

CONSTITUTION OF LUTHERAN YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

This Constitution adopted November 26, 1988
Amended December 2, 1989, December 7, 1991,
December 5, 1993, December 7, 1996
November 23, 2002

Article I NAME

The name of this organization shall be Lutheran Youth Fellowship of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Article II GOALS

The goals of this organization shall be to:

- A. Provide a context through which youth shall be able to share in the oneness of Christ by proclaiming in word, deed and fellowship the Gospel of Jesus Christ our Lord.
- B. Provide greater visibility and unity for youth by making youth and youth groups feel more a part of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod.
- C. Support youth ministry through a structure that will involve people.
- D. Provide greater identity for youth.
- E. Provide resources for organizing and establishing youth groups.
- F. Assist youth in developing responsibility for their local youth group and this organization.
- G. Provide a forum for discussion and debate on local and/or current topics.
- H. Foster better communication between youth groups and youth in the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod as well as from other Christian communities.
- I. Seek and encourage inclusiveness of all persons, especially those of multicultural backgrounds and those who are differently-abled.
- J. Foster friendship and fellowship.
- K. Foster greater communication between the youth organization and the local congregation.

Article III ORGANIZATION

This organization shall be accountable to the Synod Council through the Worship and Spirituality Ministry Team.

Article IV MEMBERSHIP

The membership of this organization shall be open to all youth of Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod congregations with the primary focus in grades 9 through 12. This organization will also seek and encourage membership of all youth of these congregations, especially those of multicultural backgrounds and those who are differently-abled.

Article V THE BOARD

- A. The board shall consist of:
1. The president.
 2. The vice-president.
 3. The secretary.
 4. The treasurer.
 5. The parliamentarian.
 6. The historian.
 7. The nine mission district representatives who shall be selected by their mission districts. A mission district may select an alternate representative who may attend board meetings with voice but not vote. If a mission district representative is not present, the alternate representative shall have voice and vote.
 8. A differently-abled person.
 9. At least one and not more than two multi-cultural persons.
 10. Three adult advisors (at least 21 years old) recommended by the Youth Ministry Coordinating Team (including the synod staff person with responsibility for Youth Ministry and two others) who shall have voice but not vote.
- B. The responsibilities of the board are:
1. To plan assemblies and organize related task forces, including a nominating task force.
 2. To carry out the goals of this organization.
 3. To foster mission district youth organizations.
 4. To identify the needs of youth and youth groups and to provide resources to meet those needs.
 5. To be the responsible governing body between assemblies and to meet at least three times a year.
 6. To declare a seat on the board vacant if a member of the board is absent without excuse for two consecutive meetings and to seek to appoint a successor for a seat vacant for any reason who shall serve until the next annual assembly.
 7. To appoint committees and/or advisory council to help ensure inclusivity and meet the needs of the total constituency.
 8. To review the constitution prior to assembly.
- C. Qualifications of the board:
1. All alternate mission district representatives shall be in grades 9 through 12 when elected. All other board members shall be in grades 9 through 11 when elected. Each board member shall be a member of a congregation of this synod while on the board.
 2. Mission district representatives shall serve one-year terms which will begin at the conclusion of the annual assembly and conclude at the end of the next annual assembly.
 3. The multi-cultural persons and the differently-abled person shall be appointed by the board to a one year term which will begin at the conclusion of the next annual assembly and conclude at the end of the following assembly.
 4. The parliamentarian and historian shall be appointed by the board. Both the parliamentarian and historian may serve for more than one term of one year. The parliamentarian and historian shall be in grades 9, 10, or 11 when appointed.

Article VI THE OFFICERS

The officers of this organization shall be elected by the annual assembly to one year terms. Terms of office begin on the first day of June following the assembly at which the officers are elected and conclude on the following May 31.

- A. The president shall:
 - 1. Preside at all meetings of the board and the business sessions of the annual assembly.
 - 2. Prepare an agenda for all meetings of the board.
 - 3. Exercise general supervision of this organization's activities and affairs in collaboration with the board and staff/adult advisors of this organization.
 - 4. Support and assist the work of mission district organizations as needed in collaboration with the board and staff/adult advisors of this organization.
 - 5. Represent this organization at functions of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, its congregations, and/or the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America where appropriate or requested.
 - 6. Be a member of the synod Youth Ministry Coordinating Team.
 - 7. Submit reports to the Synod Council and the synod Youth Ministry Coordinating Team to be used in the annual Bulletin of Reports and the annual assembly of this organization.
 - 8. Communicate at least annually with other synod youth organization presidents of this region at the annual council of synod presidents meeting.
 - 9. Be in grades 10-11 when elected and be a member of a congregation of this synod throughout the term of office.
- B. The vice-president shall:
 - 1. Act in the absence of the president, assuming the responsibilities of the same.
- 2. Support the president by accepting, where possible, duties and responsibilities assigned by the same.
- 3. Oversee the planning of the annual assembly of this organization.
- 4. Be in grades 9-11 when elected and be a member of a congregation of this synod throughout the term of office.
- C. The secretary shall:
 - 1. Keep accurate minutes of all board meetings and record all proceedings of the annual assembly.
 - 2. Handle all correspondence of this organization.
 - 3. Be a member of the nominating task force.
 - 4. Be in grades 9-11 when elected and be a member of a congregation of this synod throughout the term of office.
- D. The treasurer shall:
 - 1. Be responsible for promoting stewardship and support for the ministries of this organization.
 - 2. Be responsible for receiving and recording any special monies of this organization.
 - 3. Prepare a finance report for board meetings, annual assemblies, and at the request of the Youth Ministry Coordinating Team.
 - 4. Be responsible for coordinating the deposit or designation of the special monies of its organization through the treasurer of this synod.
 - 5. Be in grades 9-11 when elected and be a member of a congregation of this synod throughout the term of office.

Article VII THE ASSEMBLY

- A. The highest authority delegated by the membership of this organization shall be vested in the assembly which shall meet in regular session once a year at the call of the board.
- B. Each congregation of this synod shall be entitled to two voting delegates who are in grades 9-12 (strongly encouraged to be one male and one female).
- C. A majority of the registered delegates shall constitute a quorum at all business sessions of the annual assembly.

Article VIII ELECTION OF OFFICERS

- A. All elections shall be by written ballot.
- B. Nominations shall be submitted on a nomination form to the secretary by the deadline designated by the nominating task force. The form shall include a listing of the nominee's qualifications for that office.
- C. The nominating committee shall provide a list of the nominees and their qualifications to each congregational delegate upon arrival at assembly.
- D. The nominating committee shall present at least two but no more than five nominees for each office. Additional nominations may be made from the floor.
- E. A majority cast on any ballot shall elect. If no election occurs on the first ballot the three nominees receiving the most votes shall be on the second ballot. If there is no election on the second ballot, the two nominees receiving the most votes shall be on the third ballot.
- F. Individuals may not serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

Article IX FINANCES

This organization shall be financed by the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council through the Worship and Spirituality Ministry Team.

Article X PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* shall govern parliamentary procedure of the youth organization except as otherwise provided in the constitution or special rules of order adopted by this organization.

Article XI BYLAWS

The board may adopt by majority vote, bylaws not in conflict with this constitution. Bylaws shall be reported annually to the assembly. Bylaws are subject to ratification by the Synod Council.

Article XII AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended at any annual or special assembly of this organization by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the delegates present provided that proposed amendments have been first sent to the board and then sent to congregations of this synod at least six weeks prior to the meeting. Amendments to the constitution are subject to ratification by the Synod Council.



BY-LAWS

Adopted December 7, 1996

By-Law I MISSION DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES

- A. The Mission District Representative's term shall be for one year from Assembly to Assembly. The representative must be in grades 9-11 when elected and be a member of a congregation of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA, while serving.
- B. The duties of the Mission District Representative shall be to:
 - 1. Attend all LYF Board meetings.
 - 2. Provide annual reports to the Board on activities in the Mission District.
 - 3. Attend all Mission District Council meetings.
 - 4. Work to carry out the goals of LYF.
 - 5. Work with the Mission District to plan for and oversee Mission District youth activities.
 - 6. Educate youth about LYF.
 - 7. Seek out an adult partner to work with.

By-Law II MISSION DISTRICT ALTERNATES

- A. The Mission District Alternate's term shall be for one year, from Assembly to Assembly. The Alternate must be in grades 9-12 when elected and be a member of a congregation of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA, while serving.
- B. The duties of the Mission District Alternate shall be to:
 - 1. Attend all LYF Board meetings.
 - 2. Attend all Mission District Council meetings.
 - 3. Assist the Mission District Representative.
 - 4. Carry out the Mission District Representative's responsibilities when the Mission District Representative is unable to attend LYF Board meetings or is otherwise not able to fulfill the responsibilities of this position.
 - 5. Carry out the goals of LYF.

By-Law III ADVISORS

- A. There shall be three advisors (at least twenty one years of age) who are recommended to the Board by the Youth Ministry Coordinating Team. One of these advisors shall be the Synod staff person with responsibility for Youth Ministry. These advisors shall have voice but not vote.
- B. The advisor's term shall be three years with the option to renew. An advisor must be an active member of a congregation of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod while serving.
- C. The duties of the Advisors shall be to:
 - 1. Attend all Board and Executive Committee meetings.
 - 2. Be familiar with *Robert's Rules of Order*.
 - 3. Be able to relate to youth and be available for guidance.
 - 4. Be familiar with LYF.
 - 5. Educate youth and adults about LYF.

By-Law IV BOARD ATTENDANCE

- A. It is expected that members of the LYF Board shall attend all Board meetings. Members shall notify an Executive Committee member prior to a meeting if they will be absent. Exception is made for emergency situations.

- B. Excused absences shall include: sickness or other medical problem, vacation or out of town, legitimate school activity (musicals, plays, concerts, etc.), other reasons deemed acceptable by the Board.
- C. Excuses will be reviewed by the Board. After two consecutive unexcused absences the LYF President shall contact the absentee and review the following:
 - 1. the importance of the Board position
 - 2. the responsibilities of the Board member
 - 3. the intention of the Board member to fulfill these responsibilities
- D. If the Board member continues to be absent from Board meetings, the Board may declare the seat vacant and appoint a youth to fill that seat.

By-Law V LYF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- A. The LYF Executive Committee shall consist of the President, Vice-President Secretary, Treasurer, and the three advisors.
- B. The LYF Executive Committee shall:
 - 1. assist the President in preparing an agenda and planning for Board meetings
 - 2. identify youth to fill vacancies and committees of the Board.

By-Law VI STANDING COMMITTEES

- A. The Standing Teams of the LYF Board shall be as follows:
 - 1. Worship and Spirituality
 - 2. Connection Building
 - 3. Leadership Development
 - 4. Witness and Service
- B. Each member of the executive committee will be a member of one of the standing teams.
- C. Each standing team is expected to identify at least one goal per year on which to work. Progress and advancement on each goal shall be reported at each meeting of the LYF Board.

By-Law VII ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE AND SUBCOMMITTEES

- A. The Assembly Committee shall:
 - 1. identify youth and adults to serve on the LYF Assembly subcommittees.
 - 2. appoint at least one member of the Board to each subcommittee.
 - 3. recommend Assembly themes to the Board.
 - 4. recommend Assembly chaplains to the Board.
- B. Subcommittees may include the following:
 - Registration and Publicity Committee*
 - Work with Assembly theme as developed by the LYF Board
 - Prepare registration materials for the annual Youth Ministry mailing (to be mailed the first week in September)
 - Determine deadline for registration (four weeks prior to event)
 - Develop logo for theme
 - Contact Nominations and Elections Committee*
 - for material to be included in mailing
 - Publicize in synod publications
 - Publicize in Mission Districts
 - Identify contents of mailing which is sent to those who register
 - Prepare name tags and packets for the Assembly
 - Handle registration at the Assembly
 - Prepare reports for the LYF Board
 - Nominations and Elections Committee*
 - Prepare information about nominations procedure to include in initial mailing (see *Registration and Publicity Committee*)
 - Determine deadline for biographical material to be received
 - Receive nominations, edit, clarify

Prepare slate for elections. Identify and recruit nominees

Ensure at least two nominees but not more than five for each office

Prepare biographical material on nominees for Assembly handbook

Prepare ballots

Name tellers

Handle floor nominations

Work with *Program and Workshops Committee* to determine times for balloting

Oversee balloting at Assembly

Prepare reports for LYF Board

Program and Workshops Committee

Prepare agenda for Assembly

Review previous year's evaluations for workshop topic suggestions

Identify workshop topics (consider theme of Assembly)

Recruit workshop leaders

Prepare workshop selection sheet for those who register

Set date for return of workshop selections (at least two weeks prior to Assembly)

Inform workshop leaders of time, place, directions, supplies required, etc. Invite them to meals.

Greet workshop leaders when they arrive at Assembly and show them workshop areas. Make sure they have supplies needed.

Write thank-you notes to workshop leaders after Assembly

Prepare reports for LYF Board

Worship and Music Committee

Work with Assembly theme to develop biblical reference

Incorporate theme into all worship

Be responsible for all worship times as determined on agenda

Plan for Sunday Eucharist with chaplain preaching (bishop may preside)

Invite bishop to participate in Sunday worship

Plan for warm-ups/music to begin each session

Obtain permissions for copying material to be used during Assembly

Plan for installation of LYF officers and Board members during Sunday worship

Lead the Chorus workshop

Prepare reports for LYF Board

Recycling Committee

Determine the products to be recycled (paper, cans, used soap, etc.)

Develop a method for recycling at the Assembly

Prepare recycling instructions for the participants

Prepare recycling containers

Determine where recycling will be taken and by whom
Prepare reports for LYF Board

Reference and Counsel Committee

Receive resolutions from Mission Districts and individuals prior to or at Assembly

Present resolutions to Assembly

Work with members and authors to clarify, rewrite, etc.

Keep accurate account of all resolutions passed for the Secretary to include in the minutes of the Assembly

Work with LYF Board to see that resolutions passed are followed up during the year

Dorm Life Committee

Review Dorm Life Agreement from year to year. Revise if necessary.

Ensure that all participants (adults included) return one signed copy of agreement and retain the other copy

Review agreement with participants at Assembly

Meet with those who do not abide by the agreement

Determine appropriate action.