

## Choosing Youth Delegates

Central Plains Annual Meeting is just months away, so now is the time to choose a congregational youth delegate. Inviting young people to participate in Annual Meeting helps to connect youth to the broader church, introduces them to the deep fellowship we share in Central Plains, begins to grow their leadership skills, increases feelings of ownership in the church, and allows youth to help guide the conference in the present and the future! In addition, our time around tables and in worship at Annual Meeting is richer when we incorporate intergenerational voices in our discussions, Bible studies, discernment, and decision-making.

### Whom to choose

Each congregation is invited to choose one “active participant of their congregation between the ages of 15 and 20” to represent the congregation as a youth delegate. *Youth delegates have full participation in the delegate body.* Additional youths are welcome to be a part of the youth delegate program, but will not have voting privileges, so if congregations choose to send more than one youth to Annual Meeting (which we’d love!), they must designate one the “youth delegate.” Please consider choosing youth delegates by the same mechanism by which your congregation chooses non-youth delegates.

### Making the Invitation

*How a youth is invited to be the youth delegate matters!* When a pastor or council chair thoughtfully invites a youth to be a delegate, s/he understands that it’s an important task and feels affirmed for being chosen. It is also important to explain what is involved so the youth will understand what s/he is being asked to do. When youth feel affirmed to do a significant task and understand what they are getting into, they are more likely to agree to do it! The Youth Delegate Invitation that is found in this packet is designed to help a youth understand what s/he is being asked to do. Please read it and give it to the youth you invite.

### Preparing Youth Delegates for their Task

It is a good idea to get your delegates together before Annual Meeting to review the business that will take place. This meeting will be very helpful in preparing your youth delegate. You’ll also want to make sure that each youth is registered and has a place to stay during Annual Meeting. Much of our conference reporting will be done ahead of time via our website again this year, so you’ll want to direct your youth delegate to the resources that will be found on [centralplainsmc.org](http://centralplainsmc.org) prior to Annual Meeting so that they are informed and ready for their work as delegates when they come to the meeting.

Our youth delegates are such an important part of our Annual Meetings—the wisdom of the youth when we engage in discussions of business, Bible study and discernment is so valuable. They enrich our time together and will enrich your time of sharing about Annual Meeting when you return to church.

I encourage you to invite a youth delegate to this year’s Annual Meeting! You won’t regret it!

-Amanda Bleichty  
Director of Communications, CPMC

## Youth Delegate Invitation

Every year, Central Plains Mennonite Conference (CPMC) gathers together for our Annual Meeting. It's a time for all of the churches in this conference to send representatives called delegates to worship, fellowship, discern, make decisions about the future of the church, eat (and eat and eat), and have fun together. This year, YOU ARE INVITED!

We are especially interested in inviting youth to be delegates because we want you to be there to influence the kind of church we are becoming. You have valuable insight and wisdom—and the gathered church needs to hear it!

Each year, the schedule is divided into blocks for worship, business and workshops, with plenty of time in between for snack breaks, meals, and fun (usually the Youth Delegates have an area to themselves where they can eat (even more) snacks, play games and just be. We meet from Thursday evening through Sunday morning, when we gather with local congregations to worship together.

As youth delegates, you'll be included in all the meetings and activities, plus a few extras just for youth. As you are a part of things, you may have questions, so we'll assign you a mentor who will sit with you at our delegate sessions and you'll have an opportunity to meet with conference leadership. We'll also have some intentional time for youth delegates to get to know each other.

Registration information is available in your church office and also online at [centralplainsmc.org](http://centralplainsmc.org). You'll also need to have a lodging reservation. Youth delegates don't stay together in one place, so you'll want to ask what other delegates from your church are doing for lodging.

Delegates from past years have had really good things to say about coming to CPMC's Annual Meeting— "I felt included and that they were actually listening to us." "My mentor was awesome. She was very fun and easy to talk to." "I had a really good time with the other delegates, and I more understand conference, which is good. The business meetings were long, but that's the reason we're here." I think if you join us, you'll have some good things to say about the people and the process of CPMC's Annual Meeting too!

YOU are invited and we hope to see you there!