

Venturing

In the LDS Church

You must think outside the box...

- Take off your Boy Scout hat
- Erase from your mind “tradition”
- Don’t be obsessed with advancement
- Be flexible
- Empower your youth
- Remove roadblocks, don’t create them

Priest Duty to God & Venturing



The Priest Duty to God requirements will satisfy many advancement requirements for the Venturing program

Does the LDS Church support Venturing?

- Scouting officials met with President Thomas S. Monson in January of 1998. President Monson strongly endorsed the creation of Venturing and its implementation in the Church.
- Elder F. Melvin Hammond of the General Young Men's Presidency has said:
- “The Church supports Venturing, it is a part of our program. If you've got something better for your young men of priest age, then go ahead and do it. But if you don't, you better look very carefully at Venturing. As magnificent as this Church is, we're not holding our boys. We've got to save these boys. 65% of the Aaronic Priesthood youth in the United States and Canada will never serve missions, and even a greater number than that will never enjoy the blessings of the temple and eternal marriage.”

Elder Spencer J. Condie

2nd Counselor in the General Young Men's Presidency

- October 25, 2001, Logan, Utah
- We want every young man to earn his Aaronic Priesthood Duty to God Award and we want every young man to earn his Eagle Scout Award.
- We want to re-enthroned Mutual in the Church
- Scouting is here to stay
- The youth program of the Church needs to have more sizzle in it
- Our youth are out running their spiritual supply lines
- All Priests should be registered in a Venturing Crew

Is Venturing Optional?

“If I were a Bishop, I would no more consider not having a (Venturing Crew) than I would think of not having a Priest’s Quorum. We must realize that Scouting is an activity arm of the Aaronic Priesthood, and that Priesthood leaders are also Scouting leaders...Our present policy is that Stake Presidencies may approve a program other than (Venturing) if it is a fully developed, better program, but *we have yet to see anything better on a consistent basis*. Each time I look into such “better” programs, I see a (Venturing) program with a different name attached to it, or even more often, I see unsupervised basketball.”

-Elder Robert L. Backman

**Elder Robert K. Dellenbach
First Quorum of Seventy**

“There’s a new program in Scouting called Venturing. The scouting organization has taken the old Exploring program and completely renovated it, but held onto many of the fine and wonderful attributes that it contained.

“Venturing provides wonderful outdoor activities, high adventure, opportunities for learning about citizenship and sociability. *It is a great program for Priest-age boys in the church.*

1999 LDS Church Video on Scouting

Is Scouting on trial in the Church?

“I do not believe that Varsity Scouting is on trial in the Church, nor is Boy Scouting, Cub Scouting, or Venturing. But rather it is my firm belief that Bishops, and the ward leaders, the advisors, Scoutmasters and coaches are on trial.”

“The program will work if they will work and become trained and put into effect the things they have been trained to do.”

Elder Vaughn J. Featherstone

16 to 18 year old young men need:

- Positive Melchizedek Priesthood Role Models
- Consistent leaders that “walk their talk”
- Tenured leaders- (average tenure is 7 months)
- Leadership opportunities and training
- Well planned, but flexible activities with other young men and young women
- Life skills training and spiritual experiences outside the classroom
- Opportunities to become proficient at something, it builds self-esteem

16 to 18 year old young men want:

- Challenging physical activities with young men their own age
- Recognition of their “older” status
- Activities with young women
- Independence
- To explore and experience their world
- A sense of belonging and acceptance from their peer group

Why doesn't Scouting work as well as it should in the LDS Church?

- We don't read the BSA literature and use their resources
- We seldom think outside the box or look at the big picture (mission, aims, methods)
- We are obsessed with Advancement (1 of the methods)
 - We measure success by one standard
 - What is the first question you ask your son when he returns from Scout camp?

If we could read the thoughts of a 17 year old young man...

- Scouting is...merit badges
- Scouting is...Dad & Mom bugging me about getting Eagle... and I can't drive
- Scouting is...wearing the uniform in my closet
- I have my Eagle...why is Brother Jones bugging me about earning another award
- No wonder most of our Priest-age young men want little to do with "Scouting"

Don't introduce "Venturing" to the young men.

Introduce resources to them, one boy at a time.

Use the Venturer Handbook, Venturing Leader Manual, Ranger Guidebook and Priest Duty to God Book together.

Not only on the Sabbath

“Can Sunday meetings be enough? Do we dangerously assume that, having performed on Sunday with Sacrament Meeting, Sunday School and Priesthood Meeting, that we have fulfilled our callings and are through until next Sunday?”

Sitting in Church for three hours each Sunday will not save our young men. They need to practice what they have learned in the laboratory of the outdoors.

Thayne Packer

What motivates you in your Church calling?

- Fear
- Duty
- Love

Call the Right Leaders

The call to serve should not be equated with the thought of limited service

Training

- At the time of the call should be given:
 - Crew Fast Start Video
 - Fast Start packet
- Within 90 days:
 - Attend Basic Training

Experience - (Ideal)

- Returned Missionary
- Parent of a Venturer
- Outdoorsman

Attributes

- Personal interest in boys
- Enthusiastic
- Positive Example

“Boys Need Heroes Close By”

“Boys need heroes close by. They need to know some man of towering strength and basic integrity, personally. They need to meet them on the street, to hike and camp with them, to see them in close-to-home, everyday, down-to-earth situations; to feel close enough to them to ask questions and to talk things over man-to-man with them.”

Spencer W. Kimball

Plan a well-rounded, customized program that blends Duty to God, mission and career preparation: Venturing has produced resources to help with the following:

- Expertise and program helps for 25 Outdoor disciplines
- Annual planning meeting agenda
- Youth officer job descriptions
- Ethical Controversies
- Safe Driving
- How to introduce a speaker
- How to make a speech
- How to use parliamentary procedure
- Leadership Skills Training

We can't compete with the entertainment industry, here's what we can do...

- Provide opportunities to serve
- Teach , teach, teach...we are teachers
- Demonstrate that you love them
- Praise them in front of their peers
- Leader's enthusiasm- it doesn't matter what the program is... it's enthusiasm

LET THE YOUTH LEAD

- Adult shadow leadership
- Hold periodic planning sessions to fine tune the annual plan
- Always have a three month calendar
- Hold regular presidency meetings
- Train the youth about leadership
- Meet in advance with the Crew President
- Ranger and Silver Awards require Venturer to share what he's learned with others

Most Frequent Excuses

- “My boys aren’t interested in Scouting”
 - When you describe Venturing, they will quickly see that this is not “Scouting” as they view it
- “Not enough boys in the Priests Quorum”
 - Recruit non-members, if it is fun, they will come
 - Combine occasional activities with the Varsity Team
- “The budget guidelines prohibit us from doing all these fun things”
 - Plan ahead- get \$\$ budgeted for Venturing in advance
 - Use community resources for little or no cost activities
 - Raise \$\$ for the annual camp, just like the Deacons. The annual camp can include scuba, mountain biking, COPE, horses, shooting sports, etc.

Can the wants and needs of the young men in your Priests Quorum be met with no planned mutual night activities?

Is the current program in your Priests Quorum, meeting the needs and wants of the young men better than Venturing can?

Can the Bishop afford to delegate the responsibility of meeting the needs and wants of his Priests Quorum to any other program or plan?