



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on May 10, 2018

Mormon Church to Part Ways With Boy Scouts

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) — the Mormons — announced May 8 that it will sever its ties with the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) following a 105-year close relationship with the organization.



In a [joint statement](#) with the Boy Scouts, the Mormons said the two groups had “jointly determined” that, as of the end of 2019, “the Church will conclude its relationship as a chartered organization with all Scouting programs around the world.”

The statement noted that the “Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the Boy Scouts of America have been partners for more than 100 years. The Scouting program has benefited hundreds of thousands of Latter-day Saint boys and young men, and BSA has also been greatly benefited in the process.”

However, the statement said, over the past several years the Mormon Church “has grown from a U.S.-centered institution to a worldwide organization, with a majority of its membership living outside the United States. That trend is accelerating. The Church has increasingly felt the need to create and implement a uniform youth leadership and development program that serves its members globally. In so doing, it will be necessary for the Church to discontinue its role as a chartered partner with BSA.”

The joint statement explained that “the intention of the Church is to remain a fully engaged partner in Scouting for boys and young men ages 8-13” until the end of 2019, and that LDS “encourages all youth, families, and leaders to continue their active participation and financial support.... While the Church will no longer be a chartered partner of BSA or sponsor Scouting units after December 31, 2019, it continues to support the goals and values reflected in the Scout Oath and Scout Law and expresses its profound desire for Scouting’s continuing and growing success in the years ahead.”

While there was no indication from the statement of ideological or moral differences between the two organizations, one suspects this might have been a factor. In recent years, the Boy Scouts have made major decisions at odds with Mormon religious convictions — as well as the very moral foundations of the Boy Scouts. Keep in mind that this statement comes on the heels of the BSA’s announcement that it will change its name to simply [Scouts BSA](#) and transition into allowing girls to participate in all scouting activities — including the BSA’s highly esteemed Eagle Scout program.

While for over a century the Boy Scouts steadfastly maintained a policy against behavior and lifestyles at odds with ordered society, in 2014 BSA officials announced that the organization would allow boys who self-identify as homosexual to join its ranks.

And while the Boy Scouts had faced a high-profile scandal that revealed decades of the abuse of boys by scout leaders, in 2015 the organization announced that it would allow openly homosexual adults to serve as scout leaders. Following that move, the Mormon Church issued a [statement](#) saying it was “deeply troubled” with the direction the Boy Scouts were heading, and that the Church would be



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evaluating its future relationship with the BSA.

“The Church has always welcomed all boys to its Scouting units regardless of sexual orientation,” the LDS statement noted. “However, the admission of openly gay leaders is inconsistent with the doctrines of the Church and what have traditionally been the values of the Boy Scouts of America.”

The Boy Scouts’ most recent move to integrate girls into the long-time boys-only organization began with an announcement in October 2017 that the organization would welcome girls into its Cub Scout program (traditionally for younger-aged boys) and offer “a Scouting program for older girls that will enable them to advance and earn the highest rank of Eagle Scout,” according to a BSA press release.

In a statement, the BSA’s CEO Michael Surbaugh insisted that the move “is true to the BSA’s mission and core values outlined in the Scout Oath and Law. The values of Scouting — trustworthy, loyal, helpful, kind, brave, and reverent, for example — are important for both young men and women.”

Surbaugh said that it was necessary for the BSA to change “how our programs meet the needs of families interested in positive and lifelong experiences for their children. We strive to bring what our organization does best — developing character and leadership for young people — to as many families and youth as possible as we help shape the next generation of leaders.”

While the BSA and major media have attempted to spin public response as overwhelmingly positive, in reality the majority of individuals understand that the differences between the needs of young men and women require different organizations and efforts.

The *New York Times* quoted one longtime Boy Scout Leader, Joseph Carballo, whose two sons are Eagle Scouts, as saying that girls have no place in Boy Scouts. “Boys and girls should have separate organizations for activities,” he said. “There is an organization for girls. It’s called the Girl Scouts.”

Similarly, Bob Adelman, an Eagle Scout and longtime writer for the *The New American*, decried the Boy Scouts’ continued slide into cultural compromise. “The Boy Scouts was at one time in our nation an esteemed and worthy organization because of its commitment to helping form generations of boys into solid and dependable young men,” he recalled. “Now it has become little more than a sad footnote in history, known more for compromise than commitment to the boys and families it claims to serve. The welcoming of girls into its ranks is one more predictable step on its way to irrelevance.”

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