

# ASSOCIATION of AUSTRALIAN CHRISTADELPHIAN ECCLESIAS INC

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## YOUTH CONFERENCE GUIDELINES February 2017

### Principles

#### 1. Aim of this document

- 1.1 To suggest guidelines to host city ecclesias for arranging Youth Conferences.

#### 2. Aims of a Youth Conference

- 2.1 To give Glory to God. (Colossians 3;16,17)
- 2.2 To assist in the spiritual growth of young people.
- 2.3 To foster friendships in the "bonds of the truth".
- 2.4 To promote understanding between the generations.
- 2.5 To reinforce our separateness from the world.
- 2.6 To develop the talents of young people in the service of the Lord.

#### 3. Fellowship

- 3.1 The basis of fellowship at memorial meetings is the same as at Biennial Conferences, as expressed in pages 13-15 of the book *Christadelphian Unity in Australia* without addition or further explanation.
- 3.2 The basis in 3.1 above should be included on the application form.
- 3.3 The Youth Conference Committee should refer matters relating to the fellowship standing of an individual wishing to attend a Youth Conference to Ecclesias sponsoring the Youth Conference in conjunction with that person's home Ecclesia, for resolution.

## Organisation

### 4. Conference Committee

#### *Committee establishment*

- 4.1 A premise of the organisation of the Conference is that young people from as many ecclesias as possible across the broad spectrum of ecclesias will be able to participate through both prior organisation and attendance.
- 4.2 An interecclesial organisation or a group of ecclesias in a host city or region should assume a traditional role of arranging for the election of an organising committee.
- 4.3 In the event that such an interecclesial committee is unable to undertake this task, in its role of facilitating Youth Conferences, the AACE will invite member ecclesias to nominate a Chairman and six committee members from ecclesias in the host city. The election will be arranged by a returning officer and scrutineer nominated by the AACE and living in the host city.
- 4.4 Ecclesial voting weight applied will be the same as for other elections carried out by the AACE and indicated in the Constitution. The election will be arranged as close to four years before the Conference as possible. After the election has been completed, the AACE will have no further role in Conference organisation.

#### *Qualities of those involved in Conference organisation*

- 4.5 Those nominated as Chairman and Committee members should be of good standing in the Brotherhood particularly in respect of their interaction with young people. Guidance regarding the qualities of those who may be nominated is provided in 1 Tim 3:1-12. Similar principles should guide selection by the Committee of hosts and subcommittee members.

#### *Committee structure*

- 4.6 It is recommended that as many ecclesias as possible in the host city should be able to act as co-hosts and participate in the oversight of the Conference arrangements. Appointment of appropriate subcommittees should be arranged as necessary. A suitable number of brothers and sisters should be appointed as hosts by the elected Committee.
- 4.7 It is recommended that the Conference Organising Committee consist of at least seven brothers and sisters and include the following office bearers: Conference Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, and a leader for each Sub-Committee.
- 4.8 The Conference Committee will be responsible to the ecclesias represented by the Committee members, or to the interecclesial committee responsible for the establishment of the organising committee, whichever is appropriate for the state in which the Conference is being held. Any issue relating to fellowship should be referred to the relevant ecclesias or interecclesial committee.

### 5. Main Responsibilities of the Organising Committee

- 5.1 Selection of venue.
- 5.2 Selection of speakers.
- 5.3 Overall program balance.
- 5.4 Overall programming of the Conference.
- 5.5 Financial planning.
- 5.6 Publicity for the Conference – which will include emphasis on spiritual aspects.
- 5.7 Arrangement of the Conference through its sub-committees.
- 5.8 Development of appropriate health and safety principles and practices.

## **6. Chairman**

- 6.1 The Chairman, as a senior brother, provides overall leadership, guidance and mentoring.
- 6.2 He should be approachable by young people and be capable of fostering the Conference principles.
- 6.3 Where possible he will have experience in organisation of significant inter-ecclesial events.

## **7. Secretary**

- 7.1 The Secretary should have good organisational skills including where possible experience in organisation of significant inter-ecclesial events.
- 7.2 The Secretary will be competent in communication with young people and older brothers and sisters.
- 7.3 The Secretary of the Conference will be the central contact point for individuals and ecclesias and, in conjunction with the Chairman, liaise with the host ecclesias and generally do what is necessary to promote the success of the Conference.

## **8. Treasurer**

- 8.1 The Treasurer should have an ability and willingness to work as a team member and be capable of handling the Conference finances with diligence and integrity.
- 8.2 Where possible the Treasurer will have experience in overseeing finances of a committee, event or ecclesia and/or an appropriate professional background.

## **9. Hosts**

- 9.1 Hosts should be couples who have, or have had, children currently in the age group attending the Conference, or who have had experience of hosting previous Conferences.
- 9.2 The Hosts are to provide a reference point for the young people and advise on and nurture spiritual values in planning and running the Conference. Hosts are ultimately responsible to the Host Ecclesias for the maintenance of discipline at the Conference.

## **10. Child Protection**

- 10.1 A child protection policy, modelled on the AACE child protection policy, will be developed by the sponsoring ecclesia or groups of ecclesias. This must meet the requirements of state legislation and the conference insurer.
- 10.2 All office bearers, committee members, hosts and activities leaders must comply with the relevant State legislation regarding child protection.
- 10.3 In most States this will mean the possession of a current clearance from State authorities which should be obtained prior to finalising appointment to the Committee, subcommittee or other role in Conference organisation.

## Conference Activities and Arrangements

### 11. Program

- 11.1 The program should provide for adequate spiritual activity with reasonable recreational time and some relaxation time.
- 11.2 All program items should be prepared before Conference begins, and details approved by the Conference Committee. Experience has shown that difficulties can occur when program items are "put together" during the Conference.
- 11.3 Activities towards the end of the Conference, particularly the final Saturday night, should have a strong spiritual emphasis.

### 12. Accommodation

- 12.1 Preferable accommodation provides for adequate meeting rooms and small dormitory style living accommodation.
- 12.2 It is best to avoid single living accommodation as this can give rise to difficulties in hosting as young people may perceive it as an invasion of their privacy when hosts seek to know if they are in at night, or if they are ill.

### 13. Timing of Conference

- 13.1 It is generally appropriate for a Conference to be held during school or university holidays where these are common to as many States as possible.

### 14. Cost of Conference

- 14.1 Costs should be contained as much as possible. Costly mementos, costly activities and expensive folders, etc., should be avoided.

### 15. Expectations of Attendees at the Conference

- 15.1 Christadelphians have a responsibility to God, Jesus Christ and his brothers and sisters, and all behaviour and actions should reflect his standards.
- 15.2 The expectations as determined by the host ecclesias should be listed on the Conference application form. Applicants should be asked to signify that they agree to abide by these expectations. At the opening meeting the moral commitment of each attendee to uphold the Conference principles should be stressed. Conference hosts may make decisions on aspects of the Conference at their discretion.
- 15.3 The Youth Conference Committee should consider the following aspects of behaviour at the Conference:
  - 15.3.1 The aim of attendees should be to strive to think spiritually and avoid worldly distractions. Therefore, items such as alcohol, tobacco and other recreational drugs may not be used at all during the Conference.
  - 15.3.2 Use of mobile phones should be kept to a minimum and should be turned to silent mode during study sessions. Although iPads and phones may have Bibles on them and Biblical study reference material, these should be used wisely. Distracting electronic equipment should not be brought to the Conference.

- 15.4.3 All activities of the Conference must be attended unless prior and specific approval to be absent is obtained from one of the hosts.
- 15.4.4 For the safety of all attendees at the Conference, attendees must remain within the precincts of the Conference premises except when specific permission to leave has been granted by one of the hosts. Also, cars must be locked on arrival and not used during the Conference unless this is part of the Conference program or has the specific approval of a host.
- 15.4.5 For the smooth running of the Conference, all instructions and decisions of the hosts are binding on all attendees. This may include the observance of lights out times.
- 15.4.6 Dress of all attendees must be modest. Hosts may have to determine this in some cases.

## **16. Age of attendees**

- 16.1 It is customary to require attendees to be at least 16 years old during the calendar year that the Conference is held.

## **17. Pre and Post Conference Activities**

- 17.1 Any arrangements for pre- and post- Conference activities should be in accord with these guidelines and reflect the Conference spirit.

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