crew) has complete authority to direct the unit program in the best interest of its participants. In other words, the unit is church-owned and church-administered. The unit can be uniquely Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist, Catholic, etc., as long as the stated principles of Scouting are not violated. Imagine the outreach potential of a unit whose sole purpose is to reach unchurched young people in the community. These young people might be hesitant to attend a regular church service but eager to join a Scouting unit. What an opportunity for these young people, as well as for existing church members!

To reach America with the Christian message requires boldness and a willingness to go out where the people are. Scouting is such a tool for outreach. No, Scouting will not automatically achieve the results your church is after, but when Scouting leaders are chosen as carefully as the church's Bible teachers, and when Scouting is seen as an integral ministry of the church, positive results are predictable.

Scouting is the wealth of opportunity available to help your church reach the young people of your community.

Scouting teaches duty to and reverence for God.

Central to the Scout Oath (or Promise) is the pledge to "do my duty to God." The 12th point of the Scout Law states, "A Scout is reverent." These commitments to the prominence of God in one's life form a cornerstone of the Scouting program. When properly interpreted by an adult Scouter of strong faith to young people, even the unchurched begin to understand their need for God.

P.R.A.Y. Awards

P.R.A.Y. awards are the religious program designed for use by the BSA and other youth agencies. However, any young person who is a member of a Sunday school class or other church group may use the P.R.A.Y. program, regardless of whether he or she is in Scouting. For more information, please visit www.praypub.org.

For further information, contact:

(Use local council stamp.)

www.scouting.org

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**Bringing Youth to Christ
Through a Scouting Ministry**

*A Scout
Is
Reverent*



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®



Scouting provides outreach opportunities for your church.

The opening years of the 21st century have seen an increasing need to communicate our churches' message to everyone; those within the congregations and those not yet reached. Churches have responded: every mean, print and electronic, is being employed boldly in this effort, but it is important to keep these communication wonders in perspective; they are really only tools that help strengthen the impact of personal witnessing. Face-to-face encounter remains the most effective means of outreach, and the effective church evaluates all available outlets for interpersonal encounters. A thorough evaluation of opportunities to reach children and young people will reveal an often untapped wealth of opportunity—Scouting.

Scouting is challenging. It is action- and skill-oriented; constructively competitive; balanced between scholarship and practical application. Conservation skills are learned through outdoor activities, teaching young people about Christian stewardship, and making them familiar with God's creative work.

Scouting is a winner. It appeals to young people because of its established, winning reputation—everyone wants to be on a winning team!

Scouting appeals to unchurched youth. Even if the church has a fine youth organization of Bible study, training, and mission education, chances are that the youth program mainly attracts young people already active in the congregation. Scouting offers a distinctive outreach element to help extend the church's ministry to the larger community.

Scouting provides age-appropriate ministries.

Cub Scouting activities involve the parents, adult leaders, and friends of Cub Scouts in home-centered programs that teach life skills, habits, values, and attitudes consistent with the interests of their church. Millions of boys and their families participate in Cub Scouting, the largest of the three Boy Scouts of America membership divisions. Cub Scout activities encourage character development, physical coordination, family unity, and enthusiasm for learning.



Boy Scouting encourages boys to develop physical, mental, and emotional fitness and to adopt and live by meaningful personal standards as a cornerstone for success in life. These values include the basic principles in the Scout Oath and Scout Law. Activities include fitness and leadership training, wilderness adventures, and merit badge incentives for boys mastering hobby and career skills.



Venturing is an effective coed young-adult program designed to improve character, citizenship, and fitness. Venturers exercise leadership, citizenship, fitness, social, outdoor, and community service endeavors. Venturing provides a variety of challenging activities to teach young people ages 14, or age 13 with the completion of eighth grade, through 20 the real-world meaning of values, ethical decision making, and life skills. Venturing teaches leadership and problem-solving skills to help youths mature into confident, successful adults. Venturing crews organize around a special vocation or interest of the youth members. The specialty clusters include outdoors, sports, arts and hobbies, youth ministry, and Sea Scouting.



Scouting provides more leadership opportunities.

During Scouting activities lead by a volunteer leader of Christian faith, a young person may be helped with their personal and spiritual needs. This guidance may range from answering simple questions, to guiding discussions, to serving as a role model for the child who needs one. Every youth program in the church has an important role in guiding the development of young people, yet lack of time often hampers the effort. In an average church program that meets weekly, it is fortunate if 50 minutes

a week are available for leader and youth interaction. Even assuming perfect attendance for a year, this adds up to only 43.3 hours for the whole year. If Scouting becomes an integral part of the church ministry to youth, however, consider the intensive periods of personal guidance potential within a year's span. These figures are a conservative estimate:

Regular meetings (based on one unit meeting each week)	65 hours
Overnight campouts (based on one campout per month)	156 hours
Scouting shows/multi-unit events (based on two per year)	26 hours
Summer camp (based on six full days)	80 hours
Total	327 hours

The larger segments of time in which young people and leaders interact outside the daily routine has been credited, in part, as a reason for the number of Christian conversions reported in Scouting units operated by churches.

Scouting rewards religious learning.

Scouting has an age-graded program of religious education designed by the various denominations and supported by Scouting. As boys (and girls, in Venturing) reach certain levels in their program, they can be encouraged to work toward the religious emblem of their denomination. Requirements vary by religious body, but each calls for service within the local church and for counsel with the youth's religious leader. This counseling period offers the opportunity to discover any spiritual needs and to offer guidance for the youth's pilgrimage. Without a catalyst like the religious emblems program, many young people would not avail themselves of counsel.

