

RELIGION IN LIFE PROGRAM



*The United Church
Canada*



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Membership in the Girl Guides of Canada and Scouts Canada is open to all girls and boys who wish to make the promise, regardless of race, colour or creed. The purpose of the *Guide/Scout* program is to assist girls and boys in character development by encouraging them to be responsible citizens of their country. An important part of the program is to assist in the spiritual growth of each girl or boy in their own religious community. Girl Guides of Canada and Scouts Canada uphold the principle that specific religious instruction is the responsibility of parents and religious authorities.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this program is to provide *Scouts* or *Guides* with an opportunity to explore their faith, to make it a basic part of their personal life, and to share it with others.

THE EMBLEM

The emblem consists of a great circle, the symbol of eternity. In the circle are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, Alpha and Omega, a symbol of God and a reminder that the worship and service of God form an essential part of life from beginning to end.

REQUIREMENTS

The requirements for the program differ in each faith and denomination and are prepared nationally by the church or religious bodies to suit their particular needs.

INSTRUCTION

It is the responsibility of the group-section committee and leadership team to arrange for instruction of candidates with the candidate's own spiritual leader or appointee.

PRESENTATION

Presentation of the emblem is made by the candidate's spiritual advisor, and can form an impressive part of a regular *Guide* or *Scout* meeting, a church service, or a special evening for parents/guardians.

STAGES

The Religion in Life program is in five progressive stages, colour-coded and adapted to the age groups concerned.

Stage 1 – Yellow Border (Cubs and Brownies)

Stage 2 – Green Border (Scouts and Guides)

Stage 3 – Blue Border (Venturers and Pathfinders)

Stage 4 – Red Border (Venturers/Rovers, Senior Branches)

Stage 5 – Purple Border (Adult leaders)

Candidates may start at any stage appropriate to their age and capabilities. Only one emblem – the latest stage earned – is worn.

WHERE OBTAINABLE

The emblem may be obtained from Council shops or provincial offices or through regular badge channels.

WHERE WORN

Girl Guides of Canada – *see Policy, Organization and Rules.*
Scouts Canada – *See By-Law, Policies and Procedures.*

OBJECTIVE

The Religion in Life program of the United Church of Canada for members of Scouts Canada and the Girl Guides of Canada is designed to complement Christian teaching already happening in a young person's life and to integrate this learning into the Scouting and Guiding programs. Through the youth's involvement in the program and especially through a close relationship to a congregation, it is expected that the Scout/Guide will understand more about the United Church and will grow in Christian faith and service.

Participation in regular church program and worship is not a substitute for the Religion in Life Program.

GUIDELINES**Stage 1****Program Objectives****Exploring Faith**

- to enrich the participants' understanding of the life and work of Jesus
- to discover biblical stories of Jesus sharing meals with others

Growing Faith

- to consider the sacred aspects of eating together
- to connect the meals Jesus shared, the meals shared in our own lives, and the sacrament of communion
- to learn about hunger in your community

Sharing Faith

- to offer hospitality to others
- to practise gratitude at mealtime
- to develop an action plan to feed the hungry in your community

Stage 2**Program Objectives****Exploring Faith**

- to help the participants become more aware of the world around us and of God as its Creator
- to discover biblical stories of creation and passages praising God for creation
- to reflect on the differences between scientific theories and faith stories of the beginnings of the universe and to acknowledge the value of both

Growing Faith

- to study the impact of water in the world and in our faith tradition
- to learn about the practice of baptism in The United Church of Canada

- to consider the role of people in caring for the environment and ways of practising good stewardship
- to hear creation stories from another tradition

Sharing Faith

- to practise gratitude for the gift of creation and the many gifts of the earth
- to develop an action plan for environmental care and stewardship

Stage 3

Program Objectives

Exploring Faith

- to explore various genres of the Bible
- to become aware of what is contained in the two “Testaments”
- to learn about the origins of the Bible and how the canon was developed

Growing Faith

- to view the Bible as truthful in a non-literal way
- to understand the cycle of covenant-making and covenant-breaking that occurs in the relationship between God and people
- to acknowledge our own cycle of covenant-making and covenant-breaking with God

Sharing Faith

- to relate biblical teachings to current contexts and realities
- to practise gratitude for the gift of the Bible
- to develop an action plan for personal and communal engagement with the Bible

Stages 4 and 5

Program Objectives

Exploring Faith

- to learn about the Trinity: God the Creator, God the Christ and Redeemer, and God the Spirit and Sustainer
- to become aware of the structure of The United Church of Canada

Growing Faith

- to gain some basic knowledge about other monotheistic faiths (e.g., Judaism and Islam) and determine the commonalities and differences between them and Christianity
- to understand something of the work of the Holy Spirit in the world
- to study the United Church’s involvement in some socio-political issues

Sharing Faith

- to reflect on one’s own faith and how it affects behaviour and thinking about life’s complex issues
- to appreciate the significance of church membership
- to develop an action plan for engagement with a political or social issue

For program resources, please visit <http://www.united-church.ca/files/allages/youth/scouts/rl.pdf>