



Scouting In The African Methodist Episcopal Church

Background

- The African Methodist Episcopal Church, A.M.E. for short, was the first church in the United States to be made up entirely of African Americans.
 - The church began in 1787 in Philadelphia when African Americans refused to be segregated in the seating at St. George's Church on Fourth Street.
 - The church was established in 1816 in Philadelphia when Richard Allen was consecrated as its first bishop.
- According to the 2010 *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches*, there are 2.5 million members of the African Methodist Episcopal church.
- The mission of the A.M.E. church is to minister to the spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional, and environmental needs of all people by spreading Christ's liberating gospel through the word and deeds.
- The motto of the A.M.E. church is God our Father, Christ our Redeemer, the Holy Spirit our Comforter, Humankind our Family.
- At the end of 2010, the A.M.E.'s use of Scouting included:
 - 1,647 Cub Scouts in 85 packs
 - 789 Boy Scouts in 71 troops
 - 96 Venturers in seven crews

Association of African Methodist Episcopal Scouts

Founded in 1993, the Association of African Methodist Episcopal Scouts (AAMES) works to encourage and support A.M.E. congregations with their youth ministries through the use of established programs such as the Boy Scouts of America.

Scouting is encouraged to be incorporated into A.M.E. Christian education programs for youth leadership and community outreach by:

- Fostering religious growth through religious awards programs, such as the God and Country Award Program and the A.M.E. Bishop's Award of Excellence.
- Promoting the desire to achieve higher educational goals by offering scholarships to youth earning their Eagle Scout award.
- Establishing a clear link between Christian principles as taught in the Holy Bible and the morals and values as projected in Boy Scouts of America programs.
- Providing another means of recreational and social interaction and development for youth.

Religious Principles and Key Terms

- *Basic foundational principles:* Rooted in the Apostle's Creed and the 25 Articles of Religion.
- *Episcopal:* Refers to the form of government under which the church operates, where the chief executive and administrative offices of the A.M.E. denomination are the Bishops of the church.
- *Methodist:* Provides an orderly system of rules and regulations, and places an emphasis on a plain and simple gospel.
- *Bishop:* Chief Officers of the Connectional Organization, or the A.M.E. church, who preside over an Episcopal District. They are elected for life by a majority vote of the General Conference which meets every four years. Bishops are bound by the laws of the church to retire following their 75th birthday.



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- **Presiding Elders:** Assistants whom the Bishops appoint to supervise the preachers in a Presiding Elder's District. The Presiding Elder also presides over a District Conference and a Sunday School Convention in his or her District. At the end of an Annual Conference year, the Presiding Elder reports to the Bishop at the Annual Conference and makes recommendations for pastoral appointments.
- **Presiding Elder District:** One portion of an Annual Conference, which in turn is one part of the Episcopal District over which a Bishop presides. In the Presiding Elder District, the appointed Presiding Elder meets with the local churches that comprise the District at least once every three months for a Quarterly Conference.
- **Pastor:** Receives a yearly appointment to a charge (church) on the recommendation of the Presiding Elder and with the approval and final appointment of the Bishop. The pastor is in full charge of the church and is an ex-official member of all boards, organizations and clubs of that church.
- **General Conference:** The supreme body of the African Methodist Episcopal Church that meets every four years; it may have extra sessions in certain emergencies. It is composed of the:
 - Bishops, as ex-officio presidents, according to the rank of election
 - Ministerial and lay delegates in equal numbers, elected by each of the Annual Conferences and the lay Electoral Colleges of the Annual Conferences
 - General Officers
 - College Presidents
 - Deans of Theological Seminaries
 - Chaplains in the regular Armed Forces of the U.S.A.
- **Council of Bishops:** Executive Branch of the Connectional Church. It has the general oversight of the church during the interim between General Conferences. The Council of Bishops shall meet annually at such time and place as the majority of the Council shall determine and also at such other times as may be deemed necessary in the discharging its responsibility as the Executive Branch of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.
- **Board of Incorporators:** Also known as the General Board of Trustees, has the supervision, in trust, of all connectional property of the A.M.E. church and is vested with the authority to act in behalf of the Connectional Church whenever necessary.
- **The General Board:** The administrative body, comprised of departmental commissions made up of the respective:
 - Secretary-Treasurer
 - General Secretary of the A.M.E. church
 - General Treasurer
 - Members of the various commissions
 - Presiding Bishop along with other Bishops
- **Judicial Council:** Highest judicatory body of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. It is an appellate court, elected by the General Conference and is amendable to it.



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Scouting Religious Emblems and Recognitions

According to P.R.A.Y.'s 2010 Religious Emblems Program, the God and Country religious growth program was used by:

- One Cub Scout
- Two Webelos
- Four Boy Scouts
- Two Venturers

Youth Emblems

GOD AND ME

God and Country Series – God and Me



Purpose

- Encourages children to become best friends with Jesus and tell their story of “God and Me” together

Eligibility

- Youth in first through third grade

Requirements

- Designed to be completed in four to five sessions
- Youth completes sessions on God Created Me, Jesus Is God’s Gift to Me, I Can Talk With God, Because God Cares for Me, I Can Care for Others

God and Country Series – God and Family

GOD AND FAMILY



Purpose

- Help youth understand the importance of family and God’s role in a healthy family

Eligibility

- Youth fourth and fifth grade

Requirements

- Designed to be completed in six to seven sessions
- Sessions include:
 - We are God’s Family
 - Family Heritage, Spiritual Heritage
 - Our Talents and Gifts Strengthen Our Families
 - In God’s Family We’re Loved No Matter What! Because We’re Loved, We Follow Rules
 - Being in God’s Family Helps Us When Things Are Tough
 - In God’s Family, We Share as a Response to God’s Love



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GOD AND CHURCH



God and Country Series – God and Church

Purpose

- Gives youth an opportunity to understand the church's structure and objectives, and to participate in service projects that will give them a better understanding of the mission of the church

Eligibility

- Youth in sixth through eighth grade

Requirements

- Designed to take three to five months to complete
- Sessions include Meeting Christ, Worshipping God, and Witnessing and Ministering for Christ
- Must complete a video or photo album to share what they learned

GOD AND LIFE



God and Country Series – God and Life

Purpose

- Teaches youth to study the lives of men and women in the Bible, discovering what their lives teach them about God, and challenging them to integrate the faith of those in the Bible into their daily lives

Eligibility

- Youth in ninth through twelfth grades who do not necessarily have to belong to a Boy Scout troop

Requirements

- Completion of five sections covering:
 - How God calls all kinds of people
 - God doesn't expect us to do it on our own
 - Each of us must make a personal response to the call of God
 - God gives strength to face adversities
 - God can accomplish great things through those who are willing to do God's will



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Youth and Adult Emblem



Bishop's Award of Excellence

Purpose

- Originally designed to honor excellent service in Scouting, this award recognizes both Boy Scouts and adults for significant accomplishments or contributions for the benefit of ministries in the A.M.E. church

Eligibility

- Youth eligibility:
 - Active member of the A.M.E. church for at least one year in good standing
 - Outstanding service in church
 - Performing at a high level academically
 - Actively providing community service
 - With the exception of being an active member, if none of the above, youth must have earned the Eagle Scout award
- Adult eligibility:
 - Active member of the A.M.E. church for at least one year in good standing and current with conference claims
 - Contributed significantly to a ministry in the A.M.E. church

Requirements

- Nominations must be submitted by application to A.M.E. Christian Education Department by March 1

Adult emblems



God and Country Mentor Program

Purpose

- Provides an 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

Eligibility

- Parent or guardian of a youth in the God and Country program series

Requirements

- Completion of the God and Country curriculum working alongside youth for whom parent or guardian is responsible



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God and Country Series – God and Service award

Purpose

- Acknowledge distinguished volunteer service by adults in ministry to young people by service through the church and the Boy Scouts of America

Eligibility

- Minimum of five years of service to the church
- Minimum of five years of service to Boy Scouts of America
- Encourage and assist young people in earning the God and Country award
- Promote religious observances at Boy Scouts of America functions at all levels
- Encourage youth to participate in community service projects
- Recruit volunteers to give leadership to Boy Scouts of America programs
- Promote the organization of Boy Scouts of America units among church other than his or her own congregation
- Be a person whose Christian example is highly regarded by others in the church and whose lifestyle is a model for young people

Requirements

- Nomination application and letter of recommendation must be submitted to P.R.A.Y.



Organization Information

For more information, contact:

- Association of African Methodist Episcopal Scouts
 - A.M.E. Christian Education Department, 500 8th Ave South, Nashville, TN 37203; phone: 615-242-1420; fax: 615-726-1866
 - Website: www.ameced.com/scout.shtml
 - E-mail: cedoffice@ameced.com