

CHAPTER 11

Outdoor and Campfire Ceremonies



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Scouting Goes Outdoors

Remember that the outdoor program runs like a thread through the Scouting program. When dens and packs are outdoors, ceremonies are appropriate—and important! Outdoor pack activities can start with an opening ceremony and end with a closing ceremony or closing campfire. If an outdoor pack activity is replacing the monthly pack meeting, there should also be an advancement ceremony so that awards can be presented promptly.

Things to Remember

When planning an outdoor ceremony, consider these details ahead of time:

- Weather can make it difficult to keep candles lit. Have a backup plan and always remember fire safety rules.
- Outside noises from wind and water can make it difficult to hear voices. Keep the group close together and have the speaker face the crowd.
- Plan your flag ceremony carefully. If you do not have a secure flag holder, have the boys present the flag and continue to hold it during your flag ceremony. Then have them retreat with the flag. Whether we are inside or outside, we give the U.S. flag the same respect and handle it properly.
- Use nature as a backdrop. Look around and chose a location that showcases your event.
- Sweep the area and walkways, looking for loose rocks and tree roots that might trip a boy or adult.
- If you are using a campfire, learn and follow the rules for fire safety.
- Keep ceremonies short!

Campfire Lighting

Preparation: Narrator enters carrying a lighted candle to light the fire.

NARRATOR: This light is the symbol of a Scout's promise to do his best to do his duty to God and his country, to help other people, and to obey the Law of the Pack. We light our fire tonight with the spirit of Scouting. (*Lights the fire with the candle.*)

Campfire and Candles

Materials: Leader and seven boys holding candles

LEADER: (*Lights candle from campfire.*) Welcome to our campfire. Let us draw from it the warmth of Scouting and the spirit of brotherhood. (*Lights candle of Cub Scout 1.*)

CUB SCOUT 1: In its light, we see new chances to be helpful and to do our best. (*Lights candle of Cub Scout 2.*)

CUB SCOUT 2: In its warmth, we think about friends and learning how to get along with others. (*Lights candle of Cub Scout 3.*)

CUB SCOUT 3: In the rocks around the fire that contain the fire, we learn to control our tempers and become good citizens. (*Lights candle of Cub Scout 4.*)

CUB SCOUT 4: From the smoke that rises, we learn to do our duty to God. (*Lights candle of Cub Scout 5.*)

CUB SCOUT 5: The spark that lit this fire reminds us that small things can lead to greater good deeds. (*Lights candle of Cub Scout 6.*)

CUB SCOUT 6: Fire needs to have wood to burn brightly, and we need the care and love of our families as we grow. (*Lights candle of Cub Scout 7.*)

CUB SCOUT 7: In the flames of this campfire, we see the fun of Scouting! (*All blow out their candles.*)

Invocation of the Fire

CUB SCOUT 1: May this be a fire of peace and goodwill where we may gather and share our thoughts.

CUB SCOUT 2: May this fire be beautiful.

CUB SCOUT 3: In the magic of its mystery, may we see the ever-changing beauty of the world.

CUB SCOUT 4: May this fire be a place where fellowship, adventure, and fun sit side-by-side.

CUB SCOUT 5: May this fire, this night, remain forever in our hearts as the first fire kindled by humans has stayed a part of us through the ages.

Outdoor Code

Preparation: Three boys walk in with the U.S. flag.

CUB SCOUT 1: As an American, I will do my best to be clean in my outdoor manners.

NARRATOR: I will treat the outdoors as a heritage. I will take care of it for myself and others. I will keep my trash and garbage out of lakes, streams, fields, woods, and roadways.

CUB SCOUT 2: As an American, I will be careful with fire.

NARRATOR: I will prevent wildfire. I will build my fires only where they are appropriate. When I have finished using fire, I will make sure it is cold-out. I will leave a clean fire ring or remove all evidence of my fire.

CUB SCOUT 3: As an American, I will be considerate in the outdoors.

NARRATOR: I will treat public and private property with respect. I will use low-impact methods of hiking and camping.

CUB SCOUT 4: As an American, I will be conservation-minded.

NARRATOR: I will learn how to practice good conservation of soil, waters, forests, minerals, grasslands, wildlife, and energy. I will urge others to do the same.

CUB SCOUT 5: Let us think about these responsibilities as we stand and sing "America the Beautiful."

Campfire Advancement

Preparation: Start with a very small campfire and have small pieces of tinder attached to each award. Each boy adds his piece of wood to the fire after receiving his award.

NARRATOR: Our Cub Scouts have worked hard this month on achievements, electives, and activity badges. As they learn and grow, they are adding fuel to the fire that makes our pack go. As each of you receives your award tonight, you will add a piece of tinder to help our campfire grow also. *(Call the boys and parents forward to receive Tiger Tracks and Arrow Points; Tiger Cub, Bobcat, Wolf, and Bear awards; Webelos activity badges; Webelos and Arrow of Light awards.)* You can see what a difference this tinder has made to the fire of Scouting in our pack!

Circle of Light

CUB SCOUT 1: As darkness creeps into our circle of light,

CUB SCOUT 2: Embers that glow and sigh,

CUB SCOUT 3: Draw our friendship circle closer,

CUB SCOUT 4: Whisper memories that will not die.

CUB SCOUT 5: God's magic dances in our fire's flames,

CUB SCOUT 6: And fills the gathering night

CUB SCOUT 7: With mystery and a wondrous peace

CUB SCOUT 8: That bids safe sleep 'til morning's light.

Benediction

CUB SCOUT 1: May the silence of the hills,

CUB SCOUT 2: The joy of the wind,

CUB SCOUT 3: The music of the birds,

CUB SCOUT 4: The fire of the sun,

CUB SCOUT 5: The strength of the trees,

CUB SCOUT 6: And the faith of youth,

CUB SCOUT 7: In all of which is God,

CUB SCOUT 8: Be in our hearts now and evermore.

Irish Blessing

NARRATOR: May the blessed sunlight shine upon you and warm your heart until it glows like a great fire, so that a stranger may come and warm himself at it, and also be a friend.

Light of Day Has Left Us

CUB SCOUT 1: The light of day has left us.

CUB SCOUT 2: Our campfire burns low.

CUB SCOUT 3: A good day of Scouting done, we can sit back and consider our rewards.

CUB SCOUT 4: The whole of nature surrounds us: towering trees, running water, green grass, hills and valleys, animals, stars, and especially good friends.

CUB SCOUT 5: Our fire still warms us against the chill night air.

CUB SCOUT 6: The fire focuses our attention, embers glowing, giving a soft light to silhouettes.

CUB SCOUT 7: We remember our hours of teamwork, as we became a Scouting family.

CUB SCOUT 8: While the fire becomes ashes and only a memory, our friendship and our Scouting traditions go on forever.

