

Philmont Chaplain Aide Orientation

Philmont is an experience that stands alone. Not only does it provide opportunity to develop hiking, camping, and other Scoutcraft skills, but it provides an excellent opportunity to reflect upon “Duty to God” and “A Scout is Reverent.” The *Boy Scout Handbook* reads: “A Scout is reverent toward God. He is faithful in his religious duties. He respects the beliefs of others.”

The Boy Scouts of America maintain that no member can grow into the best kind of citizen without recognizing an obligation to God.

Article IX, Section 1, Charter and Bylaws of the Boy Scouts of America

- 1. The Purpose of the Philmont Chaplain Aide.** It is recommended that each crew select or appoint a Chaplain Aide to help make “reverence to God and respect for others” a vital part of the Philmont experience. The basic responsibility of a Chaplain Aide is to encourage spiritual awareness and growth in the lives of the crew. The Scout chosen by the crew to serve as Chaplain Aide should have earned or be in the process of completing a religious emblems study program. It is recommended that the Scout be at least a Star Scout, mature and sensitive, and one who has earned the respect of the other Scouts and trust of the Advisors.
- 2. Duties of a Philmont Chaplain Aide.**
 - Be involved in crew preparation for Philmont. Participate in planning sessions, ensuring that a spiritual emphasis is included, e.g., prayer before meals, religious devotionals.
 - Assist the Crew Leader in setting a proper example of Scouting principles.
 - Teach “Philmont grace” to crew and use it for all meals.
 - Take on the trek a basic religious text (Bible, New Testament, Book of Mormon, Koran, as appropriate).
 - Lead crew on the first and last day to worship services at the Base Camp chapels.
 - Lead crew in daily reflection on *Eagles Soaring High* while on the trek.
 - Encourage crew members to strengthen their own relationship with God through personal prayer, devotions and participation in religious activities.
 - Assist Crew Leader and Advisors in conflict resolution.
- 3. How the Philmont Chaplaincy Works.** Chaplains representing the major religious faiths help to develop a climate of reverence at Philmont and encourage campers and staff to grow in their relationships with God and with each other. Philmont Chaplains provide daily worship services in Base Camp and on a regularly scheduled basis at selected backcountry camps. They also deliver emergency messages in the backcountry and help resolve conflicts on the trail. A chaplain is assigned health lodge duty to assist those with medical problems. All Philmont Chaplains provide counseling.

On the afternoon of arrival, one Philmont Chaplain will speak to the Advisors while the Crew Leaders attend their own meeting. At this time another Philmont Chaplain will meet with the Chaplain Aides to discuss their vital role on the treks, including suggestions on how to use *Eagles Soaring High*, Philmont worship services, and what support they can expect from the Philmont Chaplains, as well as what materials are available for encouraging crew members to begin work on a religious award.

4. **Aspects of the Chaplain Aide Task.** The Boy Scouts of America has always been committed to the moral, ethical, and spiritual development of our youth and this is certainly true of Philmont. The following aspects of the Chaplain Aide task should be mastered before arriving at Philmont.
 - a. Scouting Ideals. The Chaplain Aide should be familiar with *Boy Scout Handbook*, Chapter 24, pp. 549-567, on “The Spirit of Scouting,” as well as with *Youth's Frontier: Making Ethical Decisions*, 20 pp. [order No. 33620]. Just as a Scout keeps himself physically strong by camping, hiking and other outdoor activities, so also, he develops spiritually and morally by practicing his religion.
 - b. Base Camp Worship. At 6:40 pm on the afternoon of arrival and the afternoon you return from your trek, lead your crew to the worship area where they may elect to attend either the Jewish, Roman Catholic, Protestant, or Latter Day Saints service. All of these services begin at 7:00 pm. This worship will conclude with ample time for the crew to attend the evening campfire.
 - c. Backcountry Worship. At specified backcountry camps, Protestant and Roman Catholic worship services are conducted at set times on Sunday afternoons by Philmont Chaplains. The Chaplain Aide should check the poster in the Logistics Office upon arrival for the times and places and compare with the crew itinerary.
 - d. Backcountry Devotionals. Ideally, each crew member should take with them on the trek a copy of *Eagles Soaring High*, a devotional guide specifically designed for personal reflection while at Philmont. These are to be picked up at Logistics. A special time should be set aside each day for the Chaplain Aide to lead the crew in brief reflection on the daily thought.
 - e. Prayer at Meals. The “Philmont Grace” should be learned by the crew and said before all meals: “For food, for raiment, for life, for opportunity, for friendship and fellowship, we thank Thee, O Lord. Amen.”
 - f. Working with the Crew Leader and Advisors. The Crew Leader has major responsibility for working with the crew to plan, set goals, and lead the crew on the trek. The Chaplain Aide should meet with the Crew Leader and Advisors to discuss the role of Chaplain Aide in the crew. The Chaplain Aide should work closely with the Crew Leader to make sure that “A Scout is Reverent” and “Duty to God” are included in the plans and worked into each of the training hikes and the Philmont trek itself, as well as en route to and from Philmont.
 - g. Crew Teamwork/Conflict Resolution. As teamwork is essential to a successful trek, the Chaplain Aide should work with the Crew Leader and Advisors to set a positive tone for the group and resolve minor conflict early before it develops into a more serious matter. Keep Scouting ideals in mind and before the crew. A Philmont Chaplain may be asked to assist in serious cases of conflict.
5. **Resource People.** The Chaplain Aide might find it useful to establish and maintain contact with the following persons: Troop Chaplain, Council Religious Relationships Chairman and religious leaders such as minister, priest, rabbi, elder or imam.
6. **The Chaplain Aide Patch**, No. 00443, as well as the brochure *The Roles of the Troop Chaplain and the Chaplain Aide*, No. 5-216A, may be ordered from any Scout shop, local council service center or official Scouting distributor.