



Association of Baptists for Scouting
P.O. Box 152079
Irving, TX 75015-2079

October 30, 2017

To: Baptist churches chartering Boy Scout / Cub Scout units

Re: "Family Scouting" and other ABS updates

Dear Pastor and/or Scout Leader:

We trust that you have heard of the recent decision of the Boy Scouts of America ("BSA") to make more provisions for girls and young ladies in new or expanded programs. The key information used in reaching this decision is the desire of families to have similar top quality programs that the BSA offers for their boys also available to the girls in the family. There has been a lot of "fake news" or false info floating around about these new aspects, so we wanted to provide some clarification, particularly from the perspective of a Baptist church utilizing BSA programs as part of their children, youth, and outreach ministries.

Cub Scout Packs (actually, their church chartered-partner) will have the opportunity to decide if they want their Pack (ages 6-10) to be an all-boy Pack, a boys-and-girls Pack, or an all-girl Pack. We suspect that most Packs will follow the model of a "family" or "boys-and-girls" Pack, but with separate all-boy dens and all-girl dens within the Pack.

As for the older children and youth, girls will NOT be part of Boy Scout troops. Rather, your church will have the opportunity to offer a BSA all-girls program for girls ages 11-17, which will have the same rank advancement names as the traditional Boy Scout program, hence the announcement that girls will have the opportunity to reach the highly-coveted and widely-recognized Eagle Scout rank. This all-girl program is still in the development stage and is to be available to your church by 2019.

Since a chartered-partner (church) owns its BSA units, it will certainly have the opportunity to decide which programs it will offer in order to provide the best outreach and ministry to the youth and families of its community. Each church will continue to have the opportunity to set its member and adult leader standards based on the tenets of its faith.

The Boy Scout brand continues to be the most highly recognized and respected youth development brand within the general public, making it an effective "welcome mat" for a church's ministry within the community. It is our prayer that Baptist churches will continue to use BSA programs to be as effective as possible in carrying out our Lord's command to "Go ye therefore" and make disciples, especially as we try to introduce Christ to the un-churched in our "Jerusalem(s)."

Premier Training for Baptist Adult Scout Leaders

July 15-21, 2018 is the date for the "Scouting Ministry in Baptist Churches" conference at the BSA's incredible Philmont Training Center in New Mexico. Participants in the conference will discover ways to strengthen and grow their individual and/or church's evangelism and outreach through Scouting. What a great way and place to better equip our volunteer leaders and pastors! More information can be found at www.philmontscoutranch.org (look under "Training Center" - week 6).

Highlights of Recent Activities of Association of Baptists for Scouting

For highlights of our recent activities of ministering at the National Scout Jamboree, providing New Testaments at the BSA High Adventure Bases, providing Chaplains for a variety of Scouting venues, and other news, see the link to our Fall, 2017 newsletter on our website: www.baptistscouters.org .

Thank you for everything you do to reach families with the love and the gospel of Jesus Christ!

T. S. "Ted" Spangenberg, Jr., President