



RELIGION IN LIFE PROGRAM



*The Presbyterian Church
in Canada*

Published for
the Church by
Girl Guides of Canada &
Scouts Canada

Welcome to the Religion in Life Program of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. This brochure will help leaders to plan this enriching aspect of the *Guide/Scout* program by

- describing the stages and the emblem
- providing information to help organize the program
- providing objectives and guidelines for each stage (see inside).

Membership in the Girl Guides of Canada and Scouts Canada is open to all children and youth wishing to make the promise — regardless of race, colour, or creed. The *Guide/Scout* programs assist children and youth in character development. An important part of this is spiritual growth in their own religious community. Girl Guides of Canada and Scouts Canada believe parents and religious authorities are responsible for specific religious instruction. They encourage leaders to obtain material from the denominations.

The Religion in Life Program provides *Scouts* and *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 requirements for the program are prepared nationally by the churches or religious bodies to suit their particular needs.

Five Progressive Stages are included in the program. They are each colour-coded and adapted to the age group.

- Stage 1 — Yellow Border (typical ages 8–10 years)
- Stage 2 — Green Border (typical ages 11–14 years)
- Stage 3 — Blue Border (typical ages 14–17 years)
- Stage 4 — Red Border (typical ages 18–26 years)
- Stage 5 — Purple Border (adult leaders)

Typical ages are given as guidelines. Candidates may start at any stage appropriate to their age and capabilities.

The Emblem for the Christian Religion in Life consists of a great circle, the symbol of eternity. In the circle are the first and the last letters of the Greek alphabet, Alpha and Omega, symbolizing God. Together these symbols remind us that our faith journey continues from the beginning to the end of our lives, and that worshipping and serving God are essential parts of this journey.

The Religion in Life Emblem is given to mark stages in our faith journey; rather than for something already accomplished. The emblem may be obtained from provincial offices or through regular badge channels.

Only one emblem — the latest stage earned — is worn. For guidelines on where the emblem is worn for Guides, see *Policy, Organization and Rules* of Girl Guides of Canada; for Scouts, see *By-Law, Policies and Procedures* of Scouts Canada.

Scout/Guide when printed in italics includes all sections/units of both organizations.

STAGE 1 — YELLOW (TYPICAL AGES 8–10 YEARS)

Objectives

- To enrich participants' understanding of the life and work of Jesus.
- To reinforce knowledge of the importance of worship in the local congregation and to help identify meaningful worship experiences in the participants' lives.
- To understand how the Promise and Law relate to Jesus' teachings.
- To increase understanding of the nature and mission of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.
- To help participants learn about, and practice, service for others.

Guidelines

- Become familiar with some of the stories of Jesus and know where to find them in the Bible.
- Make a drawing, act out, or tell a Bible story of Jesus.
- Tell how some parts of their section Promise are like some of Jesus' teaching.
- Talk about why Christians gather — to worship, study, and work. Tell about some of the special times when they have worshipped.
- Make a visit to the sanctuary and explain the furnishings — the pulpit table, lectern, font — in terms of Reformed Church essentials.
- Discuss with their Religion In Life group some of the reasons why we pray, and prepare a prayer of their own.
- Tell about some of the work that is done through their local church and know something of the responsibilities of their own minister, teacher, leaders and other church workers. Explain what is special for them about being part of the church.
- Participate in their community with another person or persons in a project that brings joy and happiness to other people.

STAGE 2 — GREEN (TYPICAL AGES 11–14 YEARS)

Objectives

- To help participants become more aware of God's ongoing work of creation in the world around them.
- To understand that the Bible is a library of books, tracing how a nation encountered God through revelation and personal experiences.
- To discover why part of their responsibility as a Christian is to worship God.
- To increase understanding about the nature and work of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.
- To understand some implications of Christian stewardship.
- To put new learning into practice in service for others.

Guidelines

- Read Living Faith 2.4 and refer to Genesis 1 & 2, Psalm 104, Isaiah 40:18–31, Matthew 6:26–30, John 6:1–13, 2 Corinthians 8:12–15, Corinthians 12.
 - the significance for our life that God is Creator,
 - our place in the universe as creatures,

- c) the “gifts” or talents that God has given us,
- d) our responsibility to share with and care for all creation.
- Talk about different ways we try to show gratitude to God.
- Trace how God acted in the lives of two Old Testament people (e.g. Abraham, Moses, David), two New Testament people (e.g. Peter, Mary, Martha); and two present-day Christians (e.g. elders, a recent Moderator).
- Discuss a worship service with the minister or other church leader to understand the different parts of the service.
- Participate in planning and leading worship in their own *Scouting/ Guiding* section unit in their congregation, or another group.
- Explain the meaning, background, and significance of the burning bush symbol and other symbols in our Church.
- Describe some ways in which they try to fulfill the *Guide* or *Scout* Law in their daily living. Tell how being a *Guide/Scout* can influence their life at school.
- Go on a field trip to a church-run outreach program (e.g. food bank, soup kitchen, after-school program).
- Choose and carry out an outreach project to help in their own community or in another part of world.

STAGE 3 — BLUE (TYPICAL AGES 14–17 YEARS)

Objectives

- To help participants understand the various ways the Bible expresses the truth for our faith and life.
- To relate Bible teaching to their lives today.
- To see worship as a response to God who supports them in their life struggles.
- To encourage participants in their search for personal identity and worth.
- To assist them to achieve a daily personal faith.
- To increase understanding about the nature and work of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.
- To help participants find meaningful ways to care about their community.

Guidelines

- Look at different kinds of literature in the Bible and discuss the different ways of expressing truth. (e.g. parable, Luke 10:25–37; biography, Ruth 1:1–18; drama, Songs of Solomon 2:8–17, history, Acts 7:54–60; letter, Philippians 1:1–11; hymn, Psalm 100; prophecy, Amos 7:1–9; saga, Genesis 3:1–13; wisdom, Proverbs 15:17).
- Read Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1–12) and tell how various parts relate to their way of living.
- Tell how they see and feel God at work in three current events in the world.
- Discuss the meaning of worship, and then plan and present a worship service at camp, a meeting, or in church.
- Watch a movie or TV program, or read a biography, that shows the main character’s (or author’s) values in life. Discuss the meaning and how their own values are similar or different.
- Share important aspects of their Christian faith with their group.
- Describe one example of the Church’s justice, mission or development work in Canada, and one in another country.
- Assist with leadership of another group (e.g. Beaver colony, Brownie pack, church school, Cub pack, Explorer group, C.G.I.T., or C.O.C.).
- Consider some of the needs in their community and choose one in which they can make a contribution. Report orally or in writing about their experience.

STAGE 4 & 5 — RED OR PURPLE (TYPICAL AGES 18 & UP)

Objectives

- To review who they are, who God is and how their faith in God affects the way they face life’s complex questions.
- To understand something of the work of the Holy Spirit in the world.
- To increase understanding about the nature and work of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.
- To study the Church’s involvement in political, social, economic, and environmental issues.
- To appreciate the significance of church worship and membership.

Guidelines

- Read *Living Faith* Chapters 1–4 and discuss some of their personal faith and life questions with members of their section, their advisor, and their minister.
- Describe the organization of the congregation, presbytery, synod, and national level of our Church.
- Familiarize themselves with the mandates of Canada Ministries, International Ministries, and Presbyterian World Service and Development.
- Describe some examples of how our Church works ecumenically.
- Research and report on how The Presbyterian Church in Canada is dealing with two current political, social, economic, or environmental issues of special interest to them. Provide leadership in a discussion of these issues. Explore what action their group might take.
- Tell how their knowledge of Christian life affects their attitude to people in need in Canada and around the world. Read some of the Church’s current justice, mission and development materials. Share an example of how they can participate in the church’s mission to all people.
- Read John 14, 15, and 16. Identify areas where they think the Holy Spirit is working in the world (with special reference to research above).
- Explore the meaning and significance of church membership. Explain the essential elements of being a member of the Christian church.

ROLE OF CONGREGATIONS

Congregational involvement in *Guiding* and *Scouting* varies greatly from one church to another. Sometimes space is given to a community-sponsored group. In other cases the congregation sponsors the group. Congregations are encouraged to see community-sponsored groups as part of their own community outreach, and to offer support and guidance to the leaders and the children and youth whenever possible. When a group is sponsored by the church, members are encouraged to make it a genuine part of the life of the congregation, offering to provide regular Christian teaching, encouraging involvement of participants in church school and youth fellowship.

Regardless of the type of sponsorship, the leadership of the church can encourage the use of the Religion in Life Program in its five stages, and help non-Presbyterian children and youth in the group to participate in the regular teachings and worship of their own religious community.

ORGANIZATION OF THE PROGRAM

The Religion in Life Program of The Presbyterian Church in Canada is designed to complement Christian teaching already happening in a young person’s life and to integrate this learning into *Scouting* and

Guiding. Through the individual's involvement, and especially through a close relationship to a congregation, it is expected that the *Scout/Guide* will understand more about The Presbyterian Church in Canada and will grow in Christian faith and service.

Program guidelines for each stage are not rigid requirements, but are like a map to be used imaginatively and creatively to help *Guides/Scouts* in their faith journey.

1. **The Basic Requirement** for awarding the Emblem is recommendation by the minister, Christian Education (church school) leader or appointee as
 - a) participating in regular church worship or a church's Christian Education program
 - b) participating in a *Guide/Scout* program
 - c) having completed the guidelines for a particular stage.The *Guide/Scout* is expected to continue this pattern after being awarded the emblem.
2. **The Standards** for awarding the emblem should be high so that it will be respected and have meaning for those who wear it. At the same time, leaders in the Religion in Life Program are encouraged to adapt resource material to local situations and interpret program objectives and guidelines so as to give maximum encouragement to each participant on their faith journey.
3. **Leadership** for the program may be given by any member of the congregation who is
 - committed to a journey of faith in the Christian life
 - growing in the commitment
 - understands children and youth
 - wants to relate to young people in a meaningful way.The *Guide/Scout* leader, another mentor chosen for the purpose, or a minister may give leadership.
4. **Instruction** may be given in a variety of situations: at regular Section meetings, combined *Guide/Scouts* sessions, or at a special series of meetings. Instruction can be the result of consultation between *Guide/Scout* leaders, mentor and/or minister.
5. **Presentation** of the emblem may be made by the minister at a regular worship service. This can be an occasion for participation by *Guides/Scouts* in the planning and conduct of the service, and for attendance by the whole group or section.

RESOURCES

1. The following resources are available from
The Presbyterian Church in Canada
50 Wynford Drive
North York, Ontario
M3C 1J7
Telephone: 416-441-1111
Toll Free: 1-800-619-7301
Fax: 416-441-2825

Contact The Book Room (800) 619-7301 for
Religion in Life Stages 1–5 (workbooks)
This Presbyterian Church of Ours (book)

Contact the Resource Distribution Centre for
Being a Presbyterian in Canada Today (booklet)
Glorifying and Enjoying God (booklet)
Living Faith — A Statement of Christian Belief (booklet)
Social Action Handbook (binder)
Stained Glass — Windows of Faith (23 minute video)
2. The following resources are available from your local Scout Council office or by writing to
Corporate Office
Communications Services
1345 Baseline Road
Ottawa, Ontario
K2C 0A7

Role of the Chaplain (pamphlet)
In Partnership for Youth (booklet)
3. Visit our Church's Web sites:
www.presbycan.ca
www.presbyterian.ca

INQUIRIES

Direct inquiries about any aspect of this Religion in Life program to
Education for Discipleship, Youth Ministries
The Presbyterian Church in Canada
50 Wynford Drive
North York, Ontario M3C 1J7
Tel: 416-441-1111 ext. 268
Toll Free: 800-519-7301 ext. 268
Fax: 416-441-2825

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