

Report for the 2020 North Georgia Annual Conference Handbook

-- Scouting Ministry --

The mission of Scouting in the United Methodist Church is to sprinkle seeds of Christ onto the paths of boys, girls and their families through Scouting programs in our churches. This includes Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and Big Brothers Big Sisters in North Georgia. We do this by focusing on two key objectives: (1) starting new Packs, Troops, Crews and Big Brother Programs associated with the youth-serving partners mentioned above, and (2) encouraging churches and Scout leaders to include Faith-oriented activities in their Scout programs.

New Units: Scouting in the North Georgia Conference continues to grow as churches with and without Scouting have started many new packs, troops and crews. There have been 136 new Packs, Troops and Crews started and discovered over the past 12 months including:

- 122 Girl Scout Troops
- 2 Cub Scout Packs
- 4 BSA Boy Troops
- 5 BSA Girl Troops
- 3 Venture Crews
- **136 Total Units**

This increases our total count to **957 total units**, which includes 547 Boy Scout units and 410 Girl Scout troops. Although there have been many new units and youth joining our scout programs over the past year, much of the Girl Scout growth is because of improved recording keeping with the Girl Scout Councils in our area.

We now have 315 churches in the Conference with at least one BSA or GSUSA unit meeting on campus. The 39% of all churches that this represents is the highest percentage we have on record.

Membership Growth: Our 957 Scout units have a total of approximately **21,876** boys and girls enrolled in them. This breaks out to 17,294 boys and girls in our Boys Scouts USA programs and 4,582 in our Girl Scout USA troops. Please join us as we celebrate a first: our total number of boys and girls registered in our programs now exceeds 21,000 youth.

Introducing Christ to Youth: One of the ways we know we are sprinkling seeds of Christ with our Scout youth is by having boys and girls complete the God & Country (P.R.A.Y.) program through our churches. These programs take 3, 6 or 9 months to complete and require serious study by the youth. The UMCOS reports that 50 churches had at least one youth complete a program in 2019 with a total of 243 youth completing programs.

Scouters Religious Academy (SRA): The SRA is one of the ways we show Scout leaders and Clergy how to run their Scout programs as a ministry. In its 4th year, the 2020 Academy was forced to go virtual due to the COVID-19 virus. As a result, the six-hour conference held via Zoom on May 16th attracted 260 attendees from 42 states (including Hawaii and Alaska) and 5 European countries. With great feedback from participants, we are looking forward to more

churches in Georgia hosting P.R.A.Y. programs. Additionally, it is wonderful to know that we impacted Scout leaders and clergy around the nation as well and they start new faith-based programs as well.

Conference Scout Team: The North Georgia United Methodist Committee on Scouting (UMCOS) continues to grow and now has 28 team members as it supports 315 churches which sponsor at least one Boy Scout unit or host a Girl Scout troop.

I would like to thank the dedicated members of the UMCOS (United Methodist Committee on Scouting) for their passionate belief that Scouting is a ministry and for their hard work making it so. We also want to thank the hundreds of ministers and lay leaders, and thousands of Scout leaders around the Conference for their incredible support of Scouting. You all are truly making a difference in the lives of the youth we serve through Scouting.

Yours in Christ,

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