

Girls Friendly Society
Leadership Manual
A Brief Introduction



Welcome to GFS

Your daughter has decided to join GFS! She is going to have a great time at church with her leader and other girls.

What will she do?

- ❖ Attend fun meetings with church friends.
- ❖ Work together on projects that help the others.
- ❖ Earn badges for her vest by completing the study guides - reading the Bible and other stories, talking about what the stories mean, doing crafts and participating in games and drama activities. She will wear her vest proudly at GFS events.
- ❖ Meet girls from other churches by attending diocesan GFS events such as Rally Day, the Summer Beach Party and GFS Camp.



Introduction to Girls Friendly Society

Girls Friendly Society is a parish based fellowship for girls, ages 5-21. It is affiliated with the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion. This society was originally founded in England in 1876 to support the needs of young girls who had left their homes in rural areas to work in city factories. GFS was founded in the United States in 1877.

Description of GFS and the Badge Program

Today, GFS is designed to meet the needs of the girls in our congregations. The meetings usually take place twice a month at a time the leader and girls choose. *At the meetings, the group may spend their time in any way they choose that creates fellowship and supports the GFS motto "Bear Ye One Another's Burdens and so Fulfill the Law of Christ."* The badge curriculum is helpful because it gives structure to the purpose of GFS and provides many ideas for leaders that are practical to do and fun for the girls.

Installation Service for New Members

A new member is installed into GFS after she has attended four meetings and is familiar with the GFS motto and prayer. The GFS admission service is found in the Leader's Handbook. At the service, which is conducted by the priest or a lay reader, the girls receive their GFS pin, the GFS badge and a Membership Card.

Earning Badges

Badges are earned by completing the requirements listed in each study guide. Leaders are encouraged to select the activities that work best for the girls in the group. Remember, the study guides are only part of the GFS program. It is important that GFS includes other types of fun and enriching activities, service projects for the community, and worship.

Girls Friendly Society Leadership Manual A Brief Introduction



Notebooks

Each girl should have a notebook to keep her work in. This notebook will contain her study guides and any additional work done. The branch leader should help the girls keep their notebooks organized so they can be reviewed by the branch advisor or diocesan board if necessary. The notebook also becomes a memento of the girls' work that they often save into adulthood.

Awarding the Badges

At the end of the year, the branch leader determines which badges each girl has earned. The badges are ordered from the diocesan board. These badges should be presented to the girls in a special way. They can be announced and awarded as part of a Sunday service or in a separate awards service

Uniform

The GFS uniform is a white vest with blue lining. The ready-to-wear vests and sewing pattern are available from the diocesan board. It is a hip length, loose fit style. The badges are sewn on the vests. A white blouse and navy skirt can also be worn as part of the uniform.

