



A periodic look at how members of FUMC Delmar are putting their faith to work

MILESTONES

First United Methodist Church of Delmar

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SCOUTING AT FUMC: Our Church has sponsored Scouting for several generations — and it's still going strong!

We all have a mental image of scouting – boys on overnight hikes, girls selling cookies and working on craft projects, boys and girls doing community service. But what is scouting really about today? Is it still relevant in our Internet-paced world? And why should our Church support scouting?

As the profiles in this *Milestones* make clear, the answers to these questions are that scouting builds the same values it always has; that it is more relevant now than ever; and that the Church supports scouting because it makes our community a better place! In short, scouting is alive and well in Bethlehem, thanks in no small part to the Church's support nine Girl Scout Troops, one Cub Scout Pack and Boy Scout Troop 75!

FUMC is the official sponsor of Boy Scout Troop 75, founded in 1930 and hosted by the Church ever since. Bill Johnston was an early member, and many other Church members have taken part over the years. Roger Sutliff joined the Troop in the 1940s, and returned with his son in the 1970s, serving as Scoutmaster and organizer of the first Winter Sportsmart, which continues today as the Troop's primary fundraiser. Currently the Troop hosts about 40 boys (ages 11-18) and several Church families.

Rick Ryther is both an Assistant Scoutmaster and the Church's representative to the Troop. He has been active in

scouts for several years with his son, Andrew, including trips to summer camp near Long Lake. "Scouting is a youth ministry of the Church," Rick points out. "It is something other than TV or video games. It's about character-building. You take a young boy and help him become a responsible, self-disciplined man who in turn will lead the next group of boys." Part of this growth process comes through required service activities, both to the Church (e.g., Fall Fair prep) and to the community (e.g., food pantry, Eagle Scout projects).

Rick adds that scouting is not just a boys/dads activity, but involves entire families. Many Troop 75 outings like laser tag include siblings. And this summer Andrew, Rick and daughter Caitlin – who is in the Boy Scouts co-ed Venturing program – will travel to the Florida Keys for a week-long sailing program. Caitlin and sister Rachel have both been Girl Scouts, while their younger brother Sam is a Cub Scout "in the pipeline" to join Troop 75 next year.

Melissa Beegle is the undisputed "Queen of Girl Scouting" at FUMC. She volunteers with three of the nine Girl Scout Troops that meet at the Church. Melissa and Dana Burns run a Daisy Troop (kindergartners) with about 10 girls – including their daughters Margaret and Erin - who do arts and crafts and some outdoors activities. Tina Beegle is part of a Brownie troop (3rd graders) that goes on monthly field trips and works on badges like science and body awareness. Filling the rest of



Troop 75 boys learn how to build a campfire

Milestones appears from time to time to showcase the ways FUMC is in ministry. If you have a suggestion for a topic we should cover, please contact Stephen Rice at 439-2629 or

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Troop 703 on a "campout" at the State Museum

Scouting at FUMC

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Melissa's free time is her Juniors troop (6th graders), including daughter Leslie, who meet once a month, go on hikes, do indoor rock climbing and other "tween" activities. All three troops do service projects; for example, the juniors made over 120 Valentines for residents of the Good Samaritan nursing home.

How did Melissa get so involved in scouting? It all started when Leslie's Troop leader moved away, creating an opening that Melissa filled. "At first I wasn't sure if I could do this, but I find that I really enjoyed working with the girls and getting to know Leslie's friends," Melissa explains. Younger sisters Tina and Margaret saw how much fun Leslie was having, so they "encouraged" Mom to get them in scouts as well. "I used to worry about getting the achievements covered, but I can see that the best part of Girl Scouts is giving the girls a chance to be together and enjoy each other's company. It's not 'just another activity'." Melissa adds that she has seen the scout program "break down barriers" between girls who might not be close friends at school. She also values having her various meetings in the familiar surroundings of the Church.

Both of Barb Turi's children are involved in scout groups. Her son Michael is a member of FUMC's own Troop 75. Michael enjoys the community spirit of the Troop and he really likes representing the Troop at Church events like Scout Sunday and the 75th Anniversary celebration last year. Barb really values how the scout program expects the boys

"to strive to work for something; nothing is handed to you," so the boys mature as they work on their merit badges and other advancement requirements.

Michael's positive experiences with scouting led Barb to seek out a Girl Scout troop for her daughter, Gabrielle. Gabby is a member of the newly formed Troop 703 that meets once a month at the Church – with their leader, Janet Rathjens and daughter McKenzie – and do outside activities as well. Gabby has enjoyed learning sign language, participating in a World Thinking project – Troop 703 represented France – and an overnight "campout" at the State Museum. "The most important thing about Girl Scouts is the values that the girls learn," Barb explains. "The girls learn about friendship and team work, and they build self-confidence." For example, Gabby was able to make friends with girls who go to a different elementary school, which probably wouldn't happen otherwise. Barb adds that the Church has been a good host to the Troop, providing an "open door" in a community where meeting space has become harder to find.

As you can see, the more things change the more Scouting stays the same! Scouting continues to offer the timeless values that boys and girls need to grow into productive adults, and our Church is a significant partner. If you have a child who is interested in scouting, or if you are interested in being an adult volunteer, please contact Rick Ryther (for Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts) at 475-7568 or Melissa Beegle (Girl Scouts) at 439-9379 for more information.

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Brownie Troop 28 at an acting workshop at Capital Rep