



Duty to God

- What does this mean and how do we as Scouters support this part of the Scout Oath so that we ensure a Scout is Reverent?
- What is a Duty to God?
 - A Duty to God is about a Scout's spiritual journey, fostering a sense of obligation to something greater than oneself, which complements their duty to country, others and self, forming the three sides of the Scout neckerchief.
- What is Reverence?
 - In Scouting America, **Reverence** means being faithful in your religious duties, respecting God (or a higher power/spiritual foundation), and showing deep respect for the beliefs, customs, and lives of others, as well as the wonders of nature, fostering a moral compass and good citizenship





Lord Baden-Powell, the founder of Scouting, believed "Duty to God" was not a separate part but the **foundation of the entire movement**, emphasizing that Scouts should recognize and serve God through daily life, nature study, and service to others, respecting all faiths while adhering to their own religious principles, a concept central to the Scout Promise from the beginning.

Baden-Powell's Core Philosophy:

- **"The whole of it is based on religion"**: He famously stated that Scouting isn't about adding religion but is inherently rooted in recognizing God and serving Him.
- **Practical Christianity**: His aim was for Scouts to practice Christian ethics in daily life, not just Sunday theology, though he welcomed all faiths.
- **Nature as a Guide**: Baden-Powell saw the study of nature as a direct way to understand God's creation, linking spirituality to the outdoors.
- **Service to Others**: He taught that making the best of life and serving others (made in God's likeness) was fulfilling God's purpose.

Evolution of "Duty to God" in Scouting:

- **Original Promise**: The early Scout Promise included a pledge to do one's "duty to God".
- **Inclusivity**: While starting with Christian focus, Baden-Powell adapted his writings to embrace all religions as Scouting grew globally, ensuring it remained universal.
- **Respect for All Beliefs**: He stressed that Scouts should respect different customs and religions, fostering understanding, not division.

In essence, Baden-Powell built Scouting on a spiritual bedrock, **ensuring it provided a path for youth to find meaning and serve a higher power through their actions, fostering a deep, personal faith integrated into their everyday lives and adventures.**

Today, in Scouting, **Duty to God** means **recognizing a higher power, being faithful in one's own religious duties, and respecting the beliefs of others.** Scouts fulfil this through personal spiritual growth, family faith, and service to others, all while adhering to the principles of the Scout Oath and Law. It's a foundational concept that emphasizes spiritual development without prescribing a specific religion, allowing scouts to express it through their own faith traditions.

Declaration of Religious Principle – Scouting America maintains that no member can grow into the best kind of citizen without recognizing an obligation to God.... Scouting America, therefore, recognizes the religious element in the training of the member, but it is absolutely nonsectarian in its attitude toward that religious training. Its policy is that the home and organization or group with which the member is connected shall give definite attention to religious life.

Advancement Requirements – Cub Scouts

Scouting's "Duty to God" for Cub Scouts involves understanding and practicing faith, often through the **Family & Reverence** adventure (for Lions, Tigers, Wolves, Bears, Webelos) or the specific **Duty to God** adventure (for Arrow of Light). These adventures focus on family faith traditions, attending services, performing acts of kindness, and discussing beliefs with a caring adult, with options to earn specific religious emblems for deeper engagement, all emphasizing reverence and service. Requirements vary slightly by rank but center on personal reflection and community action, encouraging Scouts to articulate their spiritual journey. Scouts can also complete the adventure by completing a Religious Emblem of the Cub Scout family's choosing.



Lion Lion's Pride	Tiger Tiger Circles	Wolf Footsteps	Bear Fellowship	Webelos My Family	Arrow of Light Duty to God
<p>Requirement 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With your parent or legal guardian talk about your family's faith traditions. • Draw a picture of your favorite family's faith tradition holiday or celebration. 	<p>Requirement 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With your parent or legal guardian talk about your family's faith traditions. • Identify three holidays or celebrations that are part of your family's faith traditions. • Draw a picture of your favorite family's faith tradition holiday or celebration. 	<p>Requirement 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With your parent or legal guardian talk about your family's faith traditions. • Identify three holidays or celebrations that are part of your family's faith traditions. • Make a craft or work of art of your favorite family's faith tradition holiday or celebration. 	<p>Requirement 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With your parent or legal guardian talk about your family's faith traditions. • Identify three holidays or celebrations that are part of your family's faith traditions. • Make a craft, work of art, or a food item that is part of your favorite family's faith tradition, holiday or celebration. 	<p>Requirement 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With your parent or legal guardian, talk about your family's faith traditions. • Identify three holidays or celebrations that are part of your family's faith traditions. • Make a craft, work of art, or a food item that is part of your family's faith traditions. 	<p>Requirement 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss with your parent or legal guardian your family's faith traditions or one of your choosing. • Choose a view or value of that faith tradition that is related to the Scout Law. • Discuss with your family how each family member demonstrates this value.
<p>Requirement 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With your family, attend a religious service OR • Other gathering that shows how your family expresses Family & Reverence. 	<p>Requirement 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With your family, attend a religious service OR • Other gathering that shows how your family expresses Family & Reverence. 	<p>Requirement 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With your family, attend a religious service OR • Other gathering that shows how your family expresses reverence. 	<p>Requirement 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With your family, attend a religious service OR • Other gathering that shows how your family expresses reverence. 	<p>Requirement 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out an act of kindness 	<p>Requirement 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with a representative of a faith-based organization in your local community who provides a service that assists people in crisis regardless of their faith. • Identify who they help and how.
<p>Requirement 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a cheerful card or a drawing for someone you love and give it to them. 	<p>Requirement 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out an act of kindness 	<p>Requirement 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out an act of kindness 	<p>Requirement 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out an act of kindness 	<p>Requirement 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With your parent or legal guardian identify a religion or faith that is different from your own. • Identify two things that it has in common with your family's beliefs. 	<p>Requirement 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss with your parent, legal guardian, or an adult leader what "Duty to God" means to you. • Tell how you practice your Duty to God in your daily life.
		<p>Requirement 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to or read Aesop's fable "The Boy Who Cried Wolf." • With your den or family discuss why being truthful is important. 	<p>Requirement 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With your parent or legal guardian identify a religion or faith that is different from your own. • Determine two things that it has in common with your family's beliefs. 	<p>Requirement 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss with our parent or legal guardian what it means to be reverent. • Tell how you practice being reverent in your daily life. 	

Advancement Requirements - Troops



As our youth advance into a Troop, this Duty to God continues to be woven into every rank's requirements.

- Scout Requirement 1- Repeat the Oath/Law, explain their meaning, and describe how you've shown Scout spirit.
- Tenderfoot Requirement 9 - Tell how you've done your duty to God and lived the Scout Law in your daily life.
- Tenderfoot, Second Class and First Class ranks require a specified amount of time for service and for the Scouts to cover a portion of the points of the Scout Law so that by completion of First Class the Scout has told how they have lived a Scout is Reverent.
- Star, Life and Eagle Scout Requirement 2 - Tell how you've done your duty to God and lived the Oath/Law in your everyday life.

Advancement Requirements – Venturing

Venturing continues Scouting's tie to a Duty to God with its rank requirements for Discovery, Pathfinder and Summit that include Personal Growth. As they advance, Crew members complete Structured Personal Reflections and explore the realms of “Adventures of Faith”, “Adventures of Self” and “Adventures of Others”

Development of Faith allows for an opportunity to explore one's values and morals and to delve deeper into one's faith or to expand one's world-view by exploring spirituality, faith-based practices, and organized religions. Development of Faith can be completion of the TRUST Award, commitment to read a sacred text, organization of or participation in a mission trip, or any goal that promotes personal growth through an exploration of faith.

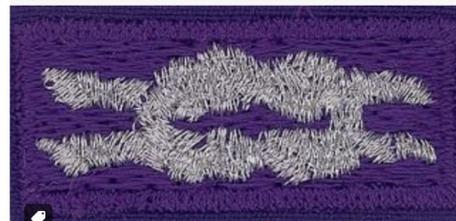


Religious Emblems and Knots



To encourage members to grow stronger in their faith, religious groups have developed religious emblems programs. Scouting America has approved of these programs and allows the emblems to be worn on the official uniform. The various religious groups administer the programs.

Scouting America's religious knots recognize youth and adults who complete their faith's specific religious emblem programs, featuring a silver knot on purple for youth (worn by youth/adults who earned it) and purple on silver for adults (for service to faith/Scouting); these universal knots signify earning a third-party religious award, with devices indicating multiple levels or programs.



Scout Involvement with Religious Service

Scout Sunday and Scout Sabbath are days in February (around the 8th, Scouting's anniversary) for Scouts to celebrate their "Duty to God" by attending or participating in services at their faith's house of worship, often wearing their uniforms and performing flag ceremonies, recognizing scouting's connection to faith and community, with specific dates like Scout Sabbath for Jewish Scouts and Scout Jumuah for Muslim Scouts, though units often adapt dates to their local needs.



Troop Chaplain and Chaplain Aide

Roles of the Troop Chaplain and Chaplain Aide

- Provide a spiritual tone for all troop meetings and camping experiences.
- Assure members and leaders of your interest in them and their activities.
- Provide spiritual counseling service when needed or requested.
- Provide opportunities for all boys to grow in their relationship with God and their fellow Scouts.
- Encourage Scouts to participate in the religious emblems program of their respective faith.

Troop Chaplain is an adult leadership position and does not have to be clergy but should take Chaplain Training through the my.scouting.org training module.

Chaplain Aide is a youth leadership position that leads the troop in opening or closing prayer and mealtime blessings. Chaplain aides ensure that religious holidays are considered during the troop's program planning process and promotes the Scouting America's religious emblems program.



Troop 9 Convocation

About a year and a half ago Troop 9 had a Scout take on Chaplain Aide as a leadership position. The Scout was challenged to prepare a Convocation that the Troop could use; similar to Lost Pines Grace or Philmont Grace. The Scout did not just make one, he created two, an informal version used at meetings and activities and a formal one for Courts of Honor.

Informal

We gather in gratitude for fellowship and growth. May our Scouting journey inspire selfless service and respect for all life. Guide us to Be Prepared and to Do a Good Turn Daily.

Formal

Troop 9 gathers today in gratitude for the opportunity to unite in fellowship, growth, and achievement.

May our Scouting journey inspire us to serve others selflessly, fostering happiness and peace for all beings.

Let us cultivate patience, courage, understanding, and determination to overcome life's challenges.

As we appreciate the beauty of the outdoors, may we recognize our connection to all life and strive to protect our natural world.

Guide us to be ever-prepared and committed to doing a good turn daily, embracing the spirit of loving our neighbors as ourselves.

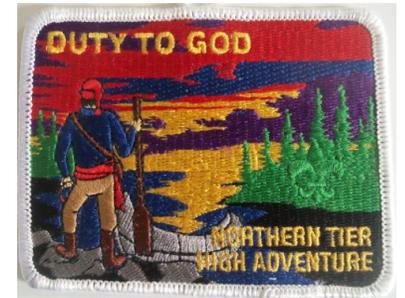
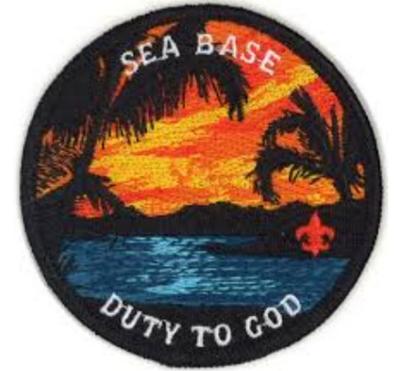
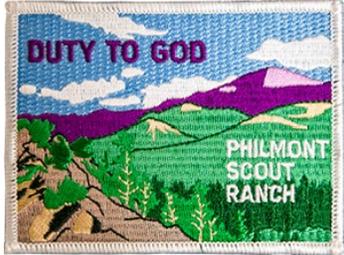
We offer these thanks with open hearts and minds.

High Adventure – Duty to God

Each of the 4 High Adventure Bases: Philmont, Sea Base, Northern Tier and Summit Bechtel recommend the crews to have 3 youth leadership positions, one of which is Chaplain Aide. The Chaplain Aide's responsibility is to encourage spiritual awareness and growth in the lives of the crew.

These High Adventure bases provides the Scouts the opportunity to earn the Duty to God Award. The requirements include

- Attending a spiritual service held by the camp or led by the youth
- Participate in daily or periodic devotionals, resources provided by the camp and geared to activities or experiences for the respective camp
- Participate in reflection talks like Roses, Thorns and Buds
- Discuss faith or spiritual traditions other than one's own
- Raise awareness of the Religious Emblems Award Program



Scouts Own Service

A Scout's Own service is a short, informal, themed gathering for Scouts to reflect on spirituality, values, and the Scout Law, using readings, songs, prayers, and stories, emphasizing inclusivity for all faiths and not replacing formal religious worship. It's designed to be inclusive, often lasting around 15 minutes, with a beginning, middle (theme exploration), and end, fostering personal reflection and connection to Scouting principles, and is typically planned by Scouts or leaders.

Date:	Sunday, 12/14/25	Helper Survivor:	_____
Location:	Scout Hut	Helper Red-eyed Raven:	_____
Event:	December COH	Helper Goat:	_____
Leader:	_____	Helper Rocket Raccoon:	_____
		Helper Warboc:	_____
		Helper Coffee:	_____
		Helper Other:	_____
		Helper Other:	_____

Include Y/N	Possible Elements in Order of Service	Sequence Number in Order of Service	Reference	Assigned to
	Processional with flags			
	Call to Worship		Troop 9 Invocation (Formal)	
	Opening song		Holy Father	
	Opening prayer		Shanti Path (Hindu)	
	Responsive Reading		The Scout Oath	
	Prayer		Prayer for Traveler (Jewish)	
	Prayer		Prayer for Peace (Baha 'i)	
	Reading		Matthew 11: 2-11	
	Meditation		Native American Spiritual Reflection	
	Inspirational Message		<i>Maybe Just One More</i>	
	Prayer		Buddhist Prayer	
	Collection		World Friendship Fund	
	Closing Song		Sea Base Hymn	
	Closing Prayer		When Setting Out on a Journey (Muslim)	
	Benediction			

Words from the Founder – Scouts' Own

For an open Troop, or for Troops in camp, I think the **Scouts' Own should be open to all [faiths], and carried on in such a manner as to offend none.** There should not be any special form, but it should abound in the right spirit, and **should be conducted not from any ecclesiastical point of view, but from that of the boy.** Everything likely to make an artificial atmosphere should be avoided. We do not want a kind of imposed Church parade, but a voluntary uplifting of their hearts by the boys in thanksgiving for the joys of life, and a desire on their part to seek inspiration and strength for greater love and service for others.

A Scouts' Own should have as big an effect on the boys as any service in church, if in conducting the Scouts' Own we remember **that boys are not grown men,** and if we go by the pace of the youngest and most uneducated of those present. **Boredom is not reverence, nor will it breed religion.**

To interest the boys, the **Scout's Own must be a cheery and varied function. Short hymns (three verses are as a rule quite enough-never four);** understandable prayers; a good address from a man who really understands boys (a homily "talk" rather than an address), which grips the boys, and in which they may laugh or applaud as the spirit moves them, so that they take a real interest in what is said. **If a man cannot make his point to keen boys in ten minutes he ought to be shot! If he has not got them keen, it would be better not to hold a Scouts' Own at all.** -Lord Robert Baden-Powell



Smilin In The Shade – Duty to God in My Own Life

Vision - *Realize my Duty to God by enhancing Smilin V's outdoor Scouting experience through service and teamwork that grows a sense of fellowship and cultivates self-sustaining trees to create the opportunity for generational beauty.*

Texas EcoGrow, a commercial landscaper is donating the planting of 45 trees and below ground irrigation. The trees will be 30-gallon, 10ft tall Chinkapin Oaks and Cedar Elms. Smilin In The Shade is a fundraising initiative that allows us to expanded the number of trees even more, beyond the donation of 45 trees. Each planted tree with irrigation costs about \$600. Every dollar contributed to Smilin In The Shade goes directly to additional trees being planted.

In the second half of February, there will be a day of service and fellowship for us to support the tree planting by resoiling around the trees, back filling irrigation trenches and adding protective barriers around the trees.

Please consider a contribution to increase the number of trees beyond the initial 45 trees and come out to Smilin V in February to enhance one of our really cool Scouting spaces.



The poster features a background of light blue topographic lines. At the top center is a green silhouette of a tree. Below it, the text "SMILIN IN THE SHADE" is written in a bold, blue, sans-serif font, with a small blue "V" logo underneath. To the right of the title are three photographs: the top one shows a person in a large yellow Smilin V mascot costume with a child and an adult; the middle one shows a boy in a blue shirt and a girl in a grey shirt looking at a bow; the bottom one is a close-up of a pink and yellow daisy flower. On the left side, there is a QR code on a green square background. Below the QR code is a small icon of a leaf. At the bottom right, there are two logos: "TEXAS ECOGROW LLC" with a tree icon and "SCOUTING AMERICA CAPITOL AREA COUNCIL" with a circular logo featuring a tree and a sun.

SMILIN IN THE SHADE

V

Thanks to its generous donation, **Texas EcoGrow** will plant new native trees throughout camping and activity areas at our **Smilin V Scout Ranch** in Liberty Hill. In addition, Texas EcoGrow will provide and install irrigation to make sure these new trees survive their initial planting and grow into legacy trees that will benefit generations to come.

You can help maximize this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and make sure that Scouts and community youth groups visiting Smilin V in the future will enjoy shade during hot Texas summers, while also improving the local ecosystem in the surrounding Liberty Hill area. **Your tax deductible donation between now and February 14, 2026, will add more trees and directly benefit Central Texas youth, now and in the future.**

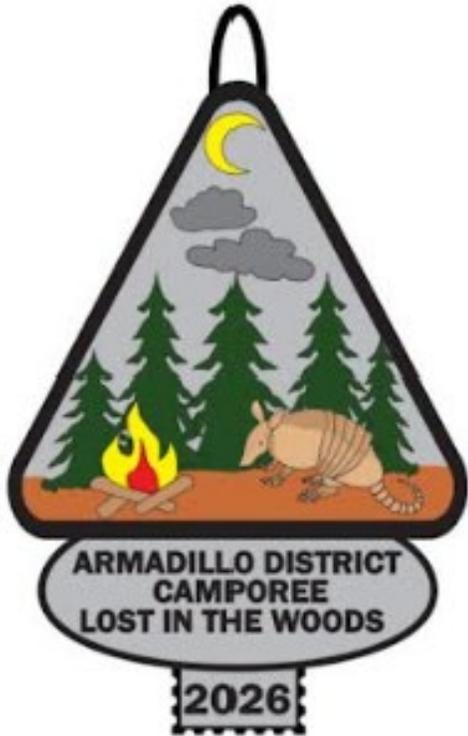
LEARN MORE, GIVE NOW
BY USING YOUR PHONE'S
CAMERA TO SCAN THE
CODE BELOW:

TEXAS ECOGROW LLC

**SCOUTING AMERICA
CAPITOL AREA
COUNCIL**

2026 ARMADILLO DISTRICT CAMPOREE

Lost In The Woods will be the theme for the 2026 Armadillo District Camporee at Camp Green Dickson from March 6-8, 2026.



The Patrols will work through activities like:

- Starting a fire that floats on water
- Quiz show with questions around water treatment, shelter, finding one's way, food prep, knots
- Orienteering course to find objects based on distance and coordinates
- First aid challenges solved for scenarios
- Making a signal flag, aka Patrol flag with an Armadillo on it
- Safe to eat or use
- Making an untieable knot
- Tent setup while blindfolded
- Shelter building with pretzels and marshmallows
- River crossing with limited options