

# P.R.A.Y. Program Start-Up Kit

Thank you for your interest in the *P.R.A.Y.* program.

This Start-up Kit will help you become familiar with the P.R.A.Y. Series and present options to you so that you can be intentional as you adapt the program for your situation. It is critical that the P.R.A.Y. program be transformed from a “program” into a “ministry.” A wealth of information is available to you, but don’t forget that P.R.A.Y. is only a phone call away. Give us a call on our toll free number 1-800-933-7729 and we would be glad to answer your questions or brainstorm with you. We are here to support you.

Thank you for your ministry with children and youth!

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# What is the P.R.A.Y. Program?

## The P.R.A.Y. Program...

- Is a religious emblems program created by the national church bodies cooperating with P.R.A.Y. It is a CHURCH program, approved for use by the national youth agencies.
- Includes awards/emblems that are approved for wear on the official uniforms of the Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of the U.S.A., Camp Fire USA, and American Heritage Girls.
- Is used by members of Protestant and Independent Christian churches.
- Is designed for boys and girls in grades one through twelve. All church youth (whether or not they belong to a scouting group) are eligible to participate.
- Is an interdenominational resource, which means that all denominations use the standard curriculum. The curriculum allows each church to introduce the unique characteristics of their denomination.
- Must be taught under the auspices of the church. Students are required to present their work to the pastor for final approval. This does not mean that the pastor is the only one who can serve as counselor or teach a class. The pastor may appoint a parent, Sunday school teacher, or other lay leader in the church to serve as a P.R.A.Y. program counselor. But it is the pastor who approves the final work.
- Consists of four different programs based on grade level. These grade levels roughly correspond to the different ranks in the scouting programs, but since the P.R.A.Y. program is a program of the church, it goes strictly by grade level (not by rank).
- Offers an Adult Mentor component for parents. Parents may choose to serve as Mentors and be involved in the P.R.A.Y. program alongside their children.

# More Than Just an Award: P.R.A.Y. Programs as Christian Education and Outreach

Young people who participate in the P.R.A.Y. programs grow stronger in faith and in service to God. True, they receive an award, but they receive many more benefits that come from studying the Bible, working with an adult Christian, getting to know their pastor, and designing their own projects to reinforce Bible lessons.

## The P.R.A.Y. Programs mean...

- **Christian Education** – The P.R.A.Y. programs are Bible based curriculum that requires students to read scripture and answer questions about the Bible. The P.R.A.Y. program can support a congregation's Christian Education department.
- **Family Involvement** – Most church programs are very age segregated and separate the children and youth from the adults. The P.R.A.Y. programs help the family to interact together and to share their faith with each other. The P.R.A.Y. programs include an adult mentor component designed to strengthen intergenerational sharing between adult/parent and child. Families enjoy the time learning together about God. Parents are often surprised at how eager their children are to learn about God and to pray together as a family.
- **Getting to Know the Pastor** – Although the pastor isn't the one necessarily teaching the class, it is the pastor who reviews the students' work and gives final approval upon completion of the program. Students enjoy connecting with their pastor.
- **Service Projects** – Students are challenged to put their faith into action. They choose or design their own projects. Service projects are often targeted toward the family, congregation, and community. Here are some sample projects: planning a game night or special night for the family, cleaning the toys in the church nursery, working in a local food pantry, serving meals for the homeless, holding a toy drive for the church day care center, etc.
- **Community Outreach** – Congregations that promote their P.R.A.Y. program classes through the scouting community are reaching out to scouting families that may not have church homes. These parents want their children to earn their award, and in the process they discover how hungry their children are for the Gospel. The P.R.A.Y. program is a friendly, non-threatening way to get families into your church building and connected with your people. It can be an additional tool for your outreach ministry.
- **Real results and the Potential to Change Lives** – The P.R.A.Y. programs have helped families re-examine their priorities. Parents realize they need to take time for faith development, to pray with their children, to talk about God. As a result, parents also share how they have seen changes in their children and in the way family members interact with each other. Family members are closer to each other and to God.

## What others have said about the P.R.A.Y. Programs

- “We are not regular church goers, and this program has developed my daughter’s interest. I didn’t know how eager she was to learn about God.” – parent
- “I am very impressed with the material. I will likely use it as a discipleship curriculum for my church.” – Pastor
- “Through the God & Me program, my son and wife decided to be baptized into the church...Thank You!”
- “We feel more open and confident in discussing our faith and beliefs.” – parent
- “My son was able to forgive his step-father...which has brought all of us closer.” – parent
- “Once a family or individual from our scouting ministry visits our Church, they find something that ministers to their family here. Scouting remains our main outreach ministry and we continue to develop nurturing ministries to keep those families coming back again and again.” – Pastor
- Garrett loved reading his Bible and learning more about God. We all agreed to find time for a family devotion time as a result. – Arlington, TX
- “I learned a lot of Bible stories. I like looking things up in my Bible!” – Recipient of the *God and Family* award
- What I remember best was going to the nursing home. It was fun, and I felt like I was doing something to help out.” – Recipient of the *God and Church* award
- I really didn’t know if I could learn the Lord’s Prayer, but I just kept saying “I think I can” and I did! I liked learning about God. – Recipient of the *God and Me* award

## P.R.A.Y. Program Eligibility Guidelines

Girls and boys in grades 1-12 associated with Protestant and Independent Christian Churches are eligible to participate in the P.R.A.Y. program series. Students are required to have original workbooks and present their work to the pastor for final approval. The program must be completed under the auspices of the church.

- All youth – even if they do not belong to a scouting group – are eligible. This means that Sunday school children and youth group members may earn this award.
- The P.R.A.Y. awards have been approved for wear on the official uniforms of the Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of the U.S.A., Camp Fire USA, and American Heritage Girls.
- The P.R.A.Y. Program is developed by Protestant and Independent Christian churches cooperating with P.R.A.Y. The program requires that the candidate present their work to the pastor (not a parent or scout leader) for final approval.
- Children are not required to have official membership in a congregation, but they are required to complete the work under the auspices of the church and present their work to a pastor for final approval.
- Children are required to have original workbooks. The curriculum is copyrighted. Please do not copy the workbooks. All candidates must complete the core requirements outlined in the booklets.
- Any program that does not fall within these eligibility guidelines must contact the P.R.A.Y. office. Exceptions must be approved in advance by P.R.A.Y.

# The Role of the Pastor in the P.R.A.Y. Program

Pastors are often “caught off guard” when Scouts approach them about earning their religious award. Sometimes a pastor doesn’t know about the P.R.A.Y. program until a Scout wants to earn it. What is the role of the pastor in the P.R.A.Y. series? Is the pastor automatically the counselor? What are realistic expectations for the pastor when setting up the program? What options do pastors have?

## ***What is the pastor required to do?***

The P.R.A.Y. program requires pastors to oversee the program and conduct a final review with the participants. As a church program, the P.R.A.Y. program requires the signature of the pastor – not the parent, unit leader, or instructor. This is to ensure that candidates complete the P.R.A.Y. program under the auspices of the church and meet with the pastor in order for them to receive their church badge.

## ***What do most pastors do?***

Most pastors choose to get more involved than just interviewing the children at the end of the program. There is a wide range of involvement by pastors, but it basically boils down to whether pastors prefer that the young people work individually at home with their parents or whether the young people attend a P.R.A.Y. program class at church.

## ***How are pastors involved when the candidate works at home to complete the requirements?***

Pastors typically meet with the family prior to starting the curriculum. They walk through the requirements, explain their expectations, make suggestions, and set deadlines. Depending on their preference (or depending on the family and their church background), pastors may require candidates to meet with them after every section, but many just require a mid-point check up or a final review at the end of the program. In this type of set up, the time with the pastor is not so much instruction, as it is discussion and reviewing the candidate’s work. Regardless of how many (or how few) meeting times, families have appreciated this one-on-one time with the pastor and the personal investment in their child’s faith development.

## ***How are pastors involved when the church offers a P.R.A.Y. program class for young people?***

Sometimes pastors have taught the class themselves. This is most often the case with small classes or when an established group (such as a Brownie Troop or Cub Scout Den) approaches their pastor. With the God and Church program for grades 6-8, some pastors have incorporated the curriculum into their confirmation classes so that all confirmants are eligible to receive the award.

When a church sponsors more than one P.R.A.Y. class (either they offer more than one level or their enrollment is so big that they have multiple classes at each level), the pastor most often approves a coordinator who handles the scheduling, supplies, adult volunteers, paperwork, etc. The pastor can then choose the level of involvement, which can range from visiting different classes, teaching a session, or attending the “party” at the end of the program. The very least that the pastor would have to do is conduct the final review at the end of the program and get to know the children and connect with them in this way.

### ***How do pastors conduct the final review?***

Some pastors interview each child. Others do the final review in a group setting with the entire class. The purpose of the final review is not to quiz or “stump” the children, but to dialogue with them and help them express what they have learned. The final review is not a “test” but rather an opportunity for the child to get to know the pastor and have a conversation on faith issues at the child’s level.

### ***How do pastors know what to ask during the final review?***

If the pastor hasn’t been involved in teaching the children, there are sample questions available online at [www.praypub.org](http://www.praypub.org). The pastor should ask the counselor/teacher if there are any particular lessons or insights that should be brought up during the review.

### ***How can pastors build a P.R.A.Y. ministry or Scouting ministry in their church?***

The pastor is a key person in interpreting the Scouting program as “ministry,” but the entire congregation – from the church council to the building committee to the newsletter publisher to the outreach committee – must embrace this concept.

Visit [http://www.praypub.org/god\\_country/start\\_up\\_kit\\_10.htm](http://www.praypub.org/god_country/start_up_kit_10.htm) to read how all the components of the church are involved in a Scouting ministry.

## One-on-one versus Classroom Instruction

The age-old debate about the P.R.A.Y. program is whether or not to require one-on-one instruction with the pastor/counselor, or to teach it in a classroom setting to a large group of children. There is no “right” or “wrong” way to do it. Here are some thoughts on this issue.

There is no better motivation for a young person than having the pastor personally involved in teaching the P.R.A.Y. programs on an individual basis. The P.R.A.Y. program will have the biggest impact in this one-on-one setting.

Visit [http://www.praypub.org/god\\_country/god\\_and\\_country\\_feature\\_01.htm](http://www.praypub.org/god_country/god_and_country_feature_01.htm) to read the testimony of Rev. Dr. William H. Willimon, a United Methodist Bishop.

And at the younger levels, one-on-one instruction can also make for great family ministry. Children will complete the bulk of the curriculum at home with the help of the parents, and then bring their work to the pastor for review. Parents welcome the opportunity to share their faith with their children and are often surprised by their children’s eagerness to learn more about God. In larger congregations, this one-on-one approach may not be feasible. It is very time consuming and can limit the number of youth a pastor can teach. Scheduling can be an issue.

Offering structured classes requires more organization and adult volunteers. It requires lesson plans, craft supplies, and a 4 to 6 week time commitment for the younger levels and an 8 to 12 week time commitment for the older programs. But it also has the potential of attracting more youth and becoming an outreach ministry to Scouts in the community. Visit [http://www.praypub.org/god\\_country/start\\_up\\_kit\\_09.htm](http://www.praypub.org/god_country/start_up_kit_09.htm) to read testimonial from Buena Vista UMC. Structured classes do not necessarily eliminate parental involvement in the program. Pastors can choose to require parents to attend, and even require parents to complete the Adult Mentor curriculum. Some families need this type of structure in order to complete the program. A larger group setting also allows for greater synergy and peer learning and sharing.

Choosing to take the children through the program individually or offering structured classes depends on your individual situation. A pastor or congregation does not have to be pigeonholed into doing the P.R.A.Y. program one particular way. The P.R.A.Y. program is flexible and offers a myriad of choices to fit your circumstances and needs.

# Adult Mentor Program

Parents have the option of enrolling in the Adult Mentor Program. In this program, the parent is an active learning participant alongside the child. The parent would have lessons and projects to complete in the Mentor Workbook just like the child, and then both parent and child would work on the student curriculum together. The mentor program is designed to provide the adult/parent with additional opportunities to model his or her Christian faith and to help a young child talk about his or her belief in God.

## ***What is the difference between a “counselor” and a “mentor”?***

The *counselor* is the pastor (or other adult assigned by the pastor). The counselor serves as an instructor who gives assignments to the young people, and it is the young people who do all the work.

*Mentors* are parents who have chosen to work alongside their children on the P.R.A.Y. curriculum. Mentors are active learning participants (students) with lessons to complete in their own workbooks just like their children. Both mentors and children work under the supervision of the pastor or counselor.

## ***What are the Adult Mentor Workbooks like?***

The Adult Mentor Workbooks are designed to help parents focus on their faith and their relationship to their children. The lessons are patterned after the student curriculum so that the parents are studying the same topics and scripture as their children, but at an adult level. For example, in the God and Me program, when the children read the story in the Bible about Jesus blessing the children, they will talk about how they are important to Jesus and how they are loved by him. Their parents, on the other hand, may discuss other questions: Have you ever acted like the disciples? When has “important” work kept you away from your children? What can you do to bring your children closer to Christ? Children will understand how important it is to grow in faith when they see their parents doing their “homework” (reading the Bible and answering questions).

## ***How do you incorporate the Adult Mentor component into a program?***

Parents need to complete their work in the Adult Mentor Workbook prior to working with their children. After completing their own lesson, parents will then focus on helping their children complete their work in the Student Workbook.

Churches that offer P.R.A.Y. programs for children can encourage parents to serve as mentors. Parents are encouraged to attend classes with their children. At some point in the class, parents will meet separately to discuss the lessons in the Adult Mentor Workbook and share their thoughts with other parents.

## ***Can parents serve as both “counselors” and “mentors?”***

Yes, parents can “wear two hats” and serve as counselors and mentors. When the pastor asks the parents to work on the program with their children at home, the parents are in essence serving as counselors, i.e. they are “teaching” their children and helping them be successful in completing the requirements. At the same time, they can also choose to be “mentors.” Being a mentor is an entirely different role. A mentor has to answer questions and complete the requirements in the Adult Mentor Workbook. Parents who choose to participate in the Adult Mentor program are challenged to model their faith and share their faith with their children. They are showing their children that it is important even as an adult to always seek to grow in faith.

***Can the adult mentor pin be worn on the adult uniform?***

It depends on the youth agency. GSUSA and Camp Fire USA allow the pin to be worn on the uniform, but BSA does not (BSA permits the patch to be worn as a temporary patch, but not the pin).

***Does the Adult Mentor Program qualify an adult to receive the BSA universal religious square knot?***

No. The only way that an adult can receive the square knot is to be nominated for one of the national adult recognitions.

***What is the difference between the adult mentor pin and a national adult recognition?***

The mentor pin may be worn by parents who have successfully completed the Adult Mentor Program. This is a program for parents to work on while they lead their children through the P.R.A.Y. Series. There is an adult workbook that must be completed.

The Adult Recognition Awards are by nomination only (they are not work/study programs like the youth awards). These are honors given to worthy adults for their outstanding service to youth through both their church and one of the national youth agencies. Most of the awards require a minimum number of years of service. Recipients of these awards are unaware that they are being nominated: an outside party must nominate them to receive an award by submitting the required application, letters of recommendation and resume. Please check on specific eligibility requirements by visiting [http://www.praypub.org/promotional\\_adultnomination.htm](http://www.praypub.org/promotional_adultnomination.htm) and clicking on the appropriate adult brochure/nomination form.

## Setting Up a Class

There are numerous settings in which the P.R.A.Y. program may be completed. You may be working with one child or with twenty, or you may be conducting a class for one or more mentor pairs. Your class may be made up of youth from one denomination or many. You may be meeting once or twice a week or only once a month. It is impossible to provide a separate counselor guide for each situation, and we would not want to suggest only one format in which the program could be completed. Therefore, the Counselor's Manual should be a guide that you can use and adapt as needed. We also encourage you to visit [www.praypub.org](http://www.praypub.org) for more information and program resources.

Here are some basic steps and items for your consideration to help you set up a class. Keep in mind that if you have been approached by a specific group, such as a Cub Scout Pack or a Brownie Troop, some of the following steps may already be decided and may not be applicable in your situation.

- ❑ **Decide which program(s) you will offer.** If this is your first time to offer the P.R.A.Y. program, it may be a good idea to start with just one or two programs the first year and expand it from there. Some congregations alternate the programs, i.e. one year they offer God and Me, and the next year they offer God and Family. Take into consideration the number of potential youth and the number of adult volunteers needed to run such a program. It is a good idea to start small. A quality program will grow quickly just by word of mouth.
- ❑ **Choose the dates.** The number of class sessions will depend on the program that you are offering. Sample schedules are in each Counselor Manual. They are also available online. These schedules consist of an introductory session and one meeting for lesson. Please feel free to modify these schedules to fit your particular situation. Do not overlook other important dates: teacher training, registration deadline, final review with the pastor, a party (optional), and the award ceremony.
- ❑ **Consider whom you will invite to participate in your class.** Will it involve only youth from Boy Scouts of America? Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.? Will it be open to all youth from your church? Your community? Other denominations? Visit [http://www.praypub.org/god\\_country/start\\_up\\_kit\\_04.htm](http://www.praypub.org/god_country/start_up_kit_04.htm) for eligibility requirements.
- ❑ **Publicize your class.** Find out the deadlines to submit articles for your church newsletter, your local council newsletter, or other appropriate publications. Be sure you make these deadlines. Visit [http://www.praypub.org/god\\_country/me/god\\_me2.htm](http://www.praypub.org/god_country/me/god_me2.htm) for sample articles and church bulletin inserts.
- ❑ **Make a budget.** Your budget will need to include the costs of booklets (each child is required to have a Student Workbook), awards, and supplies. Some churches charge a fee to cover all these costs. Others find a sponsor (such as a men's or women's group) or require each family to purchase the book and awards on their own. (In some cases, the Cub Scout Pack or Girl Scout Troop for example will pay for the cost of the award for their members.) Decide what is best for your situation and plan accordingly. Visit [http://www.praypub.org/view\\_pricing.htm](http://www.praypub.org/view_pricing.htm) for current costs.
- ❑ **Recruit and train adult counselors/teachers.** Find someone who will be in charge of teaching the curriculum and/or coordinating the teachers (depending on the size of your program), and someone who will serve as a registrar (to process the paperwork, follow through with parents, etc.). Although you will

undoubtedly be able to recruit parents to assist with the lessons, please do not wait to find your core teacher and your registrar.

- ❑ **Review lesson plans in Counselor Manuals and make a Class Schedule with Assignments.** The Counselor Manuals for each level contain lesson plans. Review these lesson plans and decide what will be done in class and what will be assigned to be completed at home. Indicate these assignments on the Class Schedule/Assignment sheet for distribution to students. A sample schedule sheet is provided in the back of each of the Counselor Manuals and also on the P.R.A.Y. web site.
- ❑ **Review the supply list and gather materials.** The lesson plans in the Counselor Manuals include supply lists. Review these lesson plans and the corresponding supply lists and start gathering some of the materials (e.g. pizza boxes, cardboard circles, etc.).
- ❑ **Consider if you will offer the Adult Mentor component.** Parents have the option of enrolling as Mentors and working side by side their children in the program. The mentor completes the Mentor Workbook and attends meetings with the student. If you will be working with one or more mentor pairs, you will need to become familiar with the material in the Mentor Workbooks. You may also want to build time into your schedule to allow mentors to meet together to discuss the questions raised in their workbooks. Visit [http://www.praypub.org/god\\_country/start\\_up\\_kit\\_07.htm](http://www.praypub.org/god_country/start_up_kit_07.htm) for more information on what a mentor is.
- ❑ **Order booklets.** If your local Scout Shop does not carry the P.R.A.Y. booklets, you can order booklets directly from P.R.A.Y. Please allow enough time for delivery via media mail through the post office.
- ❑ **Order the recognitions and plan an award ceremony.** After the candidates have completed the requirements and a pastor has reviewed their work, it is time to order their awards and plan the presentation ceremony. The Application Order Form is found in the back of the P.R.A.Y. booklets. This is the form that needs to be submitted to P.R.A.Y.

## Scouting as Ministry: A Testimonial from Buena Vista UMC

[Reprinted from the May 2001 Youthscape Newsletter]

Rev. Tucker Lewis is pastor of a United Methodist congregation in Buena Vista, Georgia. Today his congregation has a strong scouting ministry, but it wasn't always that way. Rev. Lewis remembers when he first started at the church in June 1998. He found kids running through the building one evening and that is how he discovered that he had two different scouting groups meeting in the building.

Rev. Lewis approached his board about supporting these scouting groups and urged the congregation to view scouting as "ministry" rather than as a group that simply used their building. And that is exactly what Buena Vista United Methodist Church has done. The congregation has embraced scouting and great things have happened:

- In September 1998, there were 25 children involved in scouting programs. Today, there are 62.
- In September 1998, there were two scouting units; today there are 6 scouting units including Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, and Cadette, Junior, Brownie, and Daisy Girl Scouts.
- On Scout Sunday in 1999, the attendance was 78. On Scout Sunday in 2000, the attendance was 83. This year this year there was an attendance of 112.
- In 1999, 1 scouting unit received the Bishop's Award of Excellence as an outstanding scouting unit within United Methodism. In 2001, 3 units will receive the award.
- In 1998-1999, 4 scouts participated in the Religious Awards Program. In 2000-2001, over 50 young people participated.
- Since June 1998, 25 people have become members or regular visitors of Buena Vista UMC because of Scouting. Another 5 people have become members or regular visitors because they have seen the activity and involvement of Buena Vista UMC in the lives of children and wanted to become a part of a Church which opens its doors like they do.
- Since June 1998, average worship attendance has grown from 35-40 to its present level of 70-80, in part, because of the church's involvement in scouting.

Tina Penick is an adult Girl Scout leader who was introduced to Buena Vista United Methodist Church because of Girl Scouting. Tina became the leader of the Junior Girl Scout Troop which met at Buena Vista UMC. Here's her story:

"I went to the church and met Tucker, not knowing who he was, and introduced myself as the new Girl Scout leader. And he gave me a key! When Rev. Lewis explained that their congregation looked upon scouting as part of their ministry, I didn't know what to think. I was a little uncomfortable. But I started meeting some of the older ladies of the church. They were so welcoming and sweet. They weren't pushy, which really surprised me. I would always see them around. They were great! They supported our cookie

sales and even purchased our Troop flag. I feel like they really care about what happens to the girls, just as much as I do. They invited me to the United Methodist Woman's group called Circle of Friends. I wasn't even a member of the church and they invited me. They always treated me as a member! My father was in the military and we moved around a lot. My family never really attended church and I didn't have a whole lot of exposure. But [here at Buena Vista UMC] I always felt loved and a part of the church!"

Rev. Lewis had the privilege of baptizing Tina Penick and her daughter last fall and bringing them into Church membership.

As Rev. Lewis explains, "Of course, there are programs and activities at our Church outside of scouting. And once a family or individual from our scouting ministry visits our Church, they find something that ministers to their family here. Scouting remains our main outreach ministry and we continue to develop nurturing ministries to keep those families coming back again and again."

# Incorporating Scouting Programs as Ministry

## 1. Church Board

- Understand how the youth agency programs can be a part of youth ministry
- Articulate the benefits to working with youth agencies
- Incorporate building relationships with the local councils into the church plan
- Assign responsibilities for these objectives to the appropriate groups

## 7. Pastors

- Encourage committees and departments to include scouting programs in their planning
- Help teach P.R.A.Y. classes and conduct the final review session
- Use scouting groups to make the church more visible in the community

## 8. Christian Education

- Offer "P.R.A.Y." classes to all children and youth (not just Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts)
- Encourage adults to participate in the P.R.A.Y. Mentor program
- Display P.R.A.Y. program service projects (use bulletin boards, table top displays, banners, etc.)
- Help plan devotions and worship services for camping and other events
- Help scouts understand and fulfill their "duty to God"
- Help young people connect the values they learn in scouting with the Bible lessons they learn in Sunday School

## 9. Worship Committee

- Plan special worship services for Boy Scout and Girl Scout Sundays
- Recognize P.R.A.Y. award recipients and present them with their awards during worship services

## 10. Men's and Women's Fellowship Groups

- Help sponsor a Boy Scout or Girl Scout Troop
- Help sponsor young people who want to earn a P.R.A.Y. award
- Provide service opportunities for troops
- Partner with a troop on a specific project

## 2. Building Committee

- Help coordinate scouting events and the church calendar
- List the services available to troops (meeting room, storage, etc.)
- List the responsibilities of the troop and what facilities require special permission

## 3. Outreach

- Invite scouts and their families to church events and worship services
- Connect the troop to the church as much as possible (make the church visible at all troop events)
- Invite members of the community to join the scout troop
- Volunteer to help with interfaith events for the local council (Ten Commandment Hikes, interfaith tours, Scout Sunday Celebrations, etc.)
- Publicize P.R.A.Y. classes and open them up to youth (and other scouts) in the community

## 4. Membership

- Identify adults to work with troops
- Encourage adults to share their talents with troops and to be resources for specific badges, career information, role models
- Invite scouting groups to special events
- Ask scouting groups to help with special events

## 5. Youth Group

- Invite members from the scouting troop to a special youth group event
- Bring the two groups together to work on the P.R.A.Y. programs
- Attend religious retreats and youth events together

## 6. Newsletter

- Publish names of P.R.A.Y. award recipients
- Publicize Interfaith events (Ten Commandment hikes, interfaith tours, Boy Scout Sunday/Sabbath Celebrations)
- Promote Scouting (Duty to God)
- Announce workshops and opportunities for adult leaders

**The P.R.A.Y. Program and the 40 Developmental Assets\* for Youth**

	<b>External Assets - Name and Definition</b>	<b>How the P.R.A.Y. Award Program Helps Build Assets</b>
<b>Support</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Family Support</b> - Family life provides high levels of love and support.</li> <li>2. <b>Positive family communication</b> - Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parents.</li> <li>3. <b>Other adult relationships</b> - Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults.</li> <li>4. <b>Caring neighborhood</b> - Young person experiences caring neighbors.</li> <li>5. <b>Caring school climate</b> - School provides a caring, encouraging environment.</li> <li>6. <b>Parent involvement in schooling</b> - Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Awards encourage family involvement in service projects.</li> <li>2. Mentor program encourages parents to share their faith with their children.</li> <li>3. Participants work with counselors and pastors.</li> <li>4. Participants can be caring neighbors by doing service projects for people in their neighborhood</li> </ol>
<b>Empowerment</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. <b>Community values youth</b> - Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth.</li> <li>8. <b>Youth as resources</b> - Young people are given useful roles in the community.</li> <li>9. <b>Service to others</b> - Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week.</li> <li>10. <b>Safety</b> – Young person feels safe at home, at school, and in the neighborhood.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Participants are nurtured by troop leaders as well as by church leaders and are presented with their awards in front of their congregation and are honored for their achievements</li> <li>8. Awards require children to design meaningful service projects</li> <li>9. Awards encourage children to design service projects for their community</li> <li>10. Classes are often held in neighborhood congregations which are safe and nurturing environments</li> </ol>
<b>Boundaries and Expectations</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. <b>Family boundaries</b> - Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person's whereabouts.</li> <li>12. <b>School boundaries</b> - School provides clear rules and consequences.</li> <li>13. <b>Neighborhood boundaries</b> - Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behavior.</li> <li>14. <b>Adult role models</b> - Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior.</li> <li>15. <b>Positive peer influence</b> - Young person's best friends model responsible behavior.</li> <li>16. <b>High expectations</b> - Parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11-12 Award programs provide opportunities to discuss respect and obedience (not only HOW we should behave but WHY).</li> <li>14. Counselors and mentors are encouraged to model Christ-like behavior</li> <li>15. Awards provide the opportunity to discuss friendship and how to exert positive peer pressure</li> <li>16. Counselors, mentors, and pastors have high expectations for young people.</li> </ol>
<b>Constructive Use of Time</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>17. <b>Creative activities</b> - Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts.</li> <li>18. <b>Youth programs</b> - Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school or in the community.</li> <li>19. <b>Religious community</b> - Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution.</li> <li>20. <b>Time at home</b> - Young person is out with friends "with nothing special to do," two or fewer nights per week.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>17. Awards encourage the creative expression of faith through music, drama and art</li> <li>18. Awards encourage involvement in scouting programs.</li> <li>19. Awards encourage attendance in Sunday School, worship services, and other areas of congregational life</li> <li>20. Awards require independent work at home</li> </ol>

	<b>Internal Assets – Name and Definition</b>	
<b>Commitment to Learning</b>	21. <b>Achievement motivation</b> - Young person is motivated to do well in school. 22. <b>School engagement</b> - Young person is actively engaged in learning. 23. <b>Homework</b> - Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day. 24. <b>Bonding to school</b> - Young person cares about her or his school. 25. <b>Reading for pleasure</b> - Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.	21-25 Awards require a great deal of motivation. The motivation and satisfaction can spill over in other areas of recipient's life.
<b>Positive Values</b>	26. <b>Caring</b> - Young person places high value on helping other people. 27. <b>Equality and social justice</b> - Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty. 28. <b>Integrity</b> - Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs. 29. <b>Honesty</b> - Young person "tells the truth even when it is not easy." 30. <b>Responsibility</b> - Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility. 31. <b>Restraint</b> - Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.	26. Awards require participants to seek ways to help others. 27. Participants study the example Jesus set for us in reaching out to meet real needs. 28. Awards require that participants write a "statement of belief" and an action plan for their future. 29-31. Honesty, responsibility, and restraint are the outgrowth of the Christian life style.
<b>Social Competencies</b>	32. <b>Planning and decision making</b> - Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices. 33. <b>Interpersonal competence</b> - Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills. 34. <b>Cultural competence</b> - Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds. 35. <b>Resistance skills</b> - Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations. 36. <b>Peaceful conflict resolution</b> - Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.	32. Award programs encourage young people to make choices and plan ahead in order to complete the requirements 33. Participants who enroll in P.R.A.Y. Program classes will meet new friends. 34. Participants are challenged to expand their concept of friends to include others. 35. Award programs help build resistance skills by providing opportunities to talk about how faith impacts our choices 36. Participants are taught to "seek first the Kingdom of God."
<b>Positive Identity</b>	37. <b>Personal power</b> - Young person feels he or she has control over "things that happen to me." 38. <b>Self-esteem</b> - Young person reports having a high self-esteem. 39. <b>Sense of purpose</b> - Young person reports that "my life has a purpose." 40. <b>Positive view of personal future</b> - Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future.	37. Participants learn that they can do "all things through Christ who strengthens [them]." 38. Participants are special: they are honored by their congregation in a special award ceremony for their achievements. 39. Participants learn that God has a purpose for their lives. 40. God's love and grace gives young people optimism for their future.

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# GOD AND ME (Grades 1-3)

## Curriculum Goals:

- To provide an opportunity for young people and families to explore their faith together
- To help children realize that God is active in every part of their lives
- To help children know that Jesus is their best friend
- To memorize the Lord's Prayer

## General Description

The *God and Me* curriculum is designed to help children become best friends with Jesus and tell their story of "God and Me" together. Children will tell their story of "God and Me" by starting with the creation story. Children will learn that God is their Creator and that God calls them by name, and they will give praise to God. Their story will continue as they learn of God's love through Jesus. As they tell parallel stories of their own birth and the birth of Jesus, they will proclaim that Jesus was born to be their Savior. Their story will grow as children learn that God wants them to pray. Children will be encouraged to talk and listen to God as they share from their heart. Their story of "God and Me" will wrap up with the parable of the lost sheep. As children learn to lean on God as their Good Shepherd, they will be challenged to reach out and be "good shepherds" to those around them.

## GAMEBox

Children will make a game in each lesson and keep their games in a GAMEBox (**G**od **A**nd **M**e **E**xploring **BOX**). These games will reinforce the Bible lessons and provide opportunities for families to explore God's love together.

## Outline:

### **Introduction**

Jesus Blesses the Children – Matthew 19:13-15

**Section 1: God Created Me** - Children will study the creation story and learn that God was pleased with all creation. They will acknowledge God as Creator and give praise to God.

- God Said That It Was Good – Genesis 1:1 – 2:3
- God Calls Me by Name - Isaiah 43:1-2 & 4
- Praise God! - Isaiah 44:23

**Section 2: Jesus is God's Gift to Me** - Children will learn of God's love through Jesus. As they tell parallel stories of their own birth and the birth of Jesus, they will proclaim that Jesus was born to be their Savior.

- Jesus Is Born - Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-34; Luke 2:1-20; Matthew 2:2-12
- Jesus Was Born to Be a Savior - John 3:16

**Section 3: I Can Talk with God** - Children will learn how important prayer was to Jesus and that God wants them to pray. They will learn four parts of prayer to help them share their thoughts with God. Children will be required to memorize the Lord's Prayer.

- Jesus Prays - Mark 1:35-37
- The Lord's Prayer - Matthew 6:9-13

- God Talks to Samuel - 1 Samuel 3:1-10

**Section 4: Because God Cares for Me, I Can Care for Others** - As children learn to lean on God as their Good Shepherd, they will be challenged to reach out and be “good shepherds” to those around them.

- Jesus Is the Good Shepherd - Matthew 18:12-14
- Jesus Is a Friend to All - Luke 19:1-10

### **Schedule**

A typical schedule for completing the God and Me curriculum might include five different sessions (an introductory meeting plus four sessions to complete the four lessons).

### **Eligibility Guidelines**

Girls and boys in grades 1, 2 & 3 are eligible to participate in the *God and Me* program even if they do not belong to a Girl Scout, Boy Scout or Camp Fire group (church youth and Sunday School members are eligible to participate in this program). Each participant must have his or her own copy of the Student Workbook. A pastor's signature is required on the application/order form.

### **Adult Mentor Program**

Parents have the option of enrolling in the God and Me Adult Mentor Program. In this program, the parent is an active learning participant alongside the child. The parent would have lessons and projects to complete in the Mentor Workbook just like the child, and then both parent and child would work on the student curriculum together. The mentor program is designed to provide the adult with additional opportunities to model his or her Christian faith and to help a young child talk about his or her belief in God.

### **Materials Available:**

#33604 - God and Me Student Workbook - required booklet for each child

#33603 - God and Me Counselor Manual - resource guide for the pastor/counselor

#33606 - God and Me Adult Mentor - optional program for parents if they want to participate in the program alongside their children

Order these booklets online at [www.praypub.org](http://www.praypub.org) or call 1-800-933-7729.

### **Awards**

Students must complete all the requirements before ordering any awards. The last page in the Student Workbook is the Award Application Form. This form must be submitted to P.R.A.Y. (awards are not available in local scout shops).

Visit [http://www.praypub.org/god\\_country/me/god\\_me4.htm](http://www.praypub.org/god_country/me/god_me4.htm) to view the awards.

The following items are available for the adult leading the program. These items may be purchased in advance so that the counselor may wear them while teaching the class.

#001MC – God and Me Counselor Patch

#002M8 – God and Me Counselor Pin

# GOD AND FAMILY (Grades 4-5)

## Curriculum Goals:

- To provide an opportunity for young people and families to explore their faith together
- To learn six ways of strengthening families through faith
- To help families grow in God's love
- To memorize the Ten Commandments

## General Description

The God and Family curriculum is designed to help youth understand the importance of family and God's role in a healthy family. The God and Family Program provides an opportunity for young people and their families to explore their faith together. Children will read about different families in the Bible, which can teach them about God's plan for strengthening families. To remember these lessons, children will compare families and "pizza." The six steps for making pizza will give students a concrete, "hands-on" model on which to build their understanding of God's love for their families. They will make a pizza as they study how families can grow together in God's love, and they will choose "family projects" to be done with their family at home.

## Outline:

### **Introduction**

Joshua's Family Will Serve God – Joshua 24:14-15

### **Step 1: Crust-Foundation – We are God's Family**

Every pizza needs a crust or foundation. Families need foundations, too. Students will read passages from Deuteronomy and Matthew to learn how families need to build their foundations on God and on God's love.

- God's Great Big Family – Deuteronomy 6:4-8
- New Family in Christ – Matthew 28:1-10; John 3:16

### **Step 2: Sauce – Family Heritage, Spiritual Heritage**

Every pizza has sauce (which has simmered over time). Like the sauce, a family's heritage grows over time. A family's heritage, especially its Christian heritage, is an important part of its identity. Students will learn about Ruth (how she came to faith through marriage) and Jesus (how he was brought up in the faith from infancy on) and realize that even though our faith journeys may differ, our faith in Christ is the same.

- Ruth – Ruth 1:1-18
- Mary, Joseph, and Jesus – Luke 2:21-24, 40

### **Step 3: Toppings – Our Talents and Gifts Strengthen Our Families**

The toppings on a pizza make each pizza unique. Like the toppings, the individual members of a family bring unique gifts and talents that strengthen and make their family special. Students will read about Moses and Aaron, two brothers with very different gifts, and Timothy, a young man with the gift of faith. Students will be challenged to name their own gifts and the special gifts in each member of their family.

- Moses & Aaron – Exodus 4:10-17, 27-31, 17:8-13
- Timothy – 2 Timothy 1:1-7, 3:14-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:1-2, 6

#### **Step 4: Cheese – In God’s Family We’re Loved No Matter What! Because We’re Loved, We Follow Rules**

The cheese on a pizza covers everything and holds it together. Families need to be held together, too. Christian rules and guidelines can help families relate to each other and live together as God’s family. Students will study Jesus lost in the temple and the parable of the prodigal son and discuss WHY we need rules. They will then be required to memorize the Ten Commandments.

- Mary, Joseph, and Jesus – Luke 2:41-52
- Prodigal Son – Luke 15:11-32
- 10 Commandments – Exodus 20:1-17; Deuteronomy 5:6-21

#### **Step 5: Bake – Being in God’s Family Helps Us When Things Are Tough**

When pizza comes out of a hot oven, it’s better than ever! Families can be like pizza: by relying on God, families can come through the heat of tough times and be even stronger. Students will study Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the fiery furnace, and Paul and Silas in prison, and be challenged to name the “faith tools” that can help their families in tough times.

- Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego – Daniel 3
- Paul and Silas – Acts 16:19-34

#### **Step 6: Eat, Share, Enjoy! – In God’s Family, We Share as a Response to God’s Love**

Pizza tastes good: it nourishes our bodies and satisfies our hunger. Pizza is fun to share: everybody loves a pizza party. Families are like pizza: they need to provide spiritual nourishment for family members, and they need to share the good news of Jesus Christ with those around them. Students will read about the feeding of the five thousand and the Great Commission to learn the importance of sharing God’s love with other people.

- Boy who shared his lunch – John 6:1-15
- Apostles – Matthew 28:16-20

#### **Schedule**

A typical schedule for completing the God and Family curriculum might include seven different sessions (an introductory meeting plus six sessions to complete the six lessons).

#### **Eligibility Guidelines**

Girls and boys in grades 4 & 5 are eligible to participate in the God and Family program even if they do not belong to a Girl Scout, Boy Scout or Camp Fire group (church youth and Sunday School members are eligible to participate in this program). Each participant must have his or her own copy of the student workbook. A pastor’s signature is required on the application/order form.

#### **Adult Mentor Program**

Parents have the option of enrolling in the God and Family Adult Mentor Program. In this program, the parent is an active learning participant alongside the child. The parent would have lessons and projects to complete in the Mentor Workbook just like the child, and then both parent and child would work on the student curriculum together. The mentor program is designed to provide the adult with additional opportunities to model his or her Christian faith and to help a young child talk about his or her belief in God.

**Materials Available:**

#33597 - God and Family Student Workbook - required booklet for each child

#33598 - God and Family Counselor Manual - resource guide for the pastor/counselor

#33595 - God and Family Adult Mentor - optional program for parents if they want to participate in the program alongside their children

Booklets may be ordered online at [www.praypub.org](http://www.praypub.org) or call 1-800-933-7729. They may also be available at your local council store.

**Awards**

Students must complete all the requirements before ordering any awards. The last page in the Student Workbook is the Award Application Form. This form must be submitted to P.R.A.Y. (awards are not available in local scout shops).

Visit [http://www.praypub.org/god\\_country/family/god\\_fam\\_awards.htm](http://www.praypub.org/god_country/family/god_fam_awards.htm) to view the awards.

The following items are available for the adult leading the program. These items may be purchased in advance so that the counselor may wear them while teaching the class.

#001FC – God and Family Counselor Patch

#002F8 – God and Family Counselor Pin

# GOD AND CHURCH (Grades 6-8)

## Curriculum Goals:

- To strengthen young people's relationship with Christ
- To challenge young people to learn about and participate in the worship and ministry of the church
- To have young people make a plan for daily Bible reading and memorize a creed or statement of belief or passage of scripture
- To provide the opportunity for young people to experience the joy of serving others

## General Description

The *God and Church* program will lead young people on a journey. It will be a faith journey with three parts: meeting Jesus, worshiping God, and witnessing and ministering for Christ. Participants will create either a video or a photo album to share what they have learned on their faith journeys. Young people will have the opportunity to work with their pastor or other Christian adult as they study the church's structures and objectives and participate in service projects that will give them a better understanding of the mission of the church.

## Outline:

### **Introduction**

God Promises to be with Joshua as Joshua Leads the People of God into the Promised Land  
– Joshua 1:1-9

## **UNIT I – MY JOURNEY: MEETING CHRIST**

### **Lesson 1: Meeting Jesus, the Person**

Students will be challenged to see Jesus as a real person who shared our humanity. They will study scripture to understand *why* it is important that Jesus was human and become familiar with major events in the life of Jesus.

### **Lesson 2: Meeting Jesus, the Son of God**

Jesus is more than just an historical figure. Jesus was fully divine. Students will study what Jesus said about his true identity and read the testimonies of people in the Bible to understand that Jesus is the Son of God. They will hear the Good News of Jesus!

### **Lesson 3: Meeting Jesus, the Head of the Church**

Students will read about the birth of the church at Pentecost and learn that Jesus invites us into relationship with the church. They will then study the history of their own congregation and denomination and be required to memorize a creed, statement of belief, or significant passage of scripture.

### **Project: Daily Bible Reading**

The best way to get to know Jesus is to read the Bible. Students will read their Bible every day for at least three weeks. Their counselors will help them choose a plan.

## **UNIT II – MY JOURNEY: WORSHIPING GOD**

### **Lesson 4: Learning how Christ Worshiped God**

Students will discover how Jesus worshiped God in his everyday living. They will also learn about prayer.

### **Lesson 5: Exploring How My Congregation Worships God**

Students will explore the different worship opportunities in their congregation and attend a worship service with their counselor. They will study the different parts of a worship service and the special celebrations in the church year.

### **Project: Discovering How I Can Worship God**

Planning an outdoor worship service, visiting other churches, and preparing a devotion for a Sunday school class are some of the choices that students have for Project II.

## **UNIT III – MY JOURNEY: WITNESSING AND MINISTERING FOR CHRIST**

### **Lesson 6: Learning How Christ Witnessed and Ministered to Others**

Witnessing and ministering go hand in hand. Students will learn of Jesus' compassion for people who are hurting.

### **Lesson 7: Exploring How My Congregation Witnesses and Ministers to Others**

Students will study the structure of their congregation and learn about the outreach programs of their church.

### **Project: Discovering How I Can Witness and Minister to Others**

The final project requires young people to do service hours for their congregation as well as for their community. They are also required to invite a friend or acquaintance to church (or to participate in a service project).

### **Schedule**

The *God and Church* program can take from three to five months to complete. The program is very flexible and can be structured in a number of different ways. Ideally, the youth will complete this program in his or her own church under the supervision of his or her own pastor. However, it is possible to teach the course to a group of young people who belong to different denominations. In this situation, the individual churches should be contacted ahead of time. The pastors need to be invited to the class sessions that deal with specific church history and doctrine. The young people can benefit from this type of comparative study and learn to appreciate the unique aspects of their own denomination.

### **Interdenominational Resource**

The *God and Church* curriculum was developed without theological bias; yet it was designed to permit the introduction of particular theological and denominational viewpoints on the material being studied. It is the responsibility of the counselor to provide this specific instruction. Therefore all students use the standard God and Church curriculum regardless of church membership.

It is at the *God and Church* level (when students study their specific denomination), that the following denominational logos are available on ¾" Pins to be pinned into the ribbon of the God & Church medallion: African Methodist Episcopal, Baptist, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Episcopal, Lutheran, Pentecostal, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Presbyterian Church in America, and United Methodist. Information on ordering these recognition items is contained in the Student Workbook. (Note: These denominational medals are available only at the *God and Church* level.)

### **Eligibility Guidelines:**

Girls and boys in grades 6-8 are eligible to participate in the *God and Church* program even if they do not belong to a Girl Scout, Boy Scout or Camp Fire group (youth group and Sunday School members are eligible to participate in this program). This program requires that students have original workbooks and present their work to the pastor for final approval.

### **Adult Mentor Program:**

The *God and Church* Adult Mentor program is an optional program for parents. Rather than having just their children go through the program by themselves, parents may choose to work on the program alongside their children. In the Adult Mentor program, parents have a workbook with lessons and projects to complete just like the child. Parents will be challenged to learn more about their faith and to talk about their faith with their children.

### **Materials Available:**

#33599 God and Church Student Workbook – required for each student  
#33600 God and Church Counselor Manual – resource guide for pastor/counselor  
#33596 God and Church Adult Mentor Workbook – optional program for parents if they want to participate in the program alongside their children

Booklets may be ordered online at [www.praypub.org](http://www.praypub.org) or call 1-800-933-7729. They may also be available at your local council store.

### **Awards**

Students must complete all the requirements before ordering any awards. The last page in the Student Workbook is the Award Application Form. This form must be submitted to P.R.A.Y. (awards are not available in local scout shops).

Visit [http://www.praypub.org/god\\_country/church/god\\_church4.htm](http://www.praypub.org/god_country/church/god_church4.htm) to view the awards.

The following items are available for the adult leading the program. These items may be purchased in advance so that the counselor may wear them while teaching the class.

#001CC – God and Church Counselor Patch

#002C8 – God and Church Counselor Pin

# GOD AND LIFE (Grades 9-12)

## Curriculum Goals:

To provide opportunities for young people to:

- Strengthen their relationship with Christ
- Be open to God's calling in their lives
- Make a plan for daily Bible reading
- Experience the joy of serving others
- Write a statement of commitment

## General Description

The God and Life curriculum is the final program in the P.R.A.Y. series. After being introduced to Jesus as their best friend (God and Me), learning how the family is to grow strong in God's love (God and Family), and studying the church as the body of Christ (God and Church), students in the God and Life program will seek to understand their call to a life of discipleship. The God and Life curriculum will focus on the life of the Apostle Paul as recorded in Acts 9:1-31. This is a brief account that describes how Paul encountered Christ and was changed forever. Five chronological "events" out of this story will be highlighted and used as the focus for the five different sections in this program. Each section will illustrate a key element in learning how to live one's life for Christ:

## Outline

### **Introduction**

Samuel is Called by God – 1 Samuel 3:1-10

### **Section 1: God Calls All Kinds of People**

Before his conversion, Paul persecuted Christians. God does not call perfect people. God calls ordinary people and transforms them.

### **Section 2: God Doesn't Expect Us to Do It On Our Own**

After his conversion, Paul was helped by Ananias and Barnabas. The Christian life needs the help and fellowship of Christian believers.

### **Section 3: Each of Us Must Make a Personal Response to the Call of God.**

After his encounter with Christ on the Damascus road, Paul was baptized and filled with the Holy Spirit. He responded and accepted God's call for his life. The Holy Spirit is at work in our lives – we just need to respond!

### **Section 4: God Gives Strength to Face Adversities.**

Paul led a difficult life: many people wanted him dead. God does not promise a life free from difficulty and suffering. On the contrary, the times of difficulty and suffering may strengthen our dependence on God and prepare us for greater service. God does not guarantee an easy life, but God does promise to be with us.

## **Section 5: God Can Accomplish Great Things Through Those Who are Willing to Do God's Will.**

Because of Paul, the church was strengthened and it grew in numbers. God can use each of us for God's purposes!

### **Schedule**

A typical schedule for completing the God and Life curriculum might include 11 different sessions (an introductory meeting plus ten sessions to complete the five lessons).

### **Eligibility Guidelines**

Youth in grades 9-12 are eligible to participate in the God and Life program even if they do not belong to a Girl Scout, Boy Scout or Camp Fire group (church youth and Sunday School members are eligible to participate in this program). Each participant must have his or her own copy of the student workbook. A pastor's signature is required on the application/order form.

### **Adult Mentor Program**

Parents have the option of enrolling in the God and Life Adult Mentor Program. In this program, the parent is an active learning participant alongside the child. The parent would have lessons and projects to complete in the Mentor Workbook just like the child, and then both parent and child would work on the student curriculum together. The mentor program is designed to provide the adult with additional opportunities to model his or her Christian faith.

### **Materials Available:**

#33609 - God and Life Student Workbook - required booklet for each young person

#33610 - God and Life Counselor Manual - resource guide for the pastor/counselor

#33605 - God and Life Adult Mentor - optional program for parents if they want to participate in the program alongside their children

Booklets may be ordered online at [www.praypub.org](http://www.praypub.org) or call 1-800-933-7729. They may also be available at your local council store.

### **Awards**

Students must complete all the requirements before ordering any awards. The last page in the Student Workbook is the Award Application Form. This form must be submitted to P.R.A.Y. (awards are not available in local scout shops).

Visit [http://www.praypub.org/god\\_country/life/god\\_life4.htm](http://www.praypub.org/god_country/life/god_life4.htm) to view the awards.

The following items are available for the adult leading the program. These items may be purchased in advance so that the counselor may wear them while teaching the class.

#001LC – God and Life Counselor Patch

#002L8 – God and Life Counselor Pin

# Registration Process

If left to the last minute, the registration process can be cumbersome. The P.R.A.Y. program awards come only from P.R.A.Y. (they are not available in local scout stores). These awards cannot be ordered over the phone.

Consider asking somebody (a parent, leader, etc.) to take charge of the paperwork and coordinate the ordering of awards. Awards can only be purchased by using the official application form. EACH RECIPIENT MUST BE REGISTERED. The application form requires the name, address, and denomination of the recipient as well as the name and address of the sponsoring church.

Counselors may choose one of the following ways to register their students:

- Collect the individual application forms from the back of each Student Workbook
- Combine the information on the Multiple Order Form from the back of the Counselor Manual
- Electronic registration at [www.praypub.org](http://www.praypub.org).

# About P.R.A.Y.

Programs of Religious Activities with Youth (P.R.A.Y.) is a not-for-profit organization whose national board of directors includes representatives from Protestant and Independent Christian Churches and the national youth agencies.

## **Vision Statement**

Young people are brought closer to Christ through dynamic programs that enable adults in their ministry with youth. Our programs and resources are offered through churches and youth agencies for them to work together for the benefit of youth.

## **Tag Line**

Building Faith in Youth

## **Mission Statement**

P.R.A.Y.'s mission statement is to "foster the Christian growth of children, youth, and families through churches and youth serving agencies." Everything that the P.R.A.Y. national board does is centered on the two parts of this mission statement: collaborations between churches and agencies, and the P.R.A.Y. program.

## **Collaborations**

P.R.A.Y. encourages collaborations between churches and youth agencies to benefit young people. Both organizations have unique resources in carrying out their work with children and youth, but when a congregation and a council work side-by-side sharing their resources, more young people can be served more effectively. Both organizations, working together for youth, can reach objectives not attainable by either working alone. P.R.A.Y. has developed several resources to encourage such collaborative efforts.

## **P.R.A.Y. Program**

P.R.A.Y. is best known for the P.R.A.Y. religious awards program. The program helps young people to develop a deeper relationship with God and to understand how God is active in their lives and in the world around them. It is a Christian Education resource that uses Bible lessons paired with service projects to help young people not only to grow in Christian faith but to also express their faith by reaching out in love and in service to others. P.R.A.Y. encourages families, youth agencies, and Protestant congregations to use the P.R.A.Y. series to foster spiritual growth in children, youth and families.

## **P.R.A.Y. Board vs. P.R.A.Y. Business Office**

An important clarification needs to be made between the P.R.A.Y. national board and the P.R.A.Y. business office. The P.R.A.Y. national board is a Christian organization that oversees the P.R.A.Y. program (it develops the curriculum and establishes all guidelines). The P.R.A.Y. business office is the order processing center. Because the P.R.A.Y. office handles religious recognitions orders on a full-time basis, other religious organizations have contracted with the P.R.A.Y. office to handle their programs (i.e. Eastern Orthodox Committee on Scouting, Friends Committee on Scouting, National Jewish Committee on Scouting, etc.). In these cases, the religious organizations themselves retain all responsibility for curriculum development and establishing program guidelines, and the P.R.A.Y. business office merely processes their orders. Over the years, the P.R.A.Y. business office (as indeed the P.R.A.Y. web page) has become an important interfaith resource.

## History

- 1923 The Protestant Committee was formed under the auspices of the Federal Council of Churches.
- 1950 The Protestant Committee came under the National Council of Churches.
- 1954 The God and Country Program was established as an award for Boy Scouts (age 12 and up).
- Late 1950's The Protestant Committee became independent of the National Council of Churches.
- 1960's The Protestant Committee worked with BSA on the Philmont conference and on Chaplaincy for the Jamboree and Philmont.
- Early 1970's The God and Country program was revised and became coed.
- The God and Country program expanded to three levels (God and Family, God and Church, God and Life).
- The God and Service Adult Award was created.
- 1976 The Protestant Committee changed its name to the Commission for Church and Civic Youth Serving Agencies (CCYSA).
- The CCYSA became coed.
- P.R.A.Y. was created as the business office of the CCYSA.
- The CCYSA continued to function as the Protestant Committee for BSA.
- 1982 Gene Hazlewood became the first full time Executive Director.
- 1983 Mark Hazlewood became the ED after his father's death.
- God and Me was launched.
- 1980's BSA re-established the Protestant Committee and slowly began to reclaim the controls of the Chaplaincy programs including the Philmont conference.
- The Youthscape Newsletter was created.
- 1993 Developed stronger working relationships with BSA, GSUSA & CF. Led workshops at national CF and GSUSA meetings and various church conferences. Initiated telemarketing strategy to contact all BSA, GSUSA & CF councils.
- 1994 CCYAR Endowment Trust Fund created.

- 1997 Long range strategic planning session
- Mission Statement:  
The purpose of the C.C.Y.A.R. is to actively promote relationships between churches and youth-serving agencies in order to encourage the Christian spiritual growth of children, youth and families.
- Created a P.R.A.Y. Director of Relationships position.
- 1998 Changed the legal corporate name from CCYAR to P.R.A.Y.
- 2001-04 God and Country curriculum was revised.
- 2003 P.R.A.Y. adopted new Board Governance Policies
- 2009 The God and Country program name was changed to the P.R.A.Y. Program. New design of books and awards was launched.