

## CHARTERING ORGANIZATION RELATIONSHIP

### What is a Chartering Organization in the BSA?

A Chartering Organization (CO) sponsors one or more Scouting units (Packs, Troops, Crews, Posts, Ships, etc.). The CO agrees to provide **free** meeting and equipment storage space for the unit(s). COs traditionally are places of worship, Parent-Teacher Organizations, local police or fire stations, and private non-profits such as a VFW chapter. Our CO is St. James's Episcopal Church. In the remodeled St. James, Troop and Pack 56 have been given Tuesday evening for meetings.

### What is the relationship between the CO and the Scouting unit(s)?

The CO **owns** the Scouting unit franchise and within BSA rules, has broad autonomy over our operations and membership. We are fortunate that St. James's has always supported our inclusive membership with a hands-off approach on our activities. While the BSA **allows** units to be inclusive, individual COs **can dictate** terms of membership. Some faith-based COs continue to ban LGBTQ members and girls or even require that Scouts be members of that particular CO.

### Who is in charge?

The Institutional Head (IH) of the CO has authority over the Scout units. At St. James's, that currently is Rev. Matt Stewart. He is kept apprised of the units' operations by the Charter Organization Representative (COR). The COR must be a member of **both** the CO and the Scout unit. The COR for all the Scout units chartered to St. James's is Dr. Michelle Holmes.

### What does history tell us about this relationship?

Historically, churches have chartered Scout units primarily as an activity for their own youth. Demographic changes have resulted in very few Scouts being members of St. James's. **This means a different relationship with the CO.** Rather than serving its own members, the church's sponsorship of Scouting is a major form of charity, reflecting the church's values. In that way, the Scout units occupy a role similar to the role occupied by the Food Pantry.

### How should this inform our behavior toward the CO, St. James's?

- Understanding that it is a huge privilege to be able to use the church spaces for free;
- Appreciating how St. James's supports our inclusivity with minimal proscriptions;
- Being respectful of church property and grounds;
- Being realistic that St. James's has space priorities higher than the Scout units;
  - The primary use for the space is to be available for church member programming
  - Secondary use is for organizations who help pay the church's bills by renting space for their activities.

Understanding that community service to St. James's is mandatory for every Troop member. Community service outside of St. James's does not count toward this requirement. This is how we thank the CO for sponsorship and free meeting and storage space. In the past, that has included clean-up days, working in the Food Pantry, hosting coffee hour after worship service and entertaining young children at church events.