

HIGHER

WORK | WAYS | WITNESS | WISDOM | WORSHIP



JOIN US FOR THE 74TH ANNUAL NATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE

JULY 11-17, 2026

M U N C I E , I N D I A N A



BALL STATE
UNIVERSITY.

INFORMATIONAL PACKET

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Greetings Brothers and Sisters in Christ!

We are pleased to invite you and your teenagers to the **74TH Annual National Youth Conference of the churches of Christ** this summer, July 11-17 at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana. The National Youth Conference is one of the most storied traditions among the churches of Christ. With youth attending from as far as California, New York, Michigan, Mississippi, and Texas; it stands alone as a premier event for teenagers.

This year's theme is **HIGHER!**
(Isaiah 55)

You're constantly being asked to level up: in your grades, your sports, your social media presence. But what if there's a higher level than anything the world can offer? It is so easy to lose sight of what is most important in life. We can get so focused on the world around us that we fail to see the God above us. If you want a life that satisfies, you must look higher than this world. God wants to elevate our view so that He can expand our world. God isn't calling you to just "try harder" or "be better." He's calling you higher—to a new way of thinking, living, and seeing yourself.

The conference is planned for youth ages 13-20. In order for youth to attend, they must attend with a designated Youth Worker from your congregation or with their own parent/guardian. Please note that you **MUST HAVE** youth workers from your congregation for both males and females, if you have them both registered. Youth workers **MUST BE AT LEAST 22** years old.

Registration is **\$425 per person through March 31st**, which includes housing and meals. Transportation to the conference is not included. Registration from April 1st - May 31st will be \$450 per person. Registration is as simple as visiting any of our social media outlets. There you will find a link to connect you to the registration page. **REGISTRATION IS OFFICIALLY NOW OPEN.**

It is our hope and prayer that you are just as excited about this year's conference as we are! We look forward to seeing you at this year's conference. How Sweet It Is to be together again!

Sincerely,

The National Youth Conference Leadership

HIGHER

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HIGHER WAYS

Isaiah 55:6-9

God's ways don't always make sense to us—and that's the point. His plans sit on a level way higher than ours. While the world pushes us to chase whatever feels good, popular, or easy, God calls us to something deeper and better. "Higher Ways" is about choosing God's direction over the world's distractions. It's learning to trust that even when God's path feels confusing, His ways are wiser, safer, and stronger than anything we could design for ourselves. When we seek Him, He lifts us higher than we could ever climb on our own.

HIGHER WITNESS

Philippians 3:12-16

You're running a race, but are you running toward the right finish line? Paul said he was pressing on toward a "higher" calling. Paul reminds us that he hadn't "arrived" yet—but he was determined to press forward. "Higher Witness" is about realizing that God can use you right now as a youth to show others who Jesus is. It's about living with purpose and owning your influence. A higher witness means being someone whose life points people upward to God's grace and power at work in you.

HIGHER WISDOM

Isaiah 55:10-13; 1 Corinthians 1:18-25:

God's wisdom doesn't always look smart to the world. In fact, it can look strange, upside-down, or even foolish. But God's wisdom is life-giving—like rain that makes things grow. "Higher Wisdom" teaches students how to think with God instead of being shaped by culture, rumors, or group chats. It's about understanding that real wisdom doesn't come from popularity, trends, or the internet, but from God's Word and the cross of Christ. When students learn to follow God's wisdom, they gain peace, purpose, and the ability to make decisions that lead to real life—not regret.

HIGHER WISDOM

Psalms 34:1-3

Worship isn't just singing; it's elevating your view of God above everything else. When life gets overwhelming, worship helps us rise above our problems by focusing on the One who is greater than all of them. "Higher Worship" teaches teens that worship is a lifestyle—choosing to praise God not only on stage or on Sundays, but in the middle of stress, exams, friendships, and everyday decisions. When we "magnify the Lord," we don't make God bigger—we just see Him more clearly. And when God is lifted higher, everything else falls into its proper place.

HIGHER WORK

Ephesians 2:10

You are not an accident! The Bible says you are God's "masterpiece", created for good works. You are equipped and assigned a Higher Work right now, not just when you're older. We'll explore your unique gifts and talents and talk about how to use them to serve your family, your school, your church and your community. Your life has been pre-wired for impact—it's time to stop coasting and start doing the Higher Work God prepared for you!



ABOUT THE NATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE

The National Youth Conference of the churches of Christ has served as connection point between teenagers and the Church through intentional programming and fellowship opportunities. By moving the event around the nation for more than 70 years, youth and the adults traveling with them gain unique wholesome experiences and meaningful connections to other believers. Founded in 1952 by the late Orum L. Trone Sr. of Michigan and his lovely "Georgia Peach" wife Christine, this event came at a time when opportunities for Christian fellowship among young people were rare and confined to local areas. This event brings youth from across the country to one location for fellowship and spiritual edification under the leadership of dedicated volunteers who work to uphold the tradition of the Trones and the other great leaders who helped to establish and maintain this event since 1952. A complete history of the conference and the current leadership team can be found at nyc1952.org.

The purpose of the National Youth Conference has remained the same through the years:

- To motivate youth to be faithful, loyal, and true to the work of the Church.
- To guide youth in the right direction that will lead to strong leadership for the cause of Christ.
- To associate with young people from other geographical areas who share the same interests.
- To give youth the privilege of self-expression.
- To give youth an opportunity to work together, exhibiting their personal worth, abilities, and God given talents.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE NATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE

Each National Youth Conference includes grade-level workshops, daily devotions, and worship services. Opportunities for prayer, repentance, baptism, and restoration are always available. Other activities are also available for youth to express their individual talents and interests in one of the following ways: Talent Show, All Conference Chorus, All Conference Drama, or Athletics. Friendly competition between the states is showcased during the Roll Call of States, and the Scrapbook Competition. There is a planned community service activity for youth as well. Information about these activities is on the website or can be sent by request.

WHAT TO BRING

- √ Medical Insurance Card
- √ Prescription/Over the Counter Medicine
- √ Bible, Notepad, Pen
- √ Toiletries, Shower Shoes
- √ Light Jacket, Umbrella, Hat
- √ Linen (sheets, blanket & towels)
- √ Appropriate clothing for each day
- √ Athletic Shoes, Casual Shoes, and Dress Shoes



PAGEANT INFORMATION

This year's conference will include the annual pageant for Mr. and Miss National Youth Conference (16-20) and Mr. & Miss National Congeniality (13-15). Contestants for these titles must be the winners of their respective state pageants in these categories. There is a separate registration packet for the pageant. It is available on the website and will be emailed directly upon request. If one of your youth is representing their state at this year's competition, please contact the Director Phillip Wade I at phillip.wade@sbcglobal.net and Pageant Coordinator Barbara Davis at barbara.davis@baxter.com.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

Although we will have an NYC Medical Team on-hand, in case of emergency situations, Youth Workers are asked to take care of any minor issues with your group. To equip Youth Workers with doing so, each group is asked to bring a small or travel sized first aid kit with them. Youth Workers are asked to check with parents prior to the conference, to ensure you have a grasp on any medications your young people may be taking on a regular basis.

DRESS CODE

The Dress Code for the National Youth Conference is as follows:

- Modest attire is required at all times. Modest is defined as appropriately fitting, not too tight or revealing, covering the midriff and cleavage. No undergarments should be exposed. If it questionable, please leave it at home.
- No shorts except for the off-site activity and Thursday during the athletic/free time. Shorts should be at or below the fingers when hands are placed to one's side.
- Those leading worship and devotions are encouraged to wear either (a) a collared shirt, whether full button or polo-style - or (b) a jacket with an appropriate shirt.
- Attire for Sunday worship and evening services: polo shirts, button-up shirts or blouses with skirts or pants, dresses, no t-shirts. Skirts and dresses should extend to at or below the fingers when hands are placed to one's side.
- While dressy attire is not required during the day sessions, we encourage our youth to dress in a business casual manner. Jeans are permitted. Please refrain from wearing jeans with holes that reveal your skin. No shorts or short sets.
- Attire for pageant: Dressy attire. Skirts and dresses should extend to at or below the fingers when hands are placed to one's side.
- All-Conference Chorus: Those planning to sing in the All-Conference Chorus should bring concert attire. This means solid black dresses or suits for ladies and black slacks with white dress-shirts or black dress-shirts for men.



AS YOU PLAN YOUR TRAVEL FOR THE 2026 NATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE

PLEASE TAKE NOTE OF THE FOLLOWING:

- **PLEASE NOTE THAT YOU WILL BE ASKED TO SIGN UP FOR A CHECK-IN TIME.** In an effort to provide more efficient check-in and check-out experiences for you, we will provide a link – no closer than two weeks to the National Youth Conference. Check-in times will be between 10:00am – 4:00pm, in 25-minute intervals.
- **PLEASE PLAN TO ARRIVE TO CAMPUS BY NO LATER THAN 4PM (CENTRAL).** Registration will close at this time. Not only will this give you the opportunity to access your rooms prior to Saturday's evening session, it will also give your group the chance to take advantage of dinner on campus. Lastly, there will also be a mandatory meeting for all youth workers on Saturday afternoon with important information for the week & each congregation will need to be in attendance.
- **ALL REGISTRATION INFORMATION WILL BE CONFIRMED PRIOR TO YOUR ARRIVAL.** Upon the close of registration, each congregation will receive a Registration Confirmation Form that will (a) confirm the names and genders of each registrant, (b) provide clarity on how many people you are being billed for, and (c) provide a space for your youth ministry's primary point of contact and a member of your church's leadership (minister or elder) to acknowledge (sign) that you are responsible for the cost of the listed number of registrants listed on that document. Instructions on returning that form to us will be included with the communication that provides you with the form.
- **HOUSING FORMS WILL BE SENT WITH YOUR REGISTRATION CONFIRMATION FORM.** With your Registration Confirmation Form, you will receive a housing template to fill in. Please fill out the housing form and return it with the Registration Confirmation Form. Any registered congregations that do not return their housing template will have their rooms assigned by our NYC Staff.
- **UPON ARRIVING, ONLY YOUTH WORKERS ARE PERMITTED IN THE REGISTRATION AREA.** We ask that all youth remain outside / in vehicles until youth workers have returned to take them to check into dorms. More information will be sent out regarding check-in location and details, as the conference approaches.



DIRECTORS

At the core of our service is our common love for nurturing Christian teenagers. The Conference leadership is comprised of dedicated volunteers. The faces have changed since 1952 but the commitment of those planning the event has never wavered. We're excited to announce the expansion of our team as we move forward!



SHAY **CATHEY**
DALLAS, TX

JOSEPH **EDWARDS**
GRAND RAPIDS, MI

FATE **HAGOOD III**
LOS ANGELES, CA

RAMON **HODRIDGE**
DALLAS, TX

GARY A. **JONESJR.**
OKLAHOMA CITY, OK

LAMONT **ROSS**
DALLAS, TX

PHILLIP **WADE I**
DALLAS, TX

PAMELA **WILLIAMS**
DETROIT, MI

ASSISTANT DIRECTORS



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COORDINATORS

WHERE YOU CAN FIND US



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National Youth Conference 1952



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