

## **God and Country Program Overview for All Four Levels of the Program**

Below is a description for the following aspects of each of the 4 levels of the God and Country program:

- Eligibility Guidelines
- Schedule
- Curriculum Goals
- General Description of the topics to be discussed and assignments to be completed
- Adult Mentor Program

**NOTE:** Every student must buy his or her own Student Workbook for every level. Workbooks can be purchased at the local Scout Shop on County Road 42, near the 35E and 35W split, in the shopping center with the Schneiderman's store, or from your Counselor at the first class.

### **GOD AND ME (Grades 1-3)**

#### **Eligibility Guidelines**

Girls and boys in grades 1-3 may participate in the God and Me program even if they are not in a Girl Scout, Boy Scout or Camp Fire group (church youth and Sunday School members may participate in this program).

- A pastor's signature showing completion of the program is required on the application/order form at the back of the student's workbook in order to receive an award for completing the course (this will be obtained at the end of the program).

#### **Schedule**

The schedule for completing the God and Me curriculum will include five different sessions (an introductory meeting plus four sessions to complete the four lessons), plus one make-up session.

#### **Curriculum Goals**

- To provide an opportunity for young people and families to explore their faith together
- To help children realize that God is active in every part of their lives
- To help children know that Jesus is their best friend
- To memorize the Lord's Prayer

#### **General Description**

The God and Me curriculum is designed to help children become best friends with Jesus and tell their story of "God and Me" together.

- Children will tell their story of "God and Me" by starting with the creation story. Children will learn that God is their Creator and that God calls them by name, and they will give praise to God.
- Their story will continue as they learn of God's love through Jesus. As they tell parallel stories of their own birth and the birth of Jesus, they will proclaim that Jesus was born to be their Savior.
- Children will learn how important prayer was to Jesus and that God wants them to pray. They will be encouraged to talk and listen to God as they share from their heart. They will learn four parts of prayer to help them share their thoughts with God, and will memorize the Lord's Prayer.
- Their story of "God and Me" will wrap up with the parable of the lost sheep. As children learn to lean on God as their Good Shepherd, they will be challenged to reach out and be "good shepherds" to those around them.

#### **Adult Mentor Program**

Parents have the option of enrolling in the God and Me Adult Mentor Program. In this program, the parent is an active learning participant alongside the child.

- The parent would have lessons and projects to complete in the Mentor Workbook just like the child, and then both parent and child would work on the student curriculum together.
- The mentor program is designed to provide the 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.

## **GOD AND FAMILY (Grades 4 & 5)**

### **Eligibility Guidelines**

Girls and boys in grades 4 & 5 may participate in the God and Family program even if they are not in a Girl Scout, Boy Scout or Camp Fire group (church youth and Sunday School members may participate in this program).

- A pastor's signature showing completion of the program is required on the application/order form at the back of the student's workbook in order to receive an award for completing the course (this will be obtained at the end of the program).

### **Schedule**

The schedule for completing the God and Family curriculum will include six different sessions (six sessions to complete the six lessons).

### **Curriculum Goals:**

- To provide an opportunity for young people and families to explore their faith together
- To learn six ways of strengthening families through faith
- To help families grow in God's love
- To memorize the Ten Commandments

### **General Description**

The God and Family curriculum is designed to help youth understand the importance of family and God's role in a healthy family. The God and Family Program provides an opportunity for young people and their families to explore their faith together. The children will learn 6 Biblical steps of a good family life. To remember these lessons, children will compare families and "pizza." The six steps for making pizza will give students a concrete, "hands-on" model on which to build their understanding of God's love for their families. They will make a pizza as they study how families can grow together in God's love, and they will choose "family projects" to be done with their family at home.

- Students will read passages from Deuteronomy and Matthew to learn how families need to build their foundations on God and on God's love.
- A family's heritage, especially its Christian heritage, is an important part of its identity.
- The individual members of a family bring unique gifts and talents that strengthen and make their family special. Students will be challenged to name their own gifts and the special gifts in each member of their family.
- Families need to be held together, too. Christian rules and guidelines can help families relate to each other and live together as God's family. They will then be required to memorize the Ten Commandments.
- By relying on God, families can come through the heat of tough times and be even stronger. Students will be challenged to name the "faith tools" that can help their families in tough times.
- Families need to provide spiritual nourishment for family members, and they need to share the good news of Jesus Christ with those around them. Students will read about the feeding of the five thousand and the Great Commission to learn the importance of sharing God's love with other people.

### **Adult Mentor Program**

Parents have the option of enrolling in the God and Family Adult Mentor Program. In this program, the parent is an active learning participant alongside the child.

- The parent would have lessons and projects to complete in the Mentor Workbook just like the child, and then both parent and child would work on the student curriculum together.
- The mentor program is designed to provide the 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.

## **GOD AND CHURCH (Grades 6-8)**

### **Eligibility Guidelines:**

Girls and boys in grades 6-8 may participate in the God and Church program even if they are not in a Girl Scout, Boy Scout or Camp Fire group (church youth and Sunday School members may participate in this program).

- A pastor's signature showing completion of the program is required on the application/order form at the back of the student's workbook in order to receive an award for completing the course (this will be obtained at the end of the program).

### **Schedule**

The schedule for completing the God and Family curriculum will include 7 different sessions. The God and Church program takes three months to complete.

### **Curriculum Goals:**

The God and Church program will lead young people on a faith journey with three parts:

Meeting Jesus, worshiping God, and witnessing and ministering for Christ.

- To strengthen young people's relationship with Christ
- To challenge young people to learn about and participate in the worship and ministry of their church. Participants will work with their pastor or other Christian adult as they study the church's structures and objectives and participate in service projects that will give them a better understanding of the mission of the church.
- To have young people make a plan for daily Bible reading and memorize a creed or statement of belief or passage of scripture.
- To provide the opportunity for young people to experience the joy of serving others.
- Participants will create either a video or a photo album to share what they have learned on their faith journeys.

Ideally, the youth will complete the portions of this program devoted to history and beliefs of his/her own congregation and denomination under the supervision of his or her own pastor. However, at Shepherd of the Valley we routinely teach the course to students who belong to different denominations. The students can benefit from this type of comparative study and learn to appreciate the unique aspects of their own denomination.

### **Part I -- My Journey: Meeting Christ**

- Students will be challenged to see Jesus as a real person who shared our humanity.
- They will study scripture to understand why it is important that Jesus was human and become familiar with major events in the life of Jesus.
- Students will study what Jesus said about his true identity and read the testimonies of people in the Bible to understand that Jesus is the Son of God.
- Students will read about the birth of the church at Pentecost and learn that Jesus invites us into relationship with the church.
- They will then study the history of their own congregation and denomination.
- They will be required to memorize a creed, statement of belief, or significant passage of scripture.
- Students will read their Bible every day for at least three weeks. Their counselor will help them choose a plan.

### **Part II -- My Journey: Worshiping God**

- Students will discover how Jesus worshiped God in his everyday living.
- They will also learn about prayer.
- Students will explore the different worship opportunities in their congregation and attend a worship service with their mentor or counselor.
- They will study the different parts of a worship service and the special celebrations in the church year.
- Attending a worship service at the church of another faith will be done as part of Project II.

### **Part III -- My Journey: Witnessing and Ministering for Christ**

- Witnessing and ministering go hand in hand. Students will learn of Jesus' compassion for people who are hurting.
- Students will study the structure of their congregation and learn about the outreach programs of their church.
- The final project requires young people to do service hours for their congregation as well as for their community.
  - They must do at least 5 hours of church service (Scout Sunday service hours count).
  - They must do at least 5 hours of community service (Scouting for Food service hours count).
- They are also required to invite a friend or acquaintance to church (or to participate in a service project).

### **Interdenominational Resource**

The God and Church curriculum was developed without theological bias; yet it was designed to permit the introduction of particular theological and denominational viewpoints on the material being studied. It is the responsibility of the counselor to provide this specific instruction. Therefore all students use the standard God and Church curriculum regardless of church membership.

At the God and Church level, when students study their specific denomination, the following denominational logos are available on the medal awarded for completion of the program, for members of these denominations: African Methodist Episcopal, Baptist, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Episcopal, Lutheran, Pentecostal, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Presbyterian Church in America, and United Methodist. Information on ordering these recognition items is contained in the Student Workbook. (These denominational medals are available only at the God and Church level.)

### **Adult Mentor Program:**

Parents have the option of enrolling in the God and Church Adult Mentor Program. In this program, the parent is an active learning participant alongside the child.

- The parent would have lessons and projects to complete in the Mentor Workbook just like the child, and then both parent and child would work on the student curriculum together.
- The mentor program is designed to provide the 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.

## **GOD AND LIFE (Grades 9-12)**

### **Eligibility Guidelines**

Youth in grades 9-12 are eligible to participate in the God and Life program even if they do not belong to a Girl Scout, Boy Scout or Camp Fire group (church youth and Sunday School members are eligible to participate in this program).

- A pastor's signature showing completion of the program is required on the application/order form at the back of the student's workbook in order to receive an award for completing the course (this will be obtained at the end of the program).

### **Schedule**

The schedule for completing the God and Life curriculum include 7 different sessions (an introductory meeting plus 6 sessions to complete the five lessons).

### **Curriculum Goals:**

To provide opportunities for young people to:

- Strengthen their relationship with Christ
- Be open to God's calling in their lives
- Make a plan for daily Bible reading
- Experience the joy of serving others
- Write a statement of commitment

### **General Description**

The God and Life curriculum is the final program in the God and Country series. After being introduced to Jesus as their best friend (God and Me), learning how the family is to grow strong in God's love (God and Family), and studying the church as the body of Christ (God and Church), students in the God and Life program will seek to understand their call to a life of discipleship.

The God and Life curriculum will focus on the life of the Apostle Paul as recorded in Acts 9:1-31. This is a brief account that describes how Paul encountered Christ and was changed forever. Five chronological "events" out of this story will be highlighted and used as the focus for the five different sections in this program. Each section will illustrate a key element in learning how to live one's life for Christ.

- God does not call perfect people. God calls ordinary people and transforms them.
- The Christian life needs the help and fellowship of Christian believers.
- The Holy Spirit is at work in our lives – we just need to respond!
- Times of difficulty and suffering may strengthen our dependence on God and prepare us for greater service. God does not guarantee an easy life, but God does promise to be with us.
- God can use each of us for His purposes!

### **Adult Mentor Program**

Parents have the option of enrolling in the God and Life Adult Mentor Program. In this program, the parent is an active learning participant alongside the child.

- The parent would have lessons and projects to complete in the Mentor Workbook just like the child, and then both parent and child would work on the student curriculum together.
- The mentor program is designed to provide the 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.