

Regional Youth Council (RYC)

Purpose

The Regional Youth Council (RYC) exists to support, strengthen, and lead the youth ministry of the region through spiritual leadership, servant ministry, event planning, relationship building, and faithful representation of youth across the region.

Grounded in the mission of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the RYC seeks to help youth grow as disciples of Jesus Christ through the core practices of:

- Community
- Worship
- Study
- Mission
- Recreation

The council serves as a youth-led, adult-supported ministry that empowers young people to discover and use their gifts for leadership in the church and the world.

RYC members model leadership, service, study, spirituality, hospitality, and Christian community while helping create meaningful and welcoming experiences for children and youth throughout the region.

Structure of the Regional Youth Council

The Regional Youth Council consists of:

- 12 to 16 Youth Representatives (half rotate off each year)
- 3-6 Adult Representatives (On a 3-year rotation as well)
- In Coordination with a Regional Youth Ministers Group

Youth representatives are typically rising Juniors (Rising Sophomores may apply, but rising Juniors will be given first priority.) Youth serve a two-year term with the possibility of a third year when appropriate.

Adult representatives serve staggered three-year terms whenever possible to provide continuity, mentorship, and leadership development within the council.

Applications for Regional Council are due ***by Noon, on July 31, 2026***. Candidates are interviewed and chosen this year by the Regional Youth Ministers Group, in years to come it will be the RYC Adults and RYC youth rotating off.

Because Regional Representatives may also be eligible for Disciples of Christ scholarship opportunities and wider church leadership opportunities, the interview and selection process seeks youth and adults who demonstrate strong leadership, maturity, faith commitment, teamwork, and servant leadership.

Leadership Philosophy

The RYC operates under a youth-led, adult-supported model of ministry.

Youth leaders are entrusted with:

- Planning themes and programming
- Selecting scriptures and worship themes
- Choosing keynote speakers and leaders
- Planning activities and community-building experiences
- Leading worship, recreation, and small groups
- Serving as visible leaders throughout retreats, camps, and regional events

Adults serve primarily as:

- Mentors
- Spiritual guides
- Leadership coaches
- Support people
- Safety and logistical coordinators

The role of adults is to encourage, equip, and support youth leadership while allowing youth to take ownership of ministry planning and leadership.

Expectations and Commitments

Members of the Regional Youth Council are expected to serve faithfully, collaboratively, and responsibly throughout their term.

Participation Expectations

Members are expected to:

- Attend required meetings, retreats, and leadership events
- Participate actively in planning throughout the year
- Respond consistently to emails, texts, Zoom meetings, and other communication
- Support and attend regional events
- Represent their camp area and regional youth ministry when requested
- Arrange transportation to meetings and events as needed

The council meets in person at least twice annually and continues planning and communication throughout the year through Zoom, email, text messaging, and other digital tools.

Leadership Expectations

Members are expected to:

- Demonstrate leadership within their local congregation and youth ministry
- Work collaboratively with others in both leadership and support roles
- Encourage and support younger youth leaders
- Help create safe, welcoming, and inclusive environments
- Serve with integrity, humility, flexibility, and respect
- Model positive Christian behavior and healthy relationships

RYC values many different gifts and personalities. Members may contribute through music, worship leadership, speaking, creativity, organization, recreation, technology, relationship-building, hospitality, or other leadership skills.

Spiritual Expectations

Members are expected to:

- Demonstrate active involvement in a local DOC congregation
- Continue growing in faith and discipleship
- Make their faith journey accessible and encouraging to others
- Help create meaningful worship and spiritual experiences
- Seek to serve Christ through leadership, compassion, and community

Youth Representative Job Description

Youth Representatives serve as leaders, planners, ambassadors, and role models for regional youth ministry.

Responsibilities include:

- Assisting in the planning and leadership of retreats and regional youth events
- Helping develop themes, worship experiences, activities, recreation, and small groups
- Leading worship, announcements, games, discussions, and community-building activities
- Representing and promoting regional youth ministry within their camp area and congregation
- Encouraging participation in camps, retreats, and regional events
- Supporting younger campers and emerging youth leaders
- Collaborating with fellow council members to create meaningful and engaging ministry experiences

Youth Representatives are expected to bring their gifts, creativity, leadership, and faith experiences to the work of the council.

Adult Representative Job Description

Adult Representatives serve as mentors, encouragers, and support leaders for the youth-led ministry process.

Responsibilities include:

- Supporting youth leaders in planning and decision-making
- Encouraging youth ownership and leadership development
- Providing mentorship, spiritual encouragement, and guidance
- Assisting with logistics, communication, safety, and continuity
- Helping maintain healthy group dynamics and accountability
- Supporting the vision and ministry of the regional youth program

Adult leadership development is intentionally relational and collaborative. Whenever possible, adult representatives progress through a leadership model that includes:

- Year One: Observation and mentorship
- Year Two: Possible co-convenor/co-director responsibilities
- Year Three: Possible lead convenor/director responsibilities

This staggered structure helps maintain continuity, mentorship, and institutional knowledge within the ministry.

Meetings and Ministry Responsibilities

The Regional Youth Council:

- Meets in person at least twice annually
- Continues planning and communication throughout the year through digital communication and Zoom meetings
- Helps plan and lead regional youth gatherings
- Serves as ambassadors for camps and youth ministry within their camp areas and congregations

The RYC exists not simply to organize events, but to cultivate Christian leaders, strengthen relationships across the region, and help youth encounter the love, grace, and calling of God through the ministry of the church.