

Scout Interfaith Worship Service Resources

The following resources have been pulled from a variety of scout services found on the internet. Please select from among them or use your own ideas to create an interfaith worship service.

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Call to Worship

Psalms 100

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the lands!
Serve the Lord with gladness!
Come into his presence with singing!
Know that the Lord is God!
It is he who made us, and we are his!
We are his people and the sheep of his pasture.
Enter into his gates with thanksgiving,
and his courts with praise!
Give thanks to him; bless his name!
For the Lord is good;
his steadfast love endures forever,
and his faithfulness to all generations.

Psalms 133:1

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is
For brethren to dwell together in unity.

Almighty god, who pours out blessings on all, deliver us this day from coldness of heart and wanderings of mind, that with steadfast thoughts and kindled affections, we may worship you in spirit and in truth.

Gathering

*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.

Great Spirit

O Great Spirit! Watch over us as we begin
this day. Protect us as we live in your care.
Give us bounty and hold us from harm. We
are your children and wish only to please
you. We hold our Mother Earth close to our
hearts and wish her goodness. We thank You
for your love.
—American Indian

Prayers

Psalm 9

I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart;
I will tell of all your wonderful deeds.
I will be glad and exult in you;
I will sing praise to your name, O Most High.
Psalms 9:1-2

Each New Day

O Lord, our Heavenly father, we lift our hearts to thee at the beginning of this new day.
We come to this time and place of worship with thy beauty all about us; in the sky, in the trees, in the earth, and in all thy creation. We praise thee, and come to worship thee.
Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, who gives us each new day. Amen.

Prayer of Thanks

For each new morning with its light,
Father we thank you.
For rest and shelter of the night,
Father we thank you.
For health and food, for love and friends,
For everything your goodness sends,
Father in heaven, we thank you.

Prayer for Scouts BSA

O Lord, we thank you for the work of Sir Robert Baden-Powell, who in his dedication and wisdom founded the World Scouting Movement. We thank you for the efforts of those thousands of men and women who have brought Scouting to millions of boys and girls the world over. We rededicate ourselves to the principles of our Movement -- To do our best -- to do our duty -- to God -- and to our Country. We ask you, O Lord, to give us the strength and courage -- each of us -- to live up to the Scout Oath -- the Scout Law -- and the high ideals of the World Brotherhood of Scouting. Amen.

Campers Prayer

God of the mountains and hills, make me tall and strong;
Tall enough and strong enough to right some wrong.
God of the stars, make me steadfast and sure;
God of every lake and stream, flow through my life & make it clean;
Let me do nothing base or mean.
God of the trees and woods, keep me fresh and pure;
God of the rain, wash from my life all dirt and stain;
Pure and strong let me remain.
God of the seed and soil, plant in my heart thy love;
God of the darkness and day, through shadows or light, be my stay.
Guide thou my way.

God of the radiant sun, light thou my life;
God of the glorious dawn, make each day a fresh start.
God of the evening peace and quiet, keep me free from fear & strife.
God of the gay, free birds, sing in my heart.
God of the surging waves and sea, wide horizons give to me;
Help me to see the world as thou would have it be;
God of the lovely rose, make me lovely, too;
God of the morning dew, each day my faith renew.
God of all growing things, keep me growing, too.
--- George Earle Owen

Great Spirit

"Great spirit, whose tepee is the sky and whose hunting ground is the earth,
Mighty and fearful are you called.
Ruler over storms, over men and birds and beasts,
Have your way over all,
Over earth ways as over skyways.
Find us this day our meat and corn,
That we may be strong and brave.
And put aside from us our wicked ways as we put aside the bad
Works of them who do us wrong.
And let us not have such troubles as lead us into crooked roads,
But keep us from all evil,
For yours is all that is the earth and the sky;
The streams, the hills and the valleys, the stars, the moon,
And the sun, and all that live and breathe.
Wonderful, shining, mighty spirit."

Benedictions

"An Old Irish Blessing"

May the road rise to meet you,
May the wind always be at your back,
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
The rain fall soft upon your fields,
And until we meet again,
May god hold you in the palm of his hand.

Numbers 6:24-26

The Lord bless you and keep you:
The Lord make His face to shine upon you,
And be gracious unto you:
The Lord lift up his countenance upon you,
And give you peace.

Songs

America

My country 'tis of thee
Sweet land of liberty
Of thee I sing.
Land where my fathers died
Land of the pilgrims' pride.
From every mountainside,
Let freedom ring.

America the Beautiful

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 pilgrim feet
Whose stern impassion'd stress
A thorough - fare for freedom beat
Across the wilderness.
America! America!
God mend thine ev'ry flaw,
Confirm thy soul in self control,
Thy liberty in law.

“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

Johnny Appleseed

The Lord is good to me,
And so I thank the Lord,
For giving me
The things I need,
The sun and the rain and the apple seed.
The Lord is good to me.

Amazing Grace

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost, but now I'm found;
Was blind, but now I see

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fear relieved.
How precious did that grace appear
'Me hour I first believed.
Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost, but now I'm found;
Was blind, but now I see.

Responsive Reading

The Scout Oath

People: On my honor I will do my best

Chaplain aide: Our honor is a quality we possess because of our dignity as human beings and children of God. Our 'best' means to give all we have. It means to keep striving to do what we know is right, and in the oath. It means we will try to be good scouts by fulfilling our scout duties as expressed in the scout law.

People: To do my duty to God and my country and to obey the scout law.

Chaplain aide: Our duty to God and country means chiefly two things: obedience and loyalty. The duties we owe to God, to our country, to our parents, to one another, and to ourselves come from some command of God. The Scout Law sums up all the qualities a scout should have and without which he cannot be a good scout.

People: To help other people at all times

Chaplain aide: Our lord told us that love of neighbor was like the first law of love of God. The first children of God were known by the love they had for one another. Real human charity or love prompts us to want to help others at all times. Our scout training will give us skills and knowledge that will put us in a better position to do this.

People: To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.

Chaplain aide: Scouting offers us many opportunities to grow physically. To be alert and ready requires us to give special care to those gifts of soul - intellect and will - that make us unto god. 'Morally straight' means we must try to know what is right and true, and to love what is good and choose it.

***Scout Law Responsive Reading**

Leader: A true and worthy person recognizes their obligations and does them without being watched or compelled.

Scouts: A Scout is trustworthy.

Leader: We owe much to many—to home, school, community, nation, and to God.

Scout: A Scout is loyal.

Leader: The Good Samaritan showed the spirit of doing a Good Turn.

Scouts: A Scout is helpful.

Leader: A real friend is one who remains loyal in victory and in defeat.

Scouts: A Scout is friendly.

Leader: Courtesy is the mark of a true gentleman or lady. It is shown in thoughtful acts and kindly respect for everyone.

Scouts: A Scout is courteous.

Leader: Kindness is the way people show respect for others.

Scouts: A Scout is kind.

Leader: Life is filled with things that we must do whether we like them or not. One of the marks of growing up is to willingly accept responsibilities.

Scouts: A Scout is obedient.

Leader: Our moods make our days. If we are grouchy, our day is gloomy. If we are happy, the day is always happier.

Scouts: A Scout is cheerful.

Leader: The world offers many gifts. A wise person uses them with care.

Scouts: A Scout is thrifty.

Leader: To each of us comes danger, difficult tasks, and temptations. When faced with a choice between courage and cowardice, we must be brave.

Scouts: A Scout is brave.

Leader: Cleanliness is next to godliness. To have a clean body, a clean mind, and a clean record is a rewarding achievement.

Scouts: A Scout is clean.

Leader: Character is determined by the things we worship. If we respect ourselves and our peers, and see them as gifts of goodness from God, we live on a high plane. **Scouts:** A Scout is reverent.

God is the Eternal One - An eleventh-century Hebrew prayer composed by the Jewish poet and philosopher Solomon Ibn Gibirol.

Leader: God is the Eternal One,
Who reigned before any being had yet been created;
When all was done according to God's will,
Already then God's Name was Sovereign.

Scouts: And after all has ceased to be,
Still will God reign in solitary majesty;
God was, God is, God shall be in glory.

Leader: And God is One,
Without compare,
Without beginning,
Without end;

To God belongs power and dominion.

Scouts: And the Sovereign of all is my own God,
My living Redeemer,
My Rock in time of trouble and distress;
My banner and my Refuge,
My benefactor, to whom, in anguish, I can call.

All: Into God's hands I entrust my spirit,
Both when I sleep as when I wake;
And with my spirit, my body also:
God is with me,
I will not fear.

Responsive Reading

Leader: We live in all things. All things live in us.

All: We rejoice in all life.

Leader: We live by the sun. We move with the stars.

All: We rejoice in all life.

Leader: We eat from the earth. We drink from the rain. We breathe from the air.

All: We rejoice in all life.

Leader: We share with the creatures. We have strength through their gifts.

All: We rejoice in all life.

Leader: We depend on the forests. We have knowledge through their secrets.

All: We rejoice in all life.

Leader: We have the privilege of seeing and understanding. We have the responsibility of caring. We have the joy of celebrating.

All: We rejoice in all life.

Leader: We are full of the grace. We are graceful. We are grateful.

All: We rejoice in all life

Scout Law Intercultural Responsive Reading

***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 [those who are married], 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 Nik~ya 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)

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.

Reflexions / Inspirational Thoughts

Reverence and Kindness

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.

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

Hurt not others in ways that you 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."

Do Good *From Baden-Powell, Scouting for Boys*

The old knights were very religious. They were always careful to attend religious services, especially before going into battle or undertaking any serious difficulty. They considered it the right thing always to be prepared for death. Besides worshiping God in church, the knights always recognized His work in the things that He made, such as animals, plants, and all scenery. And so it is with peace scouts today. Wherever they go they love the woodlands, the mountains, and the prairies, and they like to watch and know about the animals that inhabit them, and the wonders of the flowers and plants. No man is much good unless he believes in God and obeys His laws. So every Scout should have religion.

Religion seems a very simple thing: First: Love and serve God. Second: Love and serve your neighbor. In doing your duty to God always be grateful to Him. Whenever you enjoy a pleasure or a good game, or succeed in doing a good thing, thank Him for it, if only with a word or two, just as you say grace at a meal. And it is a good thing to bless other people. For instance, if you see a train starting off, just pray for God's blessing on all that are in the train.

In doing your duty towards [other humans], be helpful and generous, and always be grateful for any kindness done to you, and be careful to show that you are grateful. Remember again that a present given to you is not yours until you have thanked the giver for it. While you are living your life on earth, try to do something good that may remain after you.

One writer says: "I often think that when the sun goes down the world is hidden by a big blanket from the light of heaven, but the stars are little holes pierced in that blanket by those who have done good deeds in this world. The stars are not all the same size; some are big, some are little, and some men have done great deeds and others have done small deeds, but they have made their hole in the blanket by doing good before they went to heaven." Try to make your hole in the blanket by good work while you are on earth. It is something to be good, but it is far better to do good.

Peace *From The First International Jamboree - Olympia, London, 7 August 1920*

When the whole arena was a sea of Scouts ... Baden-Powell saluted them, then joined them to walk across the arena through an impressive and colorful lane of flags of all the nations represented at the Jamboree.

Mounting the highest tier of the dais, he turned and faced the great gathering. The moment had come for him to close the Jamboree, to bid the Scouts good-bye. But before he knew what was happening, he heard a clear boyish voice proclaim aloud, "We, the Scouts of the World, salute you, Sir Robert Baden-Powell -- Chief Scout of the World!"

Chief Scout of the World! B-P hesitated, taken completely aback. As he slowly raised his hand in the Scout sign, the cheering abruptly ceased. There were a few seconds of impressive silence before his voice rang out with its accustomed force to the farthest corners of the building:

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?

A thundering shout answered him: "Yes!" "God speed you in your work," Baden-Powell concluded. "And fare you well."

National Camp School Message

Today, we know of the energy that moves all things—the oneness of existence, the diversity and uniqueness of every moment of creation; of every shape and form, the attraction, the allurements, the fascinations that all things have for one another. Humbled by our knowledge, chastened by surprising revelations, with awe and reverence we come before the mystery of life. All people of the Earth, each and every nation arise and rejoice at the continued creation of beauty, of springtime, the yearly rebirth. Of our protector, our home, our own Mother Earth! Who despite our apparent lack of care creates bountiful splendor for all to share. From mountaintops to the deepest sea, all wonderful earthly miracles bursting free! Yet this miracle of renewal requires the helping hand of the people to replenish and renew the land. From the largest of cities to the most remote

farms, to unite in spirit and with the strongest of arms, become a witness to the birth of each flower, a guardian of our resources hour by hour.

We must learn to take time to appreciate the miracles of which we did not create. God has given this wonderful treasure, and its preservation will be the measure of people who recognize and will celebrate the birth of each season before it's too late. In citizenship, in willingness to toil, we must bend our backs and tend to the soil. In stewardship, arise and applaud the worth of the wondrous marvel of our living Earth!

The Golden Rule in the World Religions

Adapted from "The Christopher Newsletter"

The Golden Rule is found in many of the worlds major religions—here are some examples

Christianity: All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you do ye so to them; for this is the law and the prophets. *Matthew 7:1*

Confucianism: Do not do to others what you would not like yourself. Then there will be no resentment against you, either in the family or in the state. *Analects 12:2*

Buddhism: Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful. *Udana-Varga 5,*

Hinduism: This is the sum of duty; do naught onto others what you would not have them do unto you. *Mahabharata 5,1517*

Islam: No one of you is a believer until he desires for his brother that which he desires for himself. *Sunnah*

Judaism: What is hateful to you, do not do to your fellowman. This is the entire Law; all the rest is commentary. *Talmud, Shabbat 31d*

Taoism: Regard your neighbor's gain as your gain, and your neighbor's loss as your own loss. *Tai Shang Kan Yin P'ien*

Zoroastrianism: That nature alone is good which refrains from doing another whatsoever is not good for itself. *Dadisten-I-dinik, 94,5*

Such a basic principal among all men should be mastered and applied in all our lives.

***Silent Meditation Introductions**

1. Leader: Let us each take a moment to meditate and pray in silence, each as his heart moves him. (Take this moment for silent meditation and reflection)

2. Leader: May the words of my mouth,
 And the meditation of my heart,
 Be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord,
 My rock and my redeemer.
 Psalm 19:14

3. Let us now silently give time to God, each in our own faith and in our own way.

Offerings

All offerings go to the "World Friendship Fund"

O, God, we thank you for these gifts to the World Friendship Fund. We ask your blessings upon the gifts, the giver, and those in other countries that will benefit from them.