

Organizational Manual  
of the  
Arkansas Presbytery Youth Council

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# **I. Youth Council**

## **A. Purpose**

To strengthen ministry to and with Youth, so Youth may grow in faith and identity with the Presbyterian tradition. The Youth Council seeks to broaden the participation of Youth at all levels in the church through:

1. Empowering youth to participate in all areas of the church's life and ministry.
2. Inspiring youth through intentional faith development and worship.
3. Developing and training youth as leaders for the church.
4. Developing and planning in collaboration with other presbytery resources for the youth ministry programs for the Presbytery of Arkansas.
5. Developing and nurturing a presbytery-wide ministry network for developing connectionalism.
6. Sharing information between youth council and youth.
7. Advocating issues of justice for young people.
8. Providing a model of partnership between youth and adults at the presbytery level.

## **B. Responsibilities**

1. Visioning, planning and policy for Youth Council and Youth Council Events
  - a. Through planning teams, organize and lead Presbytery Sponsored Youth Events: Youth at Presbytery, Senior High YouthQuake, Summer Programs and Junior High YouthQuake.
  - b. Create and approve policy for the Youth Council and Youth Council Events.
2. Communication with and support for youth ministry within congregations.

## **C. Program Year**

The Youth Council's program year begins in August and ends in July.

## **D. Composition**

1. Delegates
  - a. Youth Delegates: Each congregation in the Presbytery of Arkansas is allowed up to three youth (10th-12th grade) delegates per year.
  - b. College-Age Delegates: Each congregation and/or college in the Presbytery of Arkansas is allowed an unlimited number of college-age (high school graduate through age 23) delegates per year.
  - c. Adult Delegates: Each congregation in the Presbytery of Arkansas is allowed up to four adult (23 years of age or older) delegates per year.
2. Selection of Delegates
  - a. Process: Each congregation in the Presbytery of Arkansas selects the appropriate number of delegates and registers them with the Youth Council. Registration forms will be made available to churches by April 1st and the deadline for registering will be May 1.
  - b. Criteria:
    - Must be active members of a church in the Presbytery of Arkansas.
    - Must have attended at least one youth event sponsored by the Presbytery of Arkansas.
  - c. Expectations:
    - Be committed to the work of the Youth Council and its planning teams.
    - Serve and fully participate on a planning team, completing responsibilities that it requires.
    - Attend Youth Council meeting including overnight planning retreats.
    - Provide a communications link to their local church and neighboring congregations.
    - Be committed to youth and adults working in partnership together.

- Be an active member of a church in the PC(USA).
- d. Terms of Service for Delegates
  - All delegates will serve a one-year term and may apply for additional terms each year.
  - Most delegates will serve August through July
  - The Junior High YouthQuake Planning team will serve through the end of their event.

## E. Leadership

### 1. Leadership

- The leadership of the Youth Council will be a shared responsibility consisting of Adult Co-Moderator, Youth Co-Moderator Vice-Moderator, and Ex-Officio Moderator.
- The term of service for Youth Council adult leadership will be a three-year commitment beginning with one year as the Vice- Moderator, one year as Moderator and one year as Ex-Officio Moderator.
- The Youth Moderator will be a one-year term of service.
- The Co-Moderators will preside over all activities of the leadership team and the Youth Council.
- A. Adult Co-Moderator
  - a. Responsibilities:
    - Co-Moderate the meetings of the Youth Council with the Youth Co-Moderator
    - Coordinate the Youth at Presbytery and Senior High YouthQuake Planning Teams
    - Dispense scholarship funds with the help of the vice-moderator
    - Represent the Youth Council at the Presbytery level
    - Manage the Youth Council's budget
    - Manage the Youth Council's organizational manual
    - Secure leadership for Youth Council planning teams
    - Assign delegates to planning teams
    - Create and appoint Youth Council task forces, as needed.
  - b. Election Process
 

After serving one year as vice-moderator, the vice-moderator will assume the role of moderator. If the vice-moderator is not able to assume the role of moderator, the Youth Council will elect a moderator at the August retreat.
  - c. Criteria:
    - Must be an adult delegate to the Youth Council
    - Must have been an active member of the Youth Council for at least two years.
    - Must have directed a Youth Council planning team
  - d. Term of Service:
 

The moderator will serve a one-year term, beginning in May and continuing through May of the following year. This one year term will be followed by assuming the role as Ex-Officio Moderator.
- B. Youth Moderator
  - a. Responsibilities:
    - Co-Moderate the meetings of the Youth Council with the Adult Co-Moderator
    - Represent the Youth Council at the Presbytery Level
  - b. Selection Process:
 

The Youth Council at its first meeting will elect the Youth Moderator.
  - c. Criteria:
    - Must be a youth delegate or college-age delegate to the Youth Council

- Must have been an active member of the Youth Council for at least one year
  - Must be elected by the Youth Council.
- d. Term of Service:  
The Youth Moderator will serve a one-year term beginning in August and continuing until August of the following year.
- C. Vice-Moderator
- a. Responsibilities:
- Coordinate the Summer Programs and Junior High YouthQuake planning team
  - Help the moderator dispense scholarship funds
  - Represent the Youth Council at the Presbytery Level
  - Assume the responsibilities of the moderator when necessary
- b. Selection Process: The Vice-Moderator will be selected by the Youth Council
- c. Criteria:
- Must be an adult delegate to the Youth Council
  - Must have been an active member of the Youth Council for at least one year
  - Must have directed a Youth Council planning team
- e. Term of Service:  
The vice-moderator will service a one-year term, beginning in May and ending in April of the following year.
- D. Ex-Officio Moderator
- Responsibilities:
- Serve as resource to the Co-Moderators and Vice- Moderator.
  - Represent the Youth Council at the Presbytery Level.
- Term of Service:  
The Ex-Officio Moderator will service a one-year term, beginning in May and ending in April of the following year.

## 2. Leadership Team

The Leadership Team will be comprised of the Co-Moderators, Event Directors, Assistant Event Directors, Trip Leaders and Assistant Event Leaders.

### a. Responsibilities, Selection Process, and Criteria

Directors, Assistant Directors, Trip Leaders, and Assistant Trip Leaders for Presbytery sponsored youth events must be approved by the Youth Council. Criteria are as follows:

- Must be an adult.
- Must have attended the event at least once as an adult.
- The Assistants will succeed the Event Director or Trip Leader the following year.
- Assistant Director and Assistant Trip Leaders must serve as an active member of the Youth Council.
- Trip Leaders and Directors must have served on the Youth Council for one year.
- The Director or Trip Leader shall be responsible for planning, leading, and attending the trip or event.

## **F. Relationship to Presbytery**

The Youth Council is a subcommittee of the Christian Education and Nurture Committee of the Presbytery of Arkansas.

## **G. Policies**

### 1. Attendance Policy

- An active youth council delegate is a member who remains in communication with their planning team director throughout the year and completes the tasks assigned to them by the planning team

- The Co-Moderator and Vice Moderator will consult with a church in the event that their youth delegate is unable to fulfill their term.

## H. Meetings

1. Orientation Retreat in August
2. Fall Meeting in October or November
3. Planning Team Meeting Day in January
4. Additional Meetings as needed

## II. Council Organization

**A. Standing Teams:** There are four standing teams on the Youth Council. When registering for the Youth Council, delegates will be asked to submit requests for which team they would like to serve on. Delegates will be notified as soon as possible after the teams have been assigned.

1. Youth at Presbytery
  - a. Leadership: Led by the Youth at Presbytery Director and Assistant Director
  - b. Responsibilities:
    - Organize the Youth at Presbytery event held in February
2. Senior High YouthQuake Planning Team
  - a. Leadership: Led by the Senior High YouthQuake Director and Assistant Director
  - b. Responsibilities: Organize the Senior High YouthQuake held in the spring of each year
3. Junior High YouthQuake Planning Team
  - a. Leadership: Led by the Junior High YouthQuake Director and Assistant Director
  - b. Responsibilities: Organize the Junior High YouthQuake held in the early fall of each year.
4. Summer Programs Planning Team
  - a. Leadership: Led jointly Summer Trip Directors
  - b. Responsibilities
    - Organize summer trips for the youth of the Presbytery
    - Organize summer events for the youth of the Presbytery
    - Work closely with Ferncliff to sponsor events for the youth of the Presbytery

## B. Task Forces

1. Purpose: Task forces can be created throughout the year to study a particular issue or plan a specific event.
2. Creation: Task forces can be created and appointed by the Youth Council Co-Moderators
3. Composition: Each task force should consist of a balance between youth, college-age and adult Youth Council delegates.
4. Leadership: A moderator for the task force will be appointed by the Youth Council
5. Relationship: The Task Force shall report directly to the Youth Council.

## III. Policies for Presbytery Sponsored Youth Events

### A. Drug/Alcohol/Use of Tobacco Products

1. No illegal drugs or alcohol will be allowed (by adult or youth) at Presbytery sponsored youth events. The Moderator of the Youth Council, appropriate Presbytery staff member and/or Event Director will work with the event's chaplain to counsel any participants who are found with any contraband. The Moderator, appropriate Presbytery staff member and/or Event Director, and Chaplain will work with the participants both during and after the event to create an appropriate response to the situation to work towards reconciliation of the individual. The Co-

Moderator will notify the General Presbyter of the situation and seek guidance in contacting the home church of the participant.

2. The use of tobacco products by youth will be prohibited during Presbytery sponsored youth events.
3. In an effort to ensure the health and safety of our youth, adult event participants are asked to refrain from exposing youth to tobacco products and are asked to smoke only in designated areas approved by the host facility.

## **B. Transportation**

1. Overnight Events:
  - Youth (6th-12th Graders) must be driven by an adult (23 years of age or older) to and from the event.
  - College-age students can drive themselves and other college-age students to and from the event.
  - All Participants are expected to participate in the entire event. Participants arriving late to an event, leaving early from an event or needing to drive off-site during an event must coordinate these special transportation needs with the Event Director prior to the event. Participants arriving late to an event must arrive before midnight.
2. One Day Events/Meetings
  - Youth are encouraged to find an adult over the age of 23 to drive them to the event
  - Youth who are at least 16 years of age can drive themselves and other youth to the event at the discretion of their parents

## **C. Scholarship Policy**

The scholarship fund was created to financially assist individuals after utilizing funds available through church support and personal contribution. The Youth Council Moderator and Vice-Moderator will dispense the scholarship fund as requested. The scholarship fund will be divided to provide adequate scholarships for youthquakes and summer trips. If demand for scholarship aid is higher than available funding, the available scholarship money for each category will be equally divided among all churches that have youth applying for scholarships. All scholarship requests will be held as confidential.

1. Summer Trips: One scholarship per person, per summer, for no more than one-third (1/3) of the total cost of the trip.
3. YouthQuake: One scholarship per person, per year, for no more than one-half (1/2) of the cost of the YouthQuake.

## **D. Policies on Event Participation**

1. Youth events sponsored by the Presbytery Youth Council are for the designated ages only. Churches are expected to send only youth who are of the appropriate age to Presbytery Sponsored events. Adult leaders are expected not to bring younger children to events.
2. **\*\*The age of adult leaders for Presbytery sponsored Youth Events will be 21 for Junior High Events and 23 for Senior High Events.**

## **E. Policy on the Criteria for Selection for Small Group Leaders for Presbytery Sponsored Youth Events**

- Active in a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
- Must have attended a previous year's event
- **If under 23, must have attended a YouthQuake Event as Leadership Corp**
- Small group leaders will be approved by the Event Director in consultation with the Adult Co-Moderator of Youth Council prior to the event.

#### **F. Policy for Creation of Youth Council Policy**

- Policies are meant as a strong support of a dynamic ministry and as such should be changed as appropriate for continued success.
- Youth Council policy can be proposed in writing by anyone in the Presbytery of Arkansas.
- All proposed policy must go through the Leadership Team before being proposed to the Youth Council.
- All proposed policy must be voted on by the Youth Council.
- Youth Council policy decisions may be appealed to the Christian Education and Nurture Committee of the Presbytery for final decision.

#### **G. Bed Times for Presbytery Sponsored Youth Events**

- Youth at Presbytery: no later than 1 AM
- Senior High YouthQuake: no later than 12:30 AM
- Junior High YouthQuake: no later than 12:00 AM
- Trips to youth conferences such as Mo-Ranch and Montreat will follow the conference schedule.

#### **H. Policy for Adults and Youth in Presbytery Sponsored Youth Events**

- Adults will be in charge of conference leadership positions for Presbytery events and youth should be asked to assist the adults.
- All event participants will be expected to be full conference participants.

#### **I. Ages for Presbytery Sponsored Youth Events**

- Senior High YouthQuake participants: Ninth grade through Twelfth grade.
- Junior High YouthQuake participants: Sixth grade through Ninth grade.
- Youth at Presbytery participants: Tenth grade through Twelfth grade.
- Summer program participants: as determined by the program host.

#### **J. Policy for Number of Participants Allowed Per Church**

- One church may not initially constitute more than 30% of the number of spaces available in a Presbytery sponsored trip; additional names may be placed on a waiting list and may be added after the trip deadline. This policy shall apply to all trips unless specified otherwise in a Presbytery sponsored trip registration form.

#### **K. Chaperones**

- Chaperones for Presbytery Sponsored youth trips will be selected by the trip leaders and must be approved by the Co-Moderator and the Vice-Moderator of the Youth Council.

#### **L. Money**

- Money for all Presbytery sponsored youth events must be collected by the Presbytery office.

#### **M. Presbytery Sponsored Youth Event Planning**

- The Moderator of the Youth Council must approve all plans for Presbytery sponsored youth events before they are publicized.