

The National Lutheran Association on Scouting (NLAS) is pleased to provide this newsletter to Chartered Organization Representatives, Committee Chairs, and Leaders of Boy Scouts of America units chartered to Lutheran Congregations. Although not all top leaders of units chartered to Lutheran congregations are Lutheran, we hope that you will pass on the newsletter to the Pastor or find valuable information supporting your unit's operation.

National Lutheran Association on Scouting

January 2020

A Scout is Reverent!

Scout Sunday is coming up! The “official” date for 2020 is February 9, but units and chartered organizations are free to schedule Scout Sunday on any Sunday in February that is mutually convenient to the unit and the congregation. GS-USA has its own celebration date, but feel free to invite any Girl Scout, American Heritage Girls, Campfire or 4-H units supported by your chartered organization to the celebration.

Why should you celebrate Scout Sunday? To teach Scouts the value of performing their Duty to God, and to generate recognition and good will with the chartered organization for “their” youth serving unit. We in BSA know that the chartered organization “owns” the unit. Scout Sunday can awaken the recognition that Scouts BSA and Cub Scout units are not simply “using their space” but are part of their outreach ministry to youth and young families in the community (many of which are “unchurched”). This realization can dramatically improve and cement the relationship between unit and chartered organization.

How should we celebrate Scout Sunday? There are many ways to celebrate Scout Sunday. Scout Sunday is an excellent time to

present [youth with their religious emblems](#), recognizing (voluntary hard work and) growth in their faith. It is also a great time to present [adult religious recognitions](#) for their dedication to serving youth and God.

[Lutheran Lamb Award](#)

[Lutheran Servant of Youth Award](#)

There can be a “meet and greet” with youth before or after the service, perhaps with refreshments. Youth can be used as greeters and ushers. They can read scriptures. Older youth might even deliver a message to the congregation. On an ongoing basis, youth from the unit may perform Eagle projects benefiting the congregation, unit service projects such as landscape trimming and mulching, supporting blood-mobile visits, serving at congregational dinners, and these may be brought to mind by pictorial displays (use your Historian!).

Take advantage of Scout Sunday!

Scouting in the Lutheran Church Conference

What are YOUR plans for the summer of 2020? We invite you to set aside the week of July 19 - 25 to bring your family and join us at the Philmont Training Center (PTC) for our Scouting in the Lutheran Church conference! The Philmont Training Center (PTC) is the national volunteer training center for the Boy Scouts of America.

This conference is for Lutheran chartered organization representatives, clergy, congregational leaders and all Lutheran Scouters who want to learn about using Scouting as an outreach ministry to young people and their families. See how Scouting becomes part of a congregation’s youth ministry and contributes to reaching young families and building and sustaining membership. The conference is recommended for those considering staffing the NLAS exhibit at the 2021 National Scout Jamboree at The Summit. The NLAS national annual meeting will be held at PTC on Monday evening (July 20).

Did we mention bringing the family? The Philmont Training Center offers a full, organized program for every member of the family - from infants to spouses, organized by age group and participating in a

carefully designed, age/ability specific program under the leadership of trained, experienced staff. Groups will enjoy hiking, tours, handicrafts, games, campfires, and outdoor activities. PTC is known as Scouting's best family vacation!

Online registration is now live at the [Philmont Training Center](#)! Don't forget to check out the website for more information on the family programs. Looking forward to meeting you at PTC!

Lutheran Chaplains Needed!

An important part of NLAS ministry is providing Lutheran Chaplains for BSA high adventure bases, such as Philmont Scout Ranch, and national events, such as the 2021 National Scout Jamboree or National Order of the Arrow Conferences (NOACs). Are you, or do you know, a Lutheran minister, deacon, Director of Christian Education (DCE) or seminarian (who has completed at least one course in Clinical Pastoral Education) who would enjoy the challenge of working with a "congregation" consisting of hundreds of youth and adult leaders from across the U.S. and elsewhere in the world? In addition to planning and conducting worship services, you will be called upon to provide presence, pastoral care, and counseling in an all-faith environment, as well as visiting those in on-site medical facilities and assisting in event management in case of serious accident, illness or death. Women and men are needed who are willing to model how "a Scout is Reverent" while encouraging youth to engage in "Duty to God" activities, advocating participation in their faith tradition's religious award program, and assisting youth Chaplain Aides in carrying out their religious leadership duties. Does this sound challenging and exciting? See the [letter from the NLAS Lead Chaplain](#) at NLAS.org or email chaplain@nlas.org. Candidates will be vetted by their District President, Synod Bishop, or other national church judicatory official as appropriate.

How do Youth Earn Religious Emblems?

A major focus of NLAS is to encourage youth to engage in Duty to God activities through the Religious Emblems program. More than 35 faith groups have developed religious emblems to provide instruction

and encourage the growth of youth in their faith. Certain faiths have their own unique emblems. Lutherans participate through the Protestant and Independent Christian Churches emblems administered by the Programs of Religious Activities with Youth (P.R.A.Y.). The Protestant emblems have been developed and reviewed by the participating national churches, including The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Therefore, the Religious Emblems are owned by the national church bodies, not by the Scouting organizations. The role of the youth serving organizations is to encourage youth to do their Duty to God, not to instruct faith. Then how do youth earn the Religious Emblems?

The Religious Emblems Counselor is the key. As Lutherans, we believe that the pastor is responsible for the instruction of faith and spiritual nurture of the flock. That does not mean that we should expect an already overburdened pastor to take on instructing the Religious Emblems. In fact, some pastors may really want to do this instruction. Many times, it is handled like Sunday School teaching, by the pastor commissioning a trusted person of good doctrinal understanding as Counselor. It is possible that the designated Counselor is also a Scout leader. When instructing the Religious Emblems, the Counselor represents his or her church, not the BSA. (Nevertheless, be sure to comply with both congregational and BSA youth protection requirements. Parents who participate along with their youth as "Mentors" may serve as second adults.) Whether the pastor or a designated person is Counselor, the student will meet with the pastor for discussions or "interviews", and the pastor will sign off the completion of the student's workbook. Sound instruction by the Counselor and participation by the pastor is how the Protestant emblems become "Lutheran". Some pastors, especially those without Scouting background, may not be familiar with the Religious Emblems program. Then it is necessary for the parent or potential Counselor to obtain the student workbook and the Counselor's booklet and to review them with the pastor. The booklets are available in many local Council Service Centers or may be ordered from [P.R.A.Y.](#) direct. Each student needs a workbook, which is laid out for their participation. The Counselor's booklet is well laid out with instructional material per lesson, materials needed, scripture references, suggested schedule and suggested teaching methods, and with many online materials in the Resource Library. When instruction is complete and emblems have been ordered, be sure to present them in a meaningful service, preferably during a worship service at the youth's home congregation. Also recognize the youth's participation in Duty to God at his/ her unit

by presenting the BSA youth religious knot (silver square knot on a purple field – BSA # 05007).

If your child asks about the Religious Emblems, do not be afraid of it. Help your unit and congregation understand the Religious Emblems program with the [BSA Duty to God poster](#) and the [P.R.A.Y. Awards for Lutherans brochure](#). Ask about Counselors in neighboring Scout units and congregations. Consult your [Unit or District Religious Emblems Coordinator \(REC\)](#). Talk with your pastor. Volunteer as a Counselor. Make your class widely available in your congregation, to Scout and non-Scout youth. Notify your Unit and District RECs. Advertise in your unit. Have youth consult their pastors. Best wishes, Counselor!

Blessings on your Scouting ministry!