



# Girls Friendly Society Leadership Manual



### **GFS Motto:**

Bear Ye One Another's Burden's and so Fulfill the Law of Christ. Galatians 6:2

### **Purpose:**

The purpose of GFS/USA is to provide a girls' weekday program within the Episcopal Church whose members accept the Christian faith and seek in the fellowship of worship, study, work and play to serve God and extend his kingdom.

### **GFS Prayer**

O Lord, Our Heavenly Father, we beseech Thee to Bless us  
and all who belong to the Girls' Friendly Society.

Strengthen and protect us by thy Fatherly love,  
and vouchsafe to us the guidance of Thy Holy Spirit.

Help us all to bear one another's burdens and to live,  
not for ourselves but for others,  
as members of one family in Christ

Cleanse us from our sins,  
make us holy by the indwelling of The Holy Spirit,  
and bring us all at last to the joy of thy heavenly kingdom,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

AMEN

### **FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE HYMN**

*This song is sung at the end of every meeting. The members, leaders and parents  
form a circle, holding hands crossed in front of each other and sing:*

Bless our friendship circle, may it grow and grow,  
Blessing all within it, as we homeward go.

(Sing to tune of Hymn #42, 1982 Hymnal)



## A Brief Introduction to GFS

You have decided to join GFS!  
That means you will have a great time at church with  
your leader and other girls.  
What will you do?

- ❖ Attend meetings with your church friends and have fun
- ❖ Work together on projects that help the people around you
- ❖ Earn badges for your vest by following the study guides:  
reading the Bible and other stories, talking about what the  
stories mean, doing crafts and participating in games and  
drama activities
- ❖ Meet girls from other churches by attending diocesan GFS events such as Rally Day, summer pool  
parties and camp
- ❖ Wear your vest proudly for special GFS events



### Introduction to Girls Friendly Society for Parents

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.

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## Notebooks

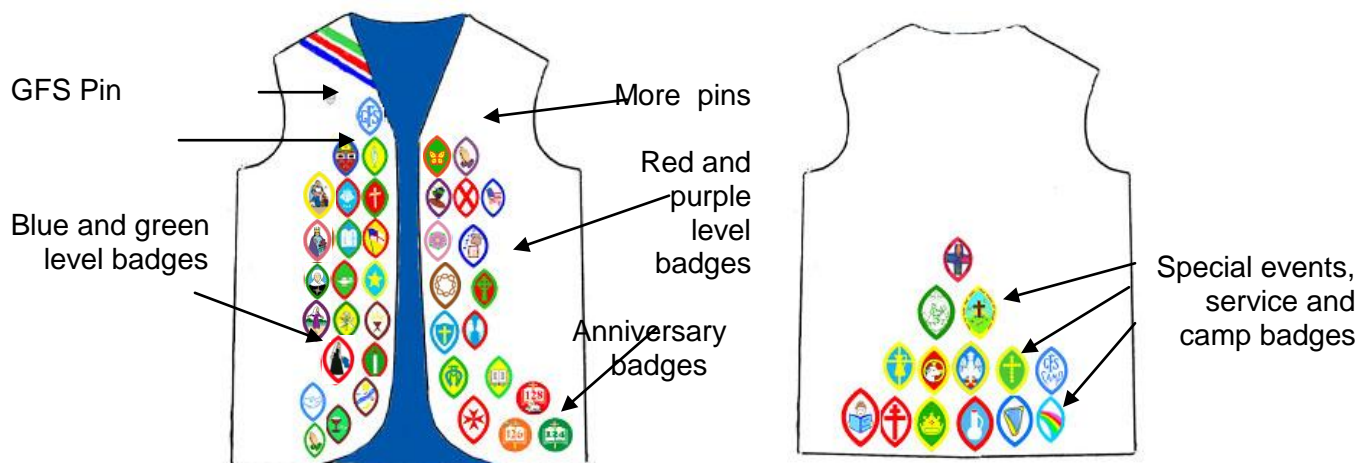
Each girl should have a notebook to keep her work in. This notebook will contain her study guides and any additional work done. The branch leader should help the girls keep their notebooks organized so they can be reviewed by the branch advisor or diocesan board if necessary. The notebook also becomes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



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## Guide For Establishing A New GFS Branch

### Who can be a leader?

- The primary branch leader/advisor must be a communicant of the Episcopal Church of the United States of America. Additional leaders may or may not be communicants of Episcopal Church of the United States of America.
- A branch leader is a woman who embraces the responsibility of working with girls to provide the understanding, encouragement, training and support that girls need to mature.
- A branch leader is a woman who is always growing as a person and in her relationship with God, has the strength of her Christian convictions, and is willing to understand other's needs and interests.

### How many girls are needed?

- Remember, *for where two or more are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.* Matthew 18:17.
- A branch can include all ages of girls between ages 5 and 21. It is recommended that they divide into smaller groups for badge studies. However, for fellowship, fun and service activities, the mixed group allows older members to model good behavior and practice leadership skills
- Membership is open to all girls of any race or religion.

### How to rally parish support

- The GFS branch should have very close relationship with its parish. Planning should incorporate the parish priest's input. Members of the congregation should be relied on as resources.
- Hold an introductory meeting with the parish priest, parents, former GFS members, and vestry members. Ask for support from the diocesan board.
- Host a fun service activity to bring the girls and parish together as a team. For instance, offer a free parish spaghetti dinner if parishioners will bring Christmas gifts for the local soup kitchen or homeless shelter.

### Diocesan requirements

- Obtain the permission of parish priest and submit a **Charter Application** to the president of GFS/LA

### Tips for successful meetings

- Make plan for the year using the **Schedule Planner**
- Supply a snack.
- Make a reminder phone call or email the day before your meetings.
- Set up the room before the members arrive.
- Maintain an attendance chart, keep records of parish service and community service hours.
- Retain a notebook for each girl to collect her badge work.
- Plan a balanced schedule of badge work, community service activities, fellowship activities and fun.
- End every meeting with the Friendship Circle Song. This creates a fun tradition.
- Ask parents to share responsibilities of providing snacks, preparing craft activities, planning outings and supervising service projects.
- Follow recommendations for prevention of sexual misconduct. Have two leaders present at all times.
- Take photographs for scrapbooks and newsletters

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Use this sample as a guide to planning your GFS year.

## Sample GFS Master Schedule

Meeting Date	Snack	Devotional Reading	Service Project	Badge Work	Extra Enrichment Activities
September 20	Teri	Page 13			Beginning of year party and crafts
October 11	Joan	Page 25	Dog toys for animal shelter	Blue Group: Dorcas Badge Green Group: Fish Badge	
October 25	Madeline	Page 7		Blue Group: Dorcas Badge Green Group: Fish Badge	Spider Bread for Halloween
November 8	Brianna	Page 14	Make Thanksgiving card for senior citizens	Blue Group: Dorcas Badge Green Group: Fish Badge	
November 22	Teri	Page 24		Blue Group: Dorcas Badge Green Group: Fish Badge	Learn to wrap a gift package
December 13	Joan	Page 9			Make gifts for parents
January 10	Madeline	Page 16		Blue Group: Elizabeth Badge Green Group: Star Badge	
etc					
etc					
etc					



## **Leader Requirements and Responsibilities**

Women who are interested in furthering the purpose of GFS may become advisors or leaders. Advisors help guide the GFS branch; leaders work directly with the girls. The primary advisor/leader must be a communicant of the Episcopal Church. Additional leaders may or may not be communicants of the Episcopal Church.

All leaders and advisors are responsible for the welfare of each every girl. GFS/USA and GFS/LA requires that leaders who work with the girls receive Safe Church Training to prevent misconduct and keep a current certificate on file at their parish.

A Christian leader is always growing as a person and in her relationship with God. She has the strength of her Christian convictions. She is honest, sincere, kind, and straightforward. She appreciates the rights and needs of others.

### ***To the branch leaders:***

As a branch leader, you hold a special position of responsibility. You are making a commitment to yourself as well as of yourself. Because you will be giving a great deal of yourself, you must develop a support system suitable to your needs. Remember Christ said, "I am with you always." In order to remain a strong leader, find tangible ways to make this true in your life and leadership.

It is your role to influence the group toward the achievement of their goals. This involves understanding what is important to each girl and creating an environment in which she can learn and grow. Involving the girls in planning activities will help you see the program through their eyes and better meet their needs. If they feel the program addresses their goals and values, the girls will respond positively and enthusiastically.

As a leader you will be developing and exercising leadership skills that will include decision making, problem solving and resource development. You will be directive, supportive and achievement oriented. As such, you will be open to new ideas, a good listener, and willing to challenge and be challenged. In addition, you will be a promoter of GFS and the guardian of the relationship between your branch and your priest and parish.

Part of your responsibility is to be aware that the girls in your group are growing, energetic, and inquiring. It is important to recognize each girl as a whole person with unique intellectual and physical abilities, personality traits, emotional states and maturity levels shaped by her background and experiences.

Thus, for you and the girls, recognition of individual aspirations, abilities, and home environments is necessary. Listening, respecting each other's rights, understanding needs and interests, and growing in spirit and knowledge should be goals mutually shared by you and the girls.

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## Membership Levels and Descriptions

There are three level of membership in Girls Friendly Society:

- **Active Members**  
Members can be any girl between the age of 5 and 21. To be officially admitted, a member needs to have attended 4 meetings, be familiar with the GFS prayer, motto and history and understand the promise to make her body strong, her mind clean, her words true and her actions right, to be friendly to people of all races and countries as member of God's great family and her best to worship and serve faithfully in her Church. Members are awarded a GFS member pin and GFS badge to wear on their vests.
- **Sponsors**  
Women, twenty-one years of age or over, who are interested in furthering the purposes of the GFS organization may become a GFS Sponsors. GFS Sponsors provide moral and prayer support to GFS and are asked to spread the word about the work of GFS.
- **Sustaining Members**  
These are women who are nominated by the Board of GFS/LA in recognition of the outstanding commitment they have made to the Girls Friendly Society program



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## GFS Traditions and Standards



### GFS Emblem

The GFS emblem and all of the badges are in the shape of a vesica. The vesica shape is an oval with pointed ends, which is used in art to surround sacred figures. It is also reminiscent of the shape of a fish, an important Christian symbol.



### Palm Crosses

One traditional task that GFS branches perform for their parish is to fold the palm crosses for use on Palm Sunday. This is usually done the day before Palm Sunday at a special meeting. However, palm crosses can be made up to a week in advance and preserved in a sealed Ziploc bag in the refrigerator. Since palms dry out easily, it is a good idea to drape a damp cloth or paper towel over the crosses until distributed.



### Leaders

GFS leaders come in all shapes and sizes! The primary leader must be a communicant of the Episcopal Church. A leader is responsible for the welfare of each girl under her care. GFS/USA requires that all leaders participate in a workshop for Safe Church training and keep a current certificate on file at the parish. Please refer to the document on Leader Responsibilities and read the GFS Guidelines, Standards and Policies on Misconduct.



### Installation of new members

Members may be officially admitted to Girls Friendly Society after they have attended 4 meetings. They should know the GFS Prayer and Motto, be familiar with GFS history and understand the promises they will make at the Admission Service. Members are awarded a GFS member pin and GFS badge to wear on their vests. Leaders may use her own discretion to determine the amount of material a girl must learn in order to be installed as a member. The admission service is available as a separate document.



### Vests and Notebooks

In the Diocese of Los Angeles, the badges are worn on a white vest with navy lining. Vests are worn for special ceremonies and at worship services, but not to regular meetings. Since the badge work is a significant accomplishment, it is customary for each girl to maintain a blue notebook containing her work. This is a record of what she has studied and is often saved into adulthood. Dividing tabs help keep the work organized. A copy of the badge curriculum and its requirements, signed off, should be filed behind each tab, along with any written work or illustrations. The vest patterns are available at [www.GFSCalifornia.org](http://www.GFSCalifornia.org).

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## GFS Traditions and Standards (continued)

### Recurring GFS Events

The Diocese of Los Angeles GFS hosts a Rally Day in the Fall and Not So Quiet Day during Lent. An Anniversary Service is held once a year. GFS celebrated its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2002. Members who have completed a level are awarded their stripe at the Anniversary Service, along with a small certificate, signed by the Bishop of the Diocese of LA.

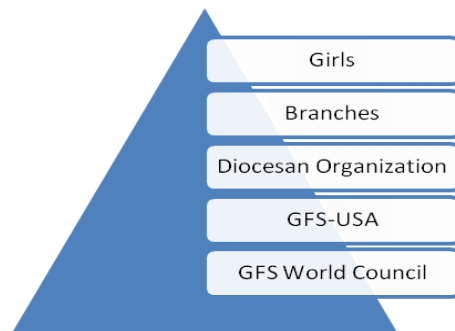
In addition, the GFS World Day of Prayer is celebrated on September 29 and GFS/USA Week is celebrated from the last Sunday in January through the first Sunday in February. The National Board of Directors suggests that branches celebrate GFS/USA week by participating in the Souper Bowl of Caring. Visit [www.souperbowl.org](http://www.souperbowl.org) for more information.

GFS/USA meets for business meetings and fellowship every three years at National Assembly. The next National Assembly of GFS will be in 2016. GFS World Council meets every three years. The next World Council will be in 2014 in Wales.

### GFS Organizational Structure

The girls form the basic unit of GFS. They are the basic unit of membership. Two levels of membership for adults exist in the Diocese of Los Angeles: Sustainers and Sponsors.

The girl membership is organized in branches at the parish level. The Diocesan Board of GFS/LA supports the network of branches. The Diocesan Board of GFS/LA is a member of GFS/USA and GFS/USA is a member of the GFS World Council.



### Sponsors and Sustainers

There are two levels of adult female membership in GFS. Sponsors can be former members, leaders, mothers or anyone who supports GFS. Sponsors help support GFS by being “image promoters”, sharing about the ministry of GFS and praying for the needs of GFS. Sustainers are women who have served GFS well and are nominated and voted to this level of membership at the GFS/LA Annual Meeting.

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**A History of GFS in England and America**



**Life for girls in the 1870s**

GFS history dates back to the 1870's, an age that seems to have little connection with our own times. Yet, it too was a day of new things. Steam power for travel on land and sea was still a matter of wonder. It turned the wheels of the new spinning and weaving mills springing up everywhere. The Industrial Revolution had begun.



Girl at work in textile mill

It was also a new age for girls and women in England and America. They began pouring into the manufacturing towns to work in the factories or to serve in homes of wealthy industrialists. Some girls came with their families, but many of them arrived alone. The work was drudgery, yet for some girls it offered independence and a chance to go out into the world and "do something". We, who may take for granted the idea of working at all sorts of jobs, can scarcely realize the stir caused by these pioneer girls of the 1870s. The girls often found, however, enjoyment of their "freedom" limited. They worked long hard hours and were lonely and without friends. They had no appropriate social outlets for their free time.

**Mrs. Mary Townsend, an English woman, sees a need for GFS**



Mary Townsend

In England, Mary Elizabeth Townsend, a young married woman, watched this change with concern. She herself was a pioneer. Vivacious, talented she painted and sculpted well, and was a gifted musician she was alert to the new movements of her day. When her husband was a candidate for Parliament, she campaigned with him and proved to be the better speaker of the two, at a time many people considered it improper for women to speak in public.

Mary Townsend was not a social reformer in the usual sense. But as founder of the GFS, she was one of the people who helped change the conditions of the 19th century to those we enjoy today.

**Mary Townsend founds the first women's organization in the Church of England in 1875**

Living in the country and working with a rescue organization in the Diocese of Winchester, Mrs. Townsend saw the challenges of girls who left their country homes to become servants in large town households. The girls were cut off from their families more completely than we can understand; they were uneducated and inexperienced,

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and they were lonely. Mrs. Townsend thought it would make all the difference in their lives if they knew of someone on whose friendship and knowledge they could call on at need. A woman of keen and thorough mind, she outlined a plan and then considered her idea for two years, until 1875, in order to make sure her idea was practical. She proposed her idea to the Archbishop of Canterbury, her own rector and three women.



House servants,  
late 1800's

On January 1, 1875, the Girls' Friendly Society was founded. The first girl's or women's organization in the Church of England, its purpose was to provide girls with friendship and recreation, bound in a fellowship of Christian love and service.



Elizabeth Mason  
Edson

### **Miss Elizabeth Mason Edson, an American woman reads about GFS**

In America women's lives were also changing. Quiet New England villages were transformed almost overnight into industrial centers where the blast of the mill's whistle marked the time of day for thousands of people. Lowell, Massachusetts was such a town and the home of Elizabeth Mason Edson. Her father was the rector of St. Anne's Church. Elizabeth was doing what she could to make her Sunday School class a center of friendship for the girls. She felt deep concern about the girls' working conditions in the Lowell mills.

### **Miss Edson founds GFS in America in 1877**

Elizabeth read in an English magazine, "The Packet", about the newly formed Girls' Friendly Society. She realized the potentialities of GFS for American girls and women. She wrote to England for more information. Elizabeth lived in Lowell, Massachusetts, known as the birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution and the first true American factory town. Girls were recruited from all over New England to work in the textile mills in Lowell. They lived in boarding houses. Elizabeth saw the potential for GFS to serve these girls.



Girls Friendly Society Window  
at St. Anne's Parish, Lowell  
Massachusetts

In 1877, Elizabeth Mason Edson began a GFS branch. The nucleus of the branch was her Sunday School class, but it included other girls from all over Lowell Massachusetts.

GFS defined itself as "a week-day group work organization within the Protestant Episcopal Church, whose members accept the Christian faith and seek in the fellowship of worship, study, work and play to serve God and extend His Kingdom". In 1879, the Massachusetts diocesan organization served as the center for national activities. Four years later the GFS signed a treaty granting the use of its name and emblem to the Girls'

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Friendly Society in America (GFSA). The Central Organization of the GFSA, established in 1886, provided a true national organization. GFS started publication of magazines in 1888. A constitution adopted in 1893 was later amended in 1917; the organization incorporated in 1895.

### **GFS is active in social programs for immigrants and laborers**

During its early years, GFSA established homes and centers for young workingwomen. Through close ties with the Chaplain of the Port of New York, immigrant women arriving in America received job and housing assistance. GFSA assisted in forming the Traveler's Aid Society in 1887 and began making systematic reports to the General Convention of the Episcopal Church in 1895.



**Early Red Cross Ambulance**

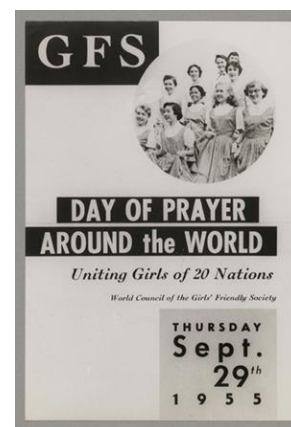
Between 1900 and 1920, GFSA sought protective legislation for girls, worked for labor reform, and provided a number of war related services including raising thousands of dollars for Red Cross ambulances. In 1920, the National Council named GFSA one of the Cooperating Agencies of the Episcopal Church.

In the mid-1920s, GFSA changed its name to The Girls' Friendly Society of the United States of America (GFS/USA) and reincorporated in 1929. In the years that followed, GFS/USA became involved with refugee aid, issues involving women and industry, and armament limitations.

### **Changes to the structure of GFS**

In 1948, a revision of the GFS Constitution limited GFS membership to those girls and young women between the ages of 7 and 21. As a result, some women over the age of 21 formed a separate organization known as the Sponsors of the Girls' Friendly Society in the United States of America.

GFS/USA became an official observer at the United Nations in 1953. During the same year, GFS/USA opened national offices in New York City. GFS/USA joined the newly formed GFS World Council in 1955. The World Council, which meets every three years, was formed to promote fellowship between the member countries by the exchange of information and ideas, to promote world assemblies and camps and to encourage visits and correspondence between members.



**GFS poster, 1955**



The Summer Opportunities Program began in 1955; members who participated in the program spent their summer working in the Mission Fields of the Church.

### **More Changes to GFS Structure**

In the mid-sixties, there was a movement within the national church to question the need for and value of individual organizations such as GFS, ECW other



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guilds, within the church. This resulted in extensive cutbacks in the national program due to lack of funds. The constitution and bylaws were suspended in 1966, eliminating the operation of GFS/USA as a national organization. The Society's capital assets were transferred to the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Fund of the Protestant Episcopal Church. A GFS Trust Fund, to be managed by the new GFS Board of Directors, was established. The National Office of GFS/USA closed on December 31, 1966. The Christian Education Department of the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church assumed responsibility for the national program. Many diocesan and branch programs continued to operate as before, but others simply collapsed without the link to a national office.

### **GFS re-organizes**

An Ad-Hoc Committee, later named the National Coordinating Board, formed in 1967. This board, consisting of diocesan presidents and key persons, served as a communications link between the organized diocesan structures and remote branches of the Society. The determination and dedication of this committee resulted in the unification of the National Board of Directors and the National coordinating Board as one Executive and Legislative Board of GFS/USA. On March 31, 1979, a Declaration of Unification was signed containing the same definition of GFS as in 1877. This act re-established GFS/USA National Assembly and made it possible for the organization to once again participate in the international GFS World Council.



**USA delegation to World Council**

At the ECW Triennial meeting in 1985, GFS/USA was seated as an associate organization with two voting delegates. The 1986 National Assembly adopted a resolution opposing apartheid, an action reminiscent of GFS opposition to racism in 1890.

### **GFS in the new millennium**

In 2002, GFS/USA celebrated 125 years of GFS in the United States. Celebrations were held in Philadelphia and in Los Angeles on the same day, with over 400 women and girls in attendance. In 2005, USA hosted the GFS World Council in Villanova, Pennsylvania and in 2008, GFS/USA sent representatives to the GFS World Council in Seoul, South Korea.

Today GFS diocesan and branch programs are meeting new challenges and continuing, through both tradition and change, to meet the needs of GFS members.



**World Council attendees in Seoul, South Korea, August 2008**

For more information on the GFS/World organization, visit [www.gfsglobal.org](http://www.gfsglobal.org).

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## The Girls Friendly Society in the United States of America

### Standards, Guidelines, Sexual Misconduct Policies 1995

#### **Purpose**

The Girls Friendly Society takes seriously its responsibility to provide a safe and secure environment for all participants in all GFS activities. The fundamental basis for all that follows rests on what it means to uphold the standards of Christian respect and dignity in all relationships. To this end, the National Board of the GFS/USA has adapted these standards to protect all children, youth and adult participants. These standards will be in place and used at all activities involving children and/or youth. The National Board encourages all branches to adopt similar policies for their events. Of particular note are the standards that deal with abuse and sexual misconduct. These guidelines are designed to promote a safe Christian community while minimizing the opportunity for misconduct to occur. Any and all allegations will be taken seriously and a uniform protocol will be used to ensure justice and consistency.

We also recognize the possibility that wrongful allegations may occur. Therefore, a shared approach involving the priest, bishop, legal, mental health, and pastoral approaches is highly desirable. Open communication between all involved will be encouraged, while respecting privacy, which precludes involving anyone who is not directly involved or needed in evaluating a case. Anyone interested in further information regarding these standards may contact the National GFS Board. We are committed to continuing dialogue and communication on all of these issues. These standards will be evaluated and updated as needed.

#### **Standards**

These standards apply to all GFS events that involve youth. For the purposes of this document, youth is understood to be any person below the age of 18. Adults are understood as ages 18 and above. Only adults may be leaders.

- 1) No person attending any GFS event is to be physically, emotionally, or sexually abused. Physical abuse is defined as bodily injury of one person by another. Emotional Abuse is the devaluing of another such as name calling or indicating to another that she is worthless. Sexual abuse is any sexual activity between a youth and adult or between youth when there is an unequal distribution of power, such as when one person is significantly older or larger. In addition, sexual misconduct will not be tolerated. Sexual misconduct includes sexual abuse, exposing a youth to a sexually provocative material, inappropriate physical exposure by an adult to a youth, etc.
- 2) Illegal drugs and alcohol may not be used by or be in possession of any adults or youth at GFS activities. Anyone found with these substances will be excluded from the activity and sent home.
- 3) All GFS youth activities prohibit smoking.
- 4) Youth left at a site for an activity are required to remain there under the supervision of the leaders until they have been picked up by their parents or guardians. GFS leaders who participate in the activity and bring their youth to an event are required to maintain supervision of the youth.
- 5) No one will be discriminated against at any GFS activity on the basis of their race, color, gender, sexual orientation, physical disability, origin, ancestry or religion.
- 6) No youth event in GFS shall have less than two adult leaders. At the minimum, the National Church standard of one adult for every ten youth will be followed.

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Standards, Guidelines, Sexual Misconduct Policies (continued)  
1995



- 7) Adult leaders are to avoid dropping of and/or picking up youth without being accompanied by another adult. Families are encouraged to arrange their own transportation.
- 8) At times when one on one interaction with youth cannot be avoided, another adult is to be present or at least aware of the place of consultation and who is being counseled. Every attempt will be made for counseling to take place in a public place such as a corner away but in clear view of others. Seclusion is to be avoided.
- 9) All youth must have parental/guardian permission to attend GFS events.
- 10) All adult leaders are to refrain from giving personal gifts or money privately to youth without first consulting the parents or the GFS diocesan Board.
- 11) No GFS event is to function with a closed door policy. Clergy, parents, church staff and members of the congregation all have a right to observe any activity any time.
- 12) GFS leaders will meet openly to discuss problems, accountability, policy clarification, personal feeling and issues that interfere with GFS ministry efforts.
- 13) All adult workers should be screened. An interview with the GFS Branch Advisor and clergy, the checking of references and a probation period is recommended.
- 14) A person convicted of prior incidents of sexual misconduct or abuse will not be used in any capacity for GFS programs. Any person who is accused of improper behavior is to be removed from positions that would give them access to members, until the situation is resolved.
- 15) No one is to strike or hit anyone at any time. No weapons of any kind are to be brought to GFS meetings or activities. Anyone in possession any weapon will be sent home.
- 16) No one is to be deprived of the basic human needs of food, shelter, sleep or clothing at any GFS activity.
- 17) Any person who believes she has experienced improper behavior is strongly encourage to report it to the proper legal authorizes, an adult advisor and/or the parish priest as soon as possible. Any advisor who receives a report of any suspected or actual misconduct or abuse must report it to the diocese within 72 hours. If anyone has question about a specific situation and whether to report it, she is encourage to report it anyway. Questions may be direct to the child abuse hot line.

## Protocol

1. In addition to the appropriate legal authorities, a report should go to a bishop in the diocese. All reports of improper conduct or abuse, whether from conversation, phone call or letter – accidental or purposeful - must be reported to a bishop immediately and forwards to a bishop in writing within 72 hours of the verbal report. All allegations will be handled professionally and be kept strictly confidential.
2. Reports should include the following information:
  - Name of the person making the report – address, position and telephone number
  - Name of the alleged victim – address, date of birth and telephone number
  - Names of the alleged victim's parents or guardians
  - Name of the alleged offender – address, position and telephone number
  - Detailed report of time, place and descriptions of the event
  - Physical, behavioral and any other indicators, observed, reported or know
  - Signature and date of person making the report
3. The bishop will meet with all of those involved. At the Bishop's discretion, such meetings may involve other staff member or consultants as deemed necessary. The bishop will detail the next steps at the end of the meeting.



Girls Friendly Society  
Leadership Manual  
*The Girls' Friendly Society  
of the Diocese of Los Angeles*



**BYLAWS**

**Revised, 1979, 1988, 1994, 1996, 2005, 2009, 2011, 2012**

**The portions in bold type reflect GFS/USA Bylaws and Policies binding on the Society.**

**ARTICLE I. NAME**

**The name of this organization shall be "The Girls' Friendly Society of the Diocese of Los Angeles",** hereinafter sometimes called the Society or GFS/LA.

**ARTICLE II. PURPOSE**

The purpose of The Girls' Friendly Society is to provide a weekday girls program within the Episcopal Church whose members accept the Christian faith and seek in the fellowship of worship, study, work and play to serve God and extend his kingdom.

**ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1. Classes of Membership

- a. Active Members: **Membership shall be granted to all girls between the ages of five (5) and twenty-one (21) who are members in good standing of a branch** and who have completed the requirements for admission.
- b. Sustaining Membership shall be granted at the pleasure of the Board in recognition of outstanding commitment to the Girls' Friendly Society program. Sustaining Membership is an honorary class of membership.
- c. GFS/LA Branch Advisors/Leaders and women who have demonstrated their commitment to the Society are eligible to serve on the GFS/LA Board.
- d. GFS Sponsors: Women who are of twenty-one years of age or over who are interested in furthering the purposes of the GFS organization may become a GFS Sponsor. If there is an organized group, the primary GFS Sponsor Group President/Advisor must be a communicant of the Episcopal Church in the United States of America. A Sponsor Group may have additional advisor who may or may not be communicants of the Episcopal Church in the United States of America.

Section 2. Affiliation

- a. **The Parish Branch shall be the basic unit of the Society and shall be organized and established by petitioning the Diocesan Board with the written consent of the parish clergy or the Bishop of the Diocese.** A charter shall be issued to each branch.
- b. **The Diocesan Organization includes all branches within the diocese and shall have the power to conduct its own affairs in harmony with the requirements and policies of The Girls' Friendly Society of the United States of America, Inc.**

**ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS**

Section 1. Officers Named

The officers shall consist of a President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer.

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## Section 2. Election Term

Officers shall be elected for a term of 3 (three) years. They shall assume office upon installation at the Anniversary Service.

## Section 3. Nomination and Election of Officers

The Nominating Committee shall present a single slate for the offices to be filled. Additional nominations with the consent of the nominee may be made in writing to the Nominating Chairman. Officers shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for a term of three (3) years. The Officers shall be nominated for election pursuant to the terms of Article VII, Section 1. Elections shall be held at the Annual Meeting.

## Section 4. Vacancies

Vacancies among officers may be filled by a majority vote of the Board with recommendations from the Nominating Committee. Person so elected shall serve until the end of the original term of office.

## Section 5. Duties of Officers

### a. The President shall:

- preside at board meetings
- appoint a Chaplain, Parliamentarian and Historian
- serve as ex officio member of all committees, except the nominating committee
- with the approval of the Board, appoint others as she deems necessary
- prepare the GFS/USA annual report
- collect annual reports from branches and remit to GFS/USA
- prepare additional reports as needed for diocesan purposes
- represent GFS/LA at diocesan meetings and events
- arrange for leadership training and other support to branch leaders
- recruit board members to visit branches
- prepare the annual calendar
- maintain the roster
- maintain electronic mail distribution lists

### b. The Vice-President shall

- assist the President
- assume the duties of the President in her absence
- send remembrances from the Board

### c. The Secretary shall

- keep the minutes of the Society and send copies of the minutes to board members
- notify board members of the next meeting
- distribute to members information about (a)GFS/USA Scholarship, (b)Junior Delegate to World Council, and (c)Youth Delegate to the National Board, as well as other opportunities for members to participate in national and world GFS activities.
- conduct the general correspondence of the Society
- maintain a file of the signed minutes

### d. The Treasurer shall coordinate and supervise the financial affairs of the Society. A Finance Committee may be appointed to assist the Treasurer. The Treasurer shall:

- receive all funds for the Society
- make payments in accordance with the budget

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- keep full and accurate accounts and shall present current financial statements at Board meetings
- prepare the annual budget and present it for approval at the Annual Meeting
- e. The records and files of each officer shall be transferred to her successor at the close of her term of office.

## ARTICLE V. MEETINGS AND QUORUMS

### Section 1. Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Society shall be held during January.

### Section 2. Special Meetings

Special meetings shall be called upon the written request of 1/3 (one-third) of the active branches.

### Section 3. Voting

Each Diocesan Board Member and all Branch delegates shall have 1 (one) vote. Sustaining Members may attend and participate but may not vote.

### Section 4. Quorum

A quorum shall consist of 1/5 (one-fifth) of the voting members.

## ARTICLE VI. GOVERNING BODIES

### Section 1. Board of Directors

#### a. Membership Named

The Board shall consist of the officers, 3 (three) Directors at Large, and the chairmen of the Standing Committees. **The Board shall be representative of the membership.**

#### b. Term

Members of the Board shall be elected for a term of 3 (three) years

#### c. Nomination and Election

The Board of Directors shall be nominated for election pursuant to the terms of Article VII, Section 1. Elections shall be held at the Annual Meeting.

#### d. Authority and Duty

The Board shall have general charge and control of the affairs, funds and property of GFS/LA. It shall also act as a policy making and planning body.

#### e. Regular and Special Meetings

Regular Diocesan Board Meetings shall be held no less than two times a year. Special Meetings may be called by the President of the Board and shall be called when requested as stated in Article V, Section 2.. Business matters which require a board vote may also be conducted via email communication.

#### f. Vacancies

Vacancies on the Board, except vacancies of officers, may be filled by the Executive Committee with recommendations from the Nominating Committee. Vacancies among officers shall be filled as prescribed in Article IV, Section 4. Persons so appointed shall serve until the end of the original term of office.

#### g. Quorum

A majority of the Board shall constitute a quorum.

### Section 2. Executive Committee

#### a. Membership Named

The Executive Committee shall be composed of the officers of the Society.

#### b. Authority and Duty

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The President shall call Executive Committee meetings. The Executive Committee shall have all authority and power of the Board to take emergency actions between meetings of the Board. A majority of the Officers shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of taking such emergency actions. The action of the Executive Committee shall be submitted to the Board for ratification at its next meeting.

## ARTICLE VII. ELECTIONS

### Section 1. Nominations

The Nominating Committee shall present a single slate for the Board of Director positions to be filled. Additional nominations with the consent of the nominee may be made in writing to the Nominating Chairman.

### Section 2. Elections

Elections shall be held at the Annual Meeting. All elections shall be decided by a plurality vote.

## ARTICLE VIII. COMMITTEES

### Section 1. Standing Committees Named

- a. Nominating - The Nominating Committee shall be appointed by the chairman. The nominating committee shall prepare a slate of those nominated for elective Board of Director positions and shall mail the slate to Board members and delegates 15 (fifteen) days prior to the Annual Meeting.
- b. Outreach and Community Service – The Outreach and Community Service committee will:
  - determine appropriate diocesan service projects for members
  - organize a minimum of one diocesan service project each calendar year
  - publicize diocesan service projects
- c. Supply – The Supply Committee will:
  - coordinate orders for vests from vest manufacturer
  - assist members in determining if a standard size will suffice or if custom measurements need to be taken
  - convey custom measurements to the liaison for vest manufacturer
  - work closely with the graphic arts committee to develop new badges as needed for GFS events and branches
  - will print new badges and distribute at events as needed
  - explore and develop ideas for GFS gear and uniform
  - develop and maintain an order form for GFS supplies
  - process orders of GFS supplies
  - remit payments received to GFS treasurer in a timely manner
  - bring GFS supplies to diocesan events to facilitate sales
- d. Ways and Means – The Ways and Means committee will:
  - Search out means to support and supplement the diocesan GFS budget
- e. Special Events/Camp – The Special Events/Camp Committee will:
  - plan a calendar of special events for the year
  - recruit branches to host the events on the calendar
  - identify new ideas for special events
  - post events on GFS website and Facebook
  - create publicity for special events
  - notify PGYM and Episcopal Update of special events

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- f. Newsletter – The Newsletter committee will:
  - prepare an electronic newsletter twice a year
  - work closely with the President to determine newsletter content
  - convert electronic newsletter to printable format as needed
- g. Graphic Design – The Graphic Design Committee will:
  - design badges as needed for events, new branches, and projects
  - provide graphic files, as needed, to board members
  - print badges for events, trim, and attach to card holders
- h. GFS Alumnae – The GFS Alumnae committee
  - maintain a roster of post-high school GFS members, including mailing and email addresses
  - plan at least one annual event which maintain relationships among post high-school GFS members
- i. Historian – The Historian shall:
  - be appointed by the President
  - obtain Photo Releases from members attending GFS events
  - be responsible or arrange for photographing GFS events
  - edit and maintain the photo collection
  - maintain a scrapbook of GFS events
- j. Parliamentarian – The Parliamentarian shall:
  - be appointed by the President
  - ensure that Robert’s Rules of Order are observed during meetings
- k. Chaplain – The Chaplain shall:
  - be appointed by the President
  - offer the invocation at Board Meetings
  - advise on liturgical issues for GFS worship
- l. Sustaining Members and Sponsors– The Sustaining Members and Sponsors Committee will:
  - present nominations for new sustaining members at the regular meeting prior to the Annual Meeting
  - maintain a full roster of sustaining members, including mailing and email addresses
  - maintain a full roster of sponsors, including mailing and email addresses
  - plan activities which maintain a relationship between sustaining members, sponsors and the general membership

### Section 2. Special Committees

Ad hoc committees may be created or dissolved by the President with the approval of the Board. The President shall designate their powers and term of appointment.

### Section 3. President as ex officio member of Committees

The president is an ex officio member of all committees, with the exception of the Nominating Committee.

### Section 4. Committee Expenditures

- a. Committee chairman will submit budget requests to the Treasurer in December for the following year for planning purposes

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- b. Committee expenditures must conform to the budget approved at the Annual Meeting. Excess expenditures must be approved by the Board.
- c. Committee funds will not be used for travel unless approved by the Board

### **ARTICLE IX. FUNDS AND FINANCE**

#### Section 1. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year shall be from January 1 to December 31.

#### Section 2. Accounts and Audit

The books and accounts of the Society shall be kept in accordance with sound, accounting practices and shall be audited in accordance with Diocesan policy.

#### Section 3. Budget

The Treasurer shall prepare an annual budget for approval at the Annual Meeting. Any expense not provided for in the Budget shall be incurred and paid by the Treasurer only upon approval of the Board.

### **ARTICLE X. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

Roberts's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall be the parliamentary authority for all matters not covered by the Bylaws or policies adopted by the Society.

### **ARTICLE XI. AMENDMENTS**

The bylaws may be amended by a 2/3 (two-thirds) vote of the members present at a meeting of the Society provided that the proposed amendment has been presented to the Board and mailed to Board members and delegates at least 15 (fifteen) days prior to the meeting. Therefore, these amendments cannot be passed until the next business meeting.