



Scouting in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Community

Background

- The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the second fastest growing church in the United States. (Source: National Council of Churches)
 - Worldwide, there are approximately 13.5 million members of the Church.
 - In the United States, nearly 6 million people, approximately 1.6 percent of the population, are members of the Church. (Source: 2007 U.S. Religious Landscape Survey, Pew Forum)
- In 2009, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints had:
 - 363,048 high school seminary students
 - 337,352 institute students, single, between the ages of 18 and 30
 - 51,736 missionaries
 - 28,424 congregations
 - 344 missions
 - 133 temples
 - 15 missionary training centers
 - 4 universities and colleges
- At the end of 2010, the Church's use of Scouting included:
 - 142,085 Cub Scouts in 10,345 packs
 - 205,990 Boy Scouts in 19,285 troops
 - 64,645 Venturers in 8,298 crews

Religious Principles and Key Terms

- *Aaronic Priesthood*: Named for Aaron, the brother of Moses in the Old Testament, it is conferred upon faithful male members of the Church beginning at age 12 and includes the offices of deacon, teacher, and priest. Aaronic Priesthood holders:
 - Prepare and offer the sacrament (communion) to Church members during Sunday worship services.
 - Help to visit members in their homes.
 - Collect contributions for the poor.
 - Perform other service duties.
- *Articles of Faith*: Written in 1842 by Joseph Smith, they outline the 13 basic points of belief of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
- *Bishop*: Leader of a local congregation (known as a ward), with duties similar to those of a pastor, priest, or rabbi. The bishop has two counselors, and the three (known as the bishopric) are unpaid. The bishop is registered with the BSA as the institution head; one of his counselors is usually registered as the chartered organization representative.
- *Book of Mormon*: Published in 1830 by Joseph Smith, it is the sacred text of the Church in addition to the Bible.
- *Branch*: Local congregation, smaller than a ward, in an area where the Church is in a developing stage. Once developed, a branch can become a ward. The leader of a branch is called the branch president; he and his two counselors are known as the branch presidency. The branch president is the institution head; one of the counselors usually serves as the chartered organization representative.



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- **Calling:** An invitation to a member to accept an office or responsibility in the Church. Worthy adults, members or non-members of the Church, may be “called” to serve as Scout leaders.
- **First Presidency:** Highest ruling body and final authority of all matters of the Church, it is composed of the President of the Church and two Apostles who serve as counselors. All three are referred to as “President.”
- **Mormon:** A fourth-century prophet in the Americas who abridged the historical and religious records of his people onto metal plates which later became known as the Book of Mormon. The name “Mormon” has become an unofficial nickname for members of the Church. When referring to Church members, the term “Latter-day Saints” is preferred, although “Mormon” is also acceptable.
- **Primary:** Church organization for children ages three through 11. The Primary presidency supervises Scouting for Primary boys ages eight through 11:
 - Cub Scouts (Wolf and Bear), ages 8 and 9
 - Webelos Scouts, age 10
 - Boys in the patrol, 11-year-old Scouts
- **Quorum:** Organized group of brethren who hold the same office in the priesthood. They may be ordained to an office in the Aaronic Priesthood starting at age 12. Young men are registered to age-appropriate Scouting units that consist of members of their priesthood quorums:
 - Deacons quorum: Boy Scouts, ages 12 to 13
 - Teachers quorum: Varsity Scouts, ages 14 to 15
 - Priests quorum: Venturers, ages 16 to 18
- **Stake:** Geographical subdivision of the Church composed of several wards (similar to a diocese). The stake presidency consists of the stake president (the leader of the stake) and two counselors.
- **Ward:** Basic geographical unit of the Church, consisting of several hundred members in a single congregation, presided over by a bishop and two counselors. In BSA terminology, the ward is the chartered organization.

Role of Scouting in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

- Recognized as a part of the Boy Scouts of America in 1913, Scouting in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints works to provide leisure-time activities, particularly along spiritual and cultural lines, for the young men of the Church.
- The Scouting unit within the Church is an extension of the home and Church and functions as an integral part of the Church’s activity program.
 - A Cub Scout pack, Boy Scout troop, and Varsity team should be chartered by every ward and branch that has two or more boys of the particular age served by the program.
 - Venturing is optional, but recommended, as the activity of the priests’ quorum.
- The Church uses age instead of school grade to determine membership in Scouting programs. Separate age-group units are encouraged to maintain quorum integrity, identity, and lines of authority.

Scouting Youth and Adult Recognitions

Scouting can be used as an activity to help the Church’s young men achieve the following recognitions. For more information on the recognitions, please click on each individually.



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Youth Emblems

Duty to God Program

Purpose

- Strengthens young men spiritually and helps them accomplish the purposes of the Aaronic Priesthood.

Eligibility

- Three two-year programs become available once a young man is of age:
 - Deacon—Start at age 12
 - Teacher—Start at age 14
 - Priest—Start at age 16

Requirements

- For each level, the young man must complete the following items within the two-year period.
 - Perform all priesthood duties and standards regularly.
 - Complete all family activity goals.
 - Complete eight or more personal goals in each of the following categories: spiritual development; physical development; education, personal, and career development; and citizenship and social development.
 - Complete a service project that benefits the family, ward, stake, or community. Depending on the youth's level in Scouting, an Eagle Scout project may qualify as the service project within the appropriate level of the Duty to God program.

Awarding Process

- When a youth completes a certificate program, he will be awarded the Duty to God certificate for the individual program. If a youth completes all three (deacon, teacher, priest), he will receive the Duty to God award.

Faith in God Award

Purpose

- Highlights a young boy's commitment to God.

Eligibility

- Young boys ages eight to 11

Requirements

- All requirements listed below must be completed prior to the boy's twelfth birthday. For boys that are Cub Scouts, certain activities within the Faith in God requirements will qualify them to receive the Scouting Religious square knot patch.
 - Pray daily.
 - Read Scriptures regularly.
 - Keep commandments and live "My Gospel Standards."
 - Honor your parents and be kind to your family.
 - Pay your tithe and attend tithing settlement.



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- Attend sacrament meetings and Primary regularly.
- To help the boy's understanding and testimony of the gospel grow, he should:
 - Write his testimony.
 - Memorize the Articles of Faith and explain what they mean.
 - Complete activities for learning and living the Gospel, serving others, developing talents, and preparing for priesthood.
 - Have an interview with a member of their bishopric or branch presidency.



On My Honor Youth Award

Purpose

- Recognizes young men for their achievements in Scouting and the Duty to God program.

Eligibility

- Boy Scouts, Varsity Scouts, or Venturers

Requirements

- To receive the award, the young man must:
 - Complete the requirements for one of the Duty to God certificates (deacon, teacher, or priest).
 - Achieve the Scouting rank of Star in the United States, or the equivalent Scouting award in other countries.

Wearing the Award

- May be worn also with the religious square knot patch.

Adult Emblem



On My Honor Adult Award

Purpose

- Recognize Scout leaders for leadership achievement in Scouting.

Eligibility

- Scouting leaders of a Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints-sponsored Scouting unit who are at least 21 years of age.

Requirements

- To receive the award, Scouting leaders must:
 - Complete basic training for Scouting leaders.
 - Have served a minimum of three years in the Aaronic Priesthood or Primary.
 - Be thoroughly familiar with the Aaronic Priesthood or Primary program, as shown in an interview with the bishop.
 - Be worthy, as shown in an interview with the bishop.

Wearing the Award

- May be worn also with the religious square knot patch.



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Organization Information

- For more information, contact:
 - The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
 - 50 East North Temple, Salt Lake City, UT 84150; phone 801-240-1000
 - Web page: www.lds.org
 - LDS Relationships Office—Boys Scouts of America
 - 15 West South Temple, Suite 1070, Salt Lake City, UT 84101-1579; phone 801-530-004; fax 801-530-0029
 - Web page: www.ldsbsa.org
 - The Boy Scouts of America LDS Relationships Office publishes a newsletter. Click here to see an online copy of the latest newsletter.