

A “Scout’s Own” Service

Non-Sectarian, for use with a Religiously Diverse Gathering of Scouts

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This observance may be freely used within Scouting programs so long as all citations of source material are maintained in published orders of the service.

Gathering to a Time Apart

Chaplain’s Aid: We gather together now from all the busyness and activity of the day for a time apart from the material and temporary to consider that we are also bound to the spiritual and timeless. We gather together now to remember that we have duties not only to ourselves and to those with whom we share this world, but duties to the Divine Source of all that is. We gather together to reflect on the obligation we have taken upon ourselves as Scouts to be “reverent.”

Scouts/Scouters: We gather together now to consider our “duty to God.”

Song “America the Beautiful” (Katharine Lee Bates)

O beautiful for spacious skies
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain
America! America!
God shed his grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
from sea to shining sea!

O beautiful for patriot dream
That sees beyond the years
Thine alabaster cities gleam,
Undimmed by human tears!
America! America!
God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
from sea to shining sea!

Responsive “The Scout Law from the World’s Wisdom” (compiled by T. B. Cargal)

Chaplain’s Aid: From the wisdom of Mesoamerica: “Never lie, for it is a great failing. When you tell anyone what has been told to you, tell the simple truth, and add nothing to it.” (Biert, *The Aztecs*, from “An Aztec Father’s Exhortations to his Son”)

Scouts/Scouters: A Scout is Trustworthy.

Chaplain's Aid: From the wisdom of Confucianism: "The duties of universal obligation are five, and the moral qualities by which they are carried out are three. The duties are those between ruler and subject, between parents and children, between husband and wife, between elder sibling and younger, and those in the intercourse between friends. ... Wisdom, compassion and courage—these are the three universally recognized moral qualities of human beings." (*The Golden Mean*, section 13)

Scouts/Scouters: A Scout is Loyal.

Chaplain's Aid: From the wisdom of the Quran, the scriptures of Islam: "The righteous ... give sustenance to the poor, the orphan, and the captive, saying, 'We feed you for God's sake only; we seek of you neither recompense nor thanks.'" (*Quran* 76:8-9)

Scouts/Scouters: A Scout is Helpful.

Chaplain's Aid: From the wisdom of Muhammad, the prophet of Islam: "All God's creatures are God's family; and the one is the most beloved of God who does most good to God's creatures." (Ab-dullah and Al-Suhrawardy, *Sayings of Muhammad*, p. 89).

Scouts/Scouters: A Scout is Friendly.

Chaplain's Aid: From the wisdom of Buddhism: "Avoid harsh language ... [and] speak such words as are gentle, soothing to the ear, loving, such words as go to the heart, and are courteous, friendly, and agreeable to many." (*Anguttara Nikāya* 10.176)

Scouts/Scouters: A Scout is Courteous.

Chaplain's Aid: From the wisdom of Hillel, a sage of Judaism: "A certain heathen came to Hillel and said to him: Convert me provided that you teach me the entire Torah while I stand on one foot. ... Hillel ... said to him: What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor: that is the entire Torah; the rest is commentary; go and learn it." (*Shabbat* 31a)

Scouts/Scouters: A Scout is Kind.

Chaplain's Aid: From the wisdom of the Book of Samuel, a shared scripture of Jews and Christians: "Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord. Surely, to obey is better than sacrifice." (1 Samuel 15:22)

Scouts/Scouters: A Scout is Obedient.

Chaplain's Aid: From the wisdom of Taoism: "If you look to others for fulfillment, you will never be truly fulfilled. If your happiness depends on money, you will never be happy with yourself. Be content with what you have; rejoice in the way things are." (*Tao Te Ching*, 44)

Scouts/Scouters: A Scout is Cheerful.

Chaplain's Aid: From a parable of Jesus of Nazareth: "The master said to his steward, 'Well done, good and trustworthy servant; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'" (Matthew 25:21)

Scouts/Scouters: A Scout is Thrifty.

Chaplain's Aid: From the wisdom of the Sioux: "With the Sioux, courage is absolute self-control. The truly brave one, we contend, yields neither to fear nor anger, desire nor agony. The brave one is at all times master of oneself." (Ohiyesa, *The Soul of the Indian*, 115)

Scouts/Scouters: A Scout is Brave.

Chaplain's Aid: From the wisdom of Hinduism: "Let one therefore keep the mind pure, for what one thinks that one becomes: this is a mystery of Eternity." (*Maitri Upanishad* VI:24)

Scouts/Scouters: A Scout is Clean.

Chaplain's Aid: From the wisdom of Augustine, a saint of Christianity: "You, O God, awake us to delight in your praise; for you made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in you." (Augustine, *Confessions*, I.1.3)

Scouts/Scouters: A Scout is Reverent.

Reflection *The Chaplain will share some thoughts on the two-fold obligation of the Scouting principle of "reverence": one's personal devotion and obligation toward God as taught by one's own faith tradition, and one's respect for and defense of the faith traditions of others. The Chaplain may wish to base the second part of this principle in the "Golden Principle/Rule," sharing examples of its expression in a variety of religious traditions.*

The Golden Principle

Blessed are those who prefer others before themselves. – *Baha'i Faith*

Hurt not others in ways that you would yourself would find hurtful. – *Buddhism*

Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. – *Christianity*

This is the sum of all duty: treat others as you yourself would be treated. – *Hinduism*

No one of you is a believer until you desire for another that which you desire for yourself" – *Islam*

In happiness and suffering, in joy and grief, regard all creatures as you would regard your own self." – *Jainism*

What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor. – *Judaism*

Be not estranged from another for God dwells in every heart. – *Sikhism*

Human nature is good only when it does not do unto another whatever is not good for its own self. – *Zoroastrianism*

As is suggested by the "Responsive," these principles might be used as well as the basis for a reflection on the Scouting principle of "kindness."

Silent Meditation

Chaplain: Let us all take a moment to meditate and pray in silence, each as our hearts move us and as our faith commitments direct. *(Allow time for silent meditation and reflection.)*

Song “If I Had a Hammer” (L. Hays and P. Seeger)

If I had a hammer, I'd hammer in the morning
I'd hammer in the evening, all over this land
I'd hammer out danger, I'd hammer out a warning
I'd hammer out love between my brothers & sisters,
all over this land.

If I had a bell, I'd ring it in the morning ...

If I had a song, I'd sing it in the morning ...

Well, I got a hammer & I got a bell
And I got a song to sing all over this land

It's the hammer of justice, it's the bell of freedom,
It's a song about love between ...

Closing

Chaplain: The story is told that Sir Robert Baden-Powell, founder of the world scouting movement, closed the first World Scouting Jamboree with the following charge: Brother Scouts, I ask you to make a solemn choice. Differences exist between the peoples of the world in thought and sentiment, just as they do in language and physique. The war has taught us that if one nation tries to impose its particular will upon others, cruel reaction is bound to follow. The Jamboree has taught us that if we exercise mutual forbearance and give-and-take, then there is sympathy and harmony. If it be your will, let us go forth from here determined that we will develop among ourselves and our boys that comradeship, through the world-wide spirit of the Scout brotherhood, so that we may help to develop peace and happiness in the world and good will among men. Brother Scouts, answer me -- will you join in this endeavor? *(cited here from “A Scout's Own Service from the Pine Tree Camp”)*

Song “Scout Vespers” (to the tune of “O Christmas Tree”)

Softly falls the light of day,
As our campfire fades away.
Silently, each Scout should ask,
“Have I done my daily task?”

“Have I cared and have I tried,
Can I guiltless sleep tonight?
Have I done and have I dared,
Every thing to be prepared.”