

**CONSTITUTION
BRETHREN YOUTH FELLOWSHIP
UNITY OF THE BRETHREN**

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this organization shall be "Brethren Youth Fellowship".

ARTICLE II- PURPOSE AND COVENANT

A. The purposes of this organization are:

1. To work as a body of Christ by coordinating the activities of the young people of the Unity of the Brethren.
2. To assist the local B.Y.F. groups in reaching the logical goals of Christian service which are:
 - a. reaching young people for Christ,
 - b. winning for Christ the young people reached,
 - c. training in the Christian life the young people won, and
 - d. sending out in Christian service those who are trained.
3. To encourage district youth activities in the denomination and participate in interdenominational youth work.

B. The Covenant of the Brethren Youth Fellowship is:

"To know, love, trust, obey, and unselfishly serve the Lord Jesus Christ and to love one another as God loves us in accordance with the Word of God."

C. The Motto of the Brethren Youth Fellowship is: "CHRIST ABOVE ALL".

ARTICLE III - RELATIONSHIP TO THE CHURCH

The Brethren Youth Fellowship is a state-wide organization of young people's groups in the various congregations of the Unity of the Brethren. This Fellowship shall be under the general oversight of the Sunday School Union and the Unity of the Brethren through the Chairman of the Board of Christian Education. All of its actions shall conform to the general policies of the Unity of the Brethren.

ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP

1. Every organized local youth people's group which has a program of worship, study, service, and recreation is eligible for membership in the organization.
2. To become or remain a member, a local group shall continue in this four-point program and send one-fourth of their income from special projects to the State BYF, and pay dues for each active member in an amount set by the state convention. Since the State BYF operates on a fiscal year beginning June 1 and ending May 31 of the following year, the annual dues must be received by the Financial Secretary of the State BYF by May 31 of each year. (amended 2001)
3. Each local group sets the requirements for membership in its own group.
4. Each local is responsible for sending in the names and addresses of their officers and sponsors to the State Secretary when they are elected. (added 1994)
5. Each local is responsible for sending a current list of their members to the State Secretary in order that an accurate record of the membership of the organization may be kept. (added 1994)
6. The State B.Y.F. may extend membership to a youth group that has shown special interest in the state organization but whose congregation is not a member of the Unity of the Brethren. A request for membership by such a group may be sent in writing to the president and executive committee at any time during the year, but in order for the group to participate in recreation activities, the request must be in by January 1st of the year, if the group wishes to be accepted in time to participate in activities for that year
This membership would require payment of dues, observance of the State Constitution, and allow participation in all State activities, including voting representation at the annual convention and permission for individuals of the group to hold a State office. (amended 1991)
7. Local B.Y.F. groups shall request permission from their Board of Elders to conduct a special youth service at any time during the year that is convenient to the congregation to receive a special offering for the youth work. (amended 1988)

9. That the State B.Y.F. age limit for all officers be between 16 and 21, inclusive, and participation in all activities be between the ages of 12 and 21, inclusive. (Exceptions to the officers age will be made if there are no youth within this age group present at the convention or none present willing to serve.)
(amended 1998)

ARTICLE V - CONVENTION

1. A convention will be held annually. The date and place shall be announced in the "Brethren Journal" at least two months before the meeting. If the preceding convention does not set the date and place, the executive committee shall make the decision.
2. The body of the convention shall consist of the executive committee, delegates, advisors, B.Y.F. Representatives on the Board of Missions and the Hus School Board of Trustees, the Chairperson of the Growth and Resource Committee, ministers, and ministerial students.
3. A delegate to the convention shall be between the ages of 14 and 21, inclusive, and have been a member of the B.Y.F. for at least 1 year. (Exceptions will be made to locals who have no youth who so qualify.)
(amended 1998)
4. Every organized local young people's group will be represented by two delegates and one advisor, whose names must be sent to the State Secretary by May 31 of that year. (amended 1998)
 - a. Only delegates and executive committee members (except the president who may only break ties) have voting privileges. (amended 1988)
 - b. The body of the convention may join in deliberation.
 - c. Visitors may join in deliberation by majority consent of the voting members of the convention.
5. A convention may be seated when two-thirds of the youth groups which are members are represented. In order for a B.Y.F. to be seated at the convention and/or participate in the volleyball tournament it must have met its financial obligations as set forth in article 4, section 2. (amended 2001)
6. The executive committee will preside over the convention until the officers for the new year are elected and installed. Names and addresses of the new officers and advisors will be handed out to the convention body before the convention adjourns. (added 1994)

7. A simple majority of votes cast decides all issues except a constitutional change, which needs a two-thirds majority of the delegates present.
8. Nominations for state executive officers must be submitted by each local prior to the State B.Y.F. convention. (added 1994) Any member who actively participates in his local B Y F and is in good standing with the State B.Y.F. who attends the convention may be nominated for offices. (amended 1997) A nominating committee shall be appointed to draw up a slate of at least two (2) nominees for each office. Nominees should be contacted before the slate is presented to ascertain whether or not they would serve if elected. At the time of the election, the entire slate of nominees shall be placed before the convention at one time, but the actual election of the person to fill the office shall be carried on separately. If there are not two nominees, nominations may be made from the convention floor. (amended 2002)
9. All elections shall be conducted by secret ballot unless the convention unanimously decides otherwise.
10. The convention business shall be carried on by previously appointed committees.
11. The convention may conduct recreational activities according to the rules set by the previous convention. Participants in district and State B.Y.F. activities must be between the ages of 12 and 21, inclusive, on the day of the activities (amended 1994)
12. To be eligible to participate in convention recreation:
 - a. Both local and state dues must be paid by the date on which they are due.
 - b. One must be an active member of one's church and/or Sunday School. ("Active" will be determined by the local B.Y.F. officers and advisors) (amended 1998)
 - c. One must be active in his B.Y.F. 50 percent of the entire year preceding the volleyball tournament.
 - d. Those who are in college or away from home and are members in the Sunday School and B.Y.F., and cannot attend their own Sunday School or B.Y.F., are required to attend some other Sunday School and youth group on the same percentage basis as the local level.
 - e. That each local must have a delegate seated at the convention to play in that year's tournament. (added 1994)

ARTICLE VI- EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. The executive committee shall consist of:
 - a. Six officers elected from persons present at the convention who are in the 16 to 21 age group: the president, the vice-president, the secretary, the financial secretary, the treasurer, and the news editor. (Exceptions to the officer's age will be made if there are no youth within this age group present at the convention or none present willing to serve.) (amended 2002)
 - b. Four adult advisors will be elected from persons present at the convention. The Chairman of the Board of Christian Education will be an ex-officio advisor to the State B.Y. F. Executive Committee (amended 2002)
2. Each officer shall be elected at the end of the convention to serve for a period of one term. (one year)
3. An officer shall not be eligible for the same office for more than three (3) successive terms.
4. Persons nominated for office must be active participants in their local B.Y.F (added 1997)
5. The persons nominated for the office of president should have previously served on the Executive Committee at least one term. (one year)
6. Persons elected, or appointed, to State B.Y.F. offices shall be unmarried. A person who marries while holding a B.Y.F. office may complete the year's term in that office, but shall not be eligible for re-election. Exception: Advisors and State Recreation Director may be married.

ARTICLE VII - DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS

1. The president heads the executive committee and the Brethren Youth Fellowship. The president calls and presides over all executive committee meetings. Along with the other members of the executive committee, he calls and presides over the annual convention until a new executive committee is elected and installed.
2. The vice-president shall co-operate with the president in making and executing plans for this organization. He shall preside in the absence of the president and upon request of the president. He shall be Projects Chairman.

3. The secretary shall keep minutes of all executive committee meetings and of the annual convention. He will carry on the correspondence of the organization and he will also keep an accurate record of the membership of the organization. Following each Executive Committee meeting, the secretary shall send out a newsletter to all local B.Y.F. groups and ministers. (newsletter added 1984)
4. The financial secretary receives, records, and transfers to the treasurer, dues from local groups and all other income. The financial secretary shall immediately confirm the receipt of all income from locals. (confirmation added 1984)
5. The treasurer shall pay the expenses of the organization by authorization of the convention or of the president.
6. The news editors duties are to report all local, district, and state youth activities to the “Brethren Journal” and to give a report to the annual convention of the activities of local groups based on the four-point program.
7. The executive committee shall present, at each convention, an evaluation of the previous years work and recommend ways for carrying out the purpose of the State B.Y.F.
8. The executive committee shall have the responsibility of appointing the representatives of the B.Y.F. to the Board of Missions and the Hus School Encampment Board of Trustees. They will also appoint a chairperson of the Growth and Resources Committee. (amended 1989)
9. The executive committee shall appoint a State Recreation Director whose duties shall be to appoint district leaders and instruct them in their responsibilities and to see that each district has a volleyball tournament prior to the State tournament. The recreation director shall be appointed for a term of one year and may not be re-appointed to the position for more than three (3) successive years.
10. In case of a vacancy on the executive committee between conventions, the remaining committee members shall appoint a person to fill that vacancy.
11. In the event that revisions are made to the constitution, the executive committee shall be responsible for updating the constitution as soon as possible after the convention and sending the revised constitution to the locals. (added 1998)

**ARTICLE VIII - TERMS OF APPOINTMENT AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE
B.Y.F. REPRESENTATIVES ON THE BOARD OF MISSIONS AND THE
HUS SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

1. The one (1) B.Y.F. representative on the Board of Missions and the one (1) B.Y.F. representative on the Hus School Board of Trustees shall be appointed (or re-appointed) by the executive committee at its first meeting after the annual B.Y F convention or at any time that a vacancy occurs in any one of these positions. The chairperson of the Growth and Resources Committee shall be appointed by the State B.Y.F. Executive Committee for a term of one (1) year. This appointment should be made at or before the first Executive Committee meeting following the annual State B.Y.F. convention. (amended 2002)
2. Each representative is appointed for a term of two (2) years and may be re-appointed for one (1) additional term. No representative is to serve more than two (2) successive terms. (amended 1989)
3. These representatives may be chosen from the B.Y. F. over the state or from the executive committee. Care should be taken in appointing those who have a sincere interest in the particular position they will fill. (It is recommended to secure those who are more mature, possibly those between the ages of 18 and 21.) (amended 1998)
4. The representatives shall attend the B.Y.F. convention to report on the work of their respective boards. The Mission Board representatives are to encourage and foster the responsibility of missions and make an effort to inspire all young people and all B.Y.F. groups to take an active role in the mission program of the Unity of the Brethren. The representative on the Board of Trustees is to encourage participation in the programs at the Encampment. The representatives shall be considered as members of the body of the convention as defined in Article V., Section 2.
5. These representatives shall also keep the executive committee informed about the work of their respective boards.
6. The chairperson of the Growth and Resources Committee shall provide direction for the Committee to assist in coordinating training events for youth officers and advisors, organizing regional activities and providing access to resources for local B.Y.F.s in order to gain a better understanding of the four-point program. (amended 1989)

ARTICLE IX - AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION

1. This constitution may be amended at any convention provided that each local youth group is notified of the proposed change at least two months prior to the convention date.
2. All constitutional changes require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of all delegates at the convention.