



# FACT SHEET

## Scouting for Lutheran Youth

**The Record** Lutheran congregations have used the Scouting program locally for more than 70 years. Scouting has been recommended at various times to constituent congregations by their respective church bodies as a viable resource for ministry with children, youth, and families. There are more than 130,000 Lutheran youth members in more than 4,300 Cub Scout packs, Boy Scout troops, Varsity Scout teams, and Venturing crews.

**National Liaison** Since 1926, Lutheran congregations have been apprised by their national church bodies about the benefits to youth who participate in the Scouting program and to the congregations that provide it. To assist congregations in their ministry with youth in Scouting, the National Lutheran Committee on Scouting was formed in 1941 with representation from the Lutheran church bodies, which encompassed approximately 95 percent of the nation's Lutherans.

In 1967, the work of the National Lutheran Committee on Scouting was incorporated into the Lutheran Council in the U.S.A. (LCUSA). Since 1990, official liaison with the Boy Scouts of America has continued through the Lutheran Committee on Civic Youth Agency Relationships. This committee is formed by and responsible to the youth ministry departments of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS).

In 1980, the National Lutheran Association of Scouters (NLAS) was formed. Incorporated in 1982, the NLAS serves as a resource to local Lutheran associations of Scouters and committees. The NLAS has a regional structure consistent with that of the BSA and represents its membership on the BSA Religious Relationships Committee.

### Church Functions

The Lutheran church bodies work with the Boy Scouts of America to

- Develop and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with the Boy Scouts of America
- Provide literature related to Scouting and the church's ministry with children, youth, and families
- Provide and administer religious growth programs for Lutheran youth in Scouting
- Emphasize the religious aspect of the Scouting program
- Promote religious worship at outdoor Scouting functions and BSA national jamborees, and a chaplaincy program at Scout summer camps
- Foster among Lutheran congregations a regard for Scouting as a resource for ministry, and assist congregations with Scouting units to use those units as effective ministry tools
- Help Lutheran adults in Scouting understand and carry out their ministry roles and give recognition to those who faithfully serve children and youth through the Scouting program

### NLAS Mission

The mission of NLAS is to equip Lutherans and other Christians to minister to young people, using the programs of our partner youth-serving agencies.

## NLAS Functions

The National Lutheran Association of Scouters was formed to

- Encourage Lutheran congregations to use the program and resources of the Boy Scouts of America as a means of extending their ministry to children, youth, and families, as well as for community outreach
- Encourage Lutheran youth to grow in knowledge of the Triune God and in their relationship to the Lutheran church through religious growth programs
- Publish a periodic newsletter, *The Lutheran Scouter*
- Foster the organization and growth of local Lutheran associations of Scouters, committees on Scouting, and similar groups
- Sponsor national meetings and regional forums of the membership
- Promote the use of unit and camp chaplains and chaplain aides
- Foster such other relationships and programs as may be jointly approved by its executive board

The NLAS also gives leadership to the Lutheran breakout sessions held in conjunction with the Scouting in the Church's Ministry conference at Philmont Scout Ranch. It also notifies local associations when a youth enrolls in the religious growth program or receives the emblem.

## Religious Growth Programs

Religious growth programs provided for Lutheran youth in Scouting include:

**God and Me:** For youth in grades one through three, this program encourages children to tell the story of their lives, think about the life and teachings of Jesus, and see how God is present in their lives today.

**God and Family:** For youth in grades four and five, this program fosters growth in relationship to self, God, family, friends, neighbors, community, and the future.

**God and Church (Lutheran):** For youth in grades six through eight, this program provides children with an opportunity to understand the church's structures and objectives, and to participate in service projects that will give them a better understanding of the mission of the church.

**God and Life:** For youth in grades nine through 12, this program helps young people grow as Christians by fostering in them a closer relationship with their Lord, a heightened awareness of their worship experiences, an eagerness and ability to be personal witnesses to their faith, and enthusiasm for sharing in the outreach efforts of the congregations.

**God and Country mentor program (adult curriculum):** A mentor is someone who serves as a living example for another person. This God and Country mentor program is designed to help adults look directly at what it means to serve as a Christian mentor, and it suggests how to have a positive, Christian influence on a child. The mentor curriculum is designed for an adult working with a young person who is enrolled in the God and Country program series.

## Information

Information and materials concerning the religious growth programs, the Lamb Award, or the Servant of Youth Award may be obtained from P.R.A.Y. (Programs of Religious Activities with Youth), 8520 Mackenzie Road, Ste. 3, St. Louis, MO 63123-3413; telephone 800-933-PRAY; Web site [www.praypub.org](http://www.praypub.org). Information concerning NLAS or the locations and addresses of local Lutheran associations of Scouters or committees on Scouting may be obtained from the NLAS secretary at the same address. The NLAS Web site address is [www.nlas.org](http://www.nlas.org).