

MIDDLE AND SR. HIGH YOUTH CONSTITUTION

This Constitution is a working document, and not final.

Information contained in this document is flexible and subject to change depending on the needs of the particular youth group at that time. Decisions to be made regarding the constitution are left up to the Youth Leadership Committee.

Original Constitution Written:

October 12, 2001

Constitution Last Reviewed:

March 14, 2024

Date last accepted by the Board of Elders:

April 2, 2024

CONGREGATIONAL MISSION STATEMENT

New Philadelphia Moravian Church seeks to be a caring fellowship, worshiping God, and encouraging one another to seek a closer relationship with Jesus Christ, as we follow the lead of the Holy Spirit in service and mission.

YOUTH MINISTRY MISSION STATEMENT

New Philadelphia Moravian Church's youth ministry strives to be a home to all teenagers- a sanctuary where the heart of Christ shines and everyone belongs; here, we delight in all God created teenagers to be, and we seek to grow the light he placed in them to its highest height in this world and beyond.

HEART OF THE YOUTH PROGRAM

Discipleship: Just as Christ practiced with his disciples, we believe discipleship is rooted in growing alongside each other in his holy words in the hopes of becoming all God created us to be. To pass on one's learned faith for the growth of another's in Jesus Christ.

Service (Ministry): We believe that Ministry (Service) means showing up for a neighbor wholeheartedly with open hands and authentic love. To meet the needs of another with a curious mind, a respectful soul, a heart of grace, and listening ears.

Worship: We believe worship is a sacred time reserved for open-handed praise that requires a heart of gratitude and a spirit of honesty. Here anyone may approach the throne of grace in celebration, conversation, and reception of our Almighty God. Worship is not reserved for Sunday mornings, rather this can be practiced anywhere at any time. Space does not make God holy, God makes the space holy.

Fellowship: We believe fellowship is intentional time spent wholeheartedly present with others in the fullness of Christ. Here we are reminded that we are all known, heard, seen, held, celebrated, wanted, and abundantly loved.

Evangelism: Wearing the heart of Christ on our sleeves, we believe evangelism is the big invitation that reaches out to another's heart and brings them into the tender hold that we once found ourselves in the Church. "And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love, yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love".

GOVERNMENT OF THE YOUTH PROGRAM

The total work of the Youth Program shall be subject to the guidance and approval of the Board of Elders.

Youth weekly events, Sunday school, mission trips, and special events shall be under the direction of the Director of Youth Ministry and Lay Youth Leaders who shall be guided in the performance of their duties by this document and by a properly constituted committee on Youth Ministry.

COMPOSITION OF THE YOUTH COMMITTEE

The committee shall be made up of the following individuals: (an Elder or Trustee may fill two capacities)

- A member of the church staff
- Director of Youth Ministries
- Trustee Representative
- Elder Representative
- 1+ Lay Middle School Youth Leaders

- 1+ Lay Sr. High School Youth Leaders
- 1-2 Members at large representing Middle School Concerns
- 1-2 Members at large representing Sr. High School Concerns
- 1-2 Members at large representing College Student Concerns

The committee shall consist of at least 10 and no more than 16 persons covering the appointed positions and shall be approved by the Board of Elders.

Church members who would like to address concerns to the committee are welcome to do so personally. Requests to attend and a brief account of matters for discussion should be given to the Director of Youth Ministry or Board Representative at least two days before a scheduled meeting.

COMMITTEE RECORDS

The Director of Youth Ministry or an ordained pastor shall conduct all the training meetings of the committee. The Director of Youth Ministry or a Lay Youth Leader shall conduct all the business and planning meetings of the committee.

A committee secretary appointed by the Youth Director shall keep notes of the discussions and actions taken by the committee as well as keep the conversation on track so that the meeting concludes promptly.

The Director of Youth Ministry or Elder Representative will report to the Board of Elders each month. The Trustee Representative will report to the board of Trustees each month.

MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

Meetings may be scheduled at the suggestion of Board Representatives, the Director of Youth Ministry, or the committee members acting in the majority.

The committee shall have at least ten meetings a year that cover: training, planning, and business. The committee shall have one extended planning and/or training meeting in August and one extended planning and/or training meeting in January. Both will be dinners hosted off campus by a member of the Youth Leadership Committee.

Committee meeting dates for August-January will be decided upon at the first meeting following the start of the new public school year in August. Committee meeting dates for February-May will be decided upon at the first meeting of the New Year in January.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE YOUTH COMMITTEE

- To secure, train, and in extreme cases, to discipline and recommend dismissal of persons in the Middle School and Sr. High ministerial team.
- To stay abreast of the messages offered and curriculum used during youth programs, bible studies, weekly activities, Sunday school, and special programs.
- To guide, advise, and assist the Director of Youth Ministry and Lay Youth Leaders in the performance of their duties.
- To continually evaluate the success of the Youth Program in living up to its purpose and work as outlined in this document.
- To encourage participation in provincial events including, but not limited to, camps, youth rallies, and other special events.

METRIC TO SCALE GROW IN THE YOUTH MINISTRY

Growth in this Youth Ministry Program will be scaled by the following metrics:

- *Fellowship*: This ministry is something our youth want to share and invite others to. The youth feel comfortable and able to bring friends with them when they attend youth events.
- *Relationship with God*: This ministry is actively fostering the growth of our teenagers' relationship with God. Here, they feel comfortable enough to be curious and ask big questions concerning their faith and where they are with God. Over time, it's evident their relationship is growing deeper, step by step.
- *Belonging*: This ministry offers a space where everyone feels safe, heard, loved, and comfortable to be all God created them to be. There is no feeling of judgment, there are no apparent cliques or groups that have distinguished themselves from the greater mass of youth, and everyone feels welcome.

- *Relationship with Youth Director (and other involved adults):* There is an evident and progressive growth in the relationships between the youth and their Youth Director. While this isn't something to be rushed, through communication on both the Director's and youth's sides there are consistent check-ins and invitations to recitals, games, and concerts. Here the Youth Director shows up for his/her youth both in the church and outside of it (within the respect boundaries). Here the Youth Director makes an effort to write notes and send letters to check in with both the youth and the adults in this youth ministry.
- *Organic Leadership:* This ministry encourages and celebrates youth who have a heart for participation in worship. Rather than douse the spirit of a teenager eager to play guitar in the morning worship services, we joyfully work alongside them to make sure their gifts shine bright for the glory of God. This ministry recognizes and rejoices in the fact that this is their church too, their home. Here, it only takes supporting one heart for leadership to spark the movement of another.
- *Organic Invitation:* This ministry does not focus pressure on numbers, rather we see the youth for the individuals they are. Whether we have five youths in attendance or twenty, we will be just as excited, joyful, and intentional with the five as we would be for the twenty. Here we encourage organic invitation, we ask the youth for input on which events they would feel comfortable inviting their friends to, we host the event, and then we allow God to step in and do the rest.
- *Attendance:* This ministry recognizes the power of consistency and a full calendar. Consistent attendance at each event is evidence of successful ministry. Whether a day's event is bowling, bible study, or simply resting together, each gathering is important and matters to our teenagers. Sunday school will be held every Sunday with few exceptions, such as Easter and Christmas. Every Sunday possible, there will also be a youth ministry event. If there is no event, check-in notes with the youth should be sent.
- *Adult Participation:* This ministry recognizes the impact of adults on teenagers and actively seeks to invite new adults into this ministry's umbrella. A successful youth ministry is overflowing with adults willing and able to step in and lift up their teenagers.
- *Financial Receiving:* This ministry recognizes the importance of others believing in it with their hearts and, as a result, sponsoring it and our teenagers with their wallets.

PROGRAMMING OFFERED BY THE YOUTH MINISTRY

Sunday School is a discipleship offering of the overall youth program. Here, youth can find support, community, bible study, spiritual guidance, and denominational beliefs. It's important to have a safe and comfortable environment, where the youth know they can share about their week, as well as learn something new from the bible. It is the responsibility of the youth director to be intentional with check-ins with the youth that will ensure what is being taught is relevant to their current life situations.

Bible Study is a discipleship offering of the overall youth program. It is a place where persons should find support, deep biblical discussion, spiritual guidance, and Christian education. Although a wonderful thing to have, it depends on the demands of the current youth who are in the youth group about whether it is a realistic and feasible option at the time to conduct a bible study.

Confirmation is a discipleship offering of the overall youth program. Confirmation is a journey of faith formation. It is the milestone youth age into once they reach 7th grade as a 'next step' following their baptism. This class should consist primarily of 7th and 8th graders due to maturity, however, if approved by the Youth Director and Senior Pastor, a 6th grader may be admitted to the class. The Youth Director, with the support of the Senior Pastor, will teach a curriculum based on the Moravian Catechism booklet with the approval of the Board of Elders and support from the Youth Committee. Confirmation should not be defined by learning facts and trivia about Christianity and the Church, rather, it is the catalyst to a life-long journey these youth embark upon in their faith. It is the Youth Director's responsibility to foster both their Christian education and faith formation during and after Confirmation. Confirmands will be Confirmed as members of New Philadelphia Moravian Church on Pentecost each year in front of the congregation with the immediate support of their Shepherd, parents, pastor, youth director, and God.

Discipleship: The Confirmation Experience is a discipleship offering of the overall youth program. Similar to Confirmation, this class's scheduling and format should offer more flexibility for 9th-12th graders who were not Confirmed in middle school. Confirmands will be Confirmed as members of New Philadelphia Moravian Church on Pentecost each year in front of the congregation with the immediate support of their Shepherd, parents, pastor, youth director, and God.

Mission Trips are ministry offerings of the overall youth program. It is a place where persons should reach out to others in Christian love, service, and humility. It should not

be approached lightly, and a meeting should be scheduled before each trip in preparation for what they will experience and should expect. Mission Trips should be scheduled with the consideration of the current youth group and their availability and interests. If there is no response to a mission trip in a particular year, significant service opportunities should be scheduled in place of the missing trip. Therefore, Mission Trips should not be limited to or be required to happen in any given calendar year.

Weekly Youth Activities should be planned and carried out by the fulfillment of a specific purpose of the youth program. These events should offer a place where our youth know they are supported, they belong, and they are loved dearly for who they are. Here they can find fellowship, spiritual guidance, worship, evangelistic opportunities, ministry opportunities, and a variety of programming.

Youth Focused: Special Programs, Seminars, Trips, and Workshops shall be planned and guided by the Youth Committee. These programs should include spiritual nurture for all youth despite appearance, family background, or church affiliation.

Parenting Focused: Special Programs, Seminars, and Workshops shall be planned and guided by the Youth Committee. These programs should include spiritual nurture for parents of Middle and Sr. High Students.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE YOUTH PROGRAM MINISTERIAL TEAM

Sr. Pastor, Associate Pastor(s): To support and guide the youth and to participate in or lead youth activities when possible.

Director of Youth Ministry: To celebrate, love, guide, and build strong relationships with the youth and to direct the overall program of Christian development for students between 6th and 12th grade.

Designated Youth Leadership Committee Members: To support and guide the youth and to participate in leader training, attend youth leadership meetings, participate in the majority of youth events offered during the year, and lead such events as needed. To interact with students in a positive and loving manner, and to serve as a mentor to youth. Youth Committee Members must also adhere to the necessary background check and drug test before chaperoning any youth events or trips.

Designated Student Leaders: To support and guide their fellow youth and to participate in student leader training, attend youth leadership meetings, attend the majority of youth events, make all students feel welcome, communicate group concerns or needs to

an adult representative, and model appropriate program behavior. To interact with students in a positive and loving manner, and to serve as a mentor to youth.

Chaperones: To provide relief for the Youth Director as an additional source of support and guidance for the youth and to supplement adult leadership at programs. They must sign the youth ministry's code of conduct as deemed appropriate by the Youth Committee. Chaperones must also adhere to the necessary background check and drug test before chaperoning any youth events or trips.

All Lay Youth Leaders and Chaperones must comply with the New Philadelphia Safe Sanctuary policy and related screenings.

RULES GOVERNING THE USE OF CHURCH PROPERTY BY THE YOUTH

Youth events will take place in the youth building and pavilion whenever possible and will be scheduled on the calendar by communication with the church's administrative assistant.

If another area of the church is required, a request will be given to the church administrative assistant.

THE NEED FOR AN ANNUAL BUDGET

The Youth Committee shall operate under the unified budget of New Philadelphia Moravian Church, and it shall be responsible for submitting a proposed budget for the next calendar year to the Board of Trustees no later than September of the present calendar year.

The Youth Director shall create a compilation of the proposed budget and submit the working document to the Youth Committee for approval before a final submission is made to the Board of Trustees.

ANNUAL REVIEW OF CONSTITUTION

This constitution shall be reviewed and amended annually by the Youth Committee.

This review should take place no later than December of each new public school calendar year.

Should there be any amendments necessary, this constitution and the suggested changes shall be brought before the Board of Elders.

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