



BEYOND REASONABLE DOUBT

Higher Things Conferences 2023

**Southern Illinois University
Carbondale, Illinois
July 18-21, 2023**

**Trinity University
San Antonio, Texas
July 25-28, 2023**

Event Policies

www.higherthings.org

Events Policies

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Registration

1. Age Definitions

All individuals attending a Higher Things event must be registered, including infants and toddlers. Neither Higher Things nor the event site is responsible for providing any additional bedding, pillows, mattresses, cribs, etc. Registration types and fees are as follows:

INFANT: Ages 0-1 at the time of the conference. The registration cost is \$150, and the child **MUST** room with a parent (not necessarily of the same sex). This is a flat fee throughout the registration season (no early bird rate or late fee.)

TODDLER: Ages 2-4 at the time of the conference. The registration cost is \$225, and the child **MUST** room with a parent (not necessarily of the same sex). This is a flat fee throughout the registration season (no early bird rate or late fee.)

CHILD: Ages 5 -10 at the time of the conference. The registration cost is full price, and the child **MUST** room with a parent of the same sex. This is a flat fee throughout the whole registration season and will remain at the early bird rate for that year.

YOUTH: Ages 11-17 at the time of the conference. One full registration fee must be paid for every youth age 11 and over at the time of the conference. A youth must be registered with a group leader/chaperone.

YOUNG ADULT: Ages 18-20 at the time of the conference. The cost of registration is full price.

CHAPERONE/ADULT: Adults 21+ years old at the time of the conference and approved by the group's pastor to serve in that role. The cost of registration is full price.

PASTOR: LCMS pastors in good standing. This is a regular adult registration, but it helps us to know who the pastors at a conference are.

2. Chaperones and Group Leaders

Higher Things does not provide chaperones for the youth attending conferences. All groups must provide adequate adult supervision of their own youth. To ensure the proper supervision, each group must have at least one (1) male chaperone for up to every seven (7) male youth (ages 11-17 at the time of the conference) and at least one (1) female chaperone for up to every seven (7) female youth (ages 11-17 at the time of the conference).

CHAPERONES of the appropriate ratios (7:1) must stay with the participants in the residence halls and be present on campus as long as the youth under their supervision are on campus throughout the conference. Chaperones should not be invited away from their duties to

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another facility on-site during a Higher Things event that precludes their ability to supervise the youth under their care.

CHAPERONES are expected to enforce residence hall rules and regulations, as well as assist their group with check-in/check-out procedures. This includes refraining from drinking alcohol, smoking and vaping, partaking in recreational drugs, and following other campus rules and regulations.

CHAPERONES must be prepared to assist their youth and organize the orderly evacuation of their participants if an emergency should arise. It is recommended that each chaperone be assigned a list of particular youth for whom they are responsible for safely evacuating in the case of an emergency. They should immediately report medical emergencies, building maintenance concerns, missing youth, or any other safety concerns to Higher Things staff.

Higher Things is not responsible for the direct supervision of the youth and/or children attending a Higher Things conference. Groups must provide adequate supervision of the minors in their charge.

There is no restriction on the number of adults or chaperones who may register with a group. If a group needs assistance finding chaperones for the number of youth they're bringing, Higher Things can provide a list of group leaders from their area who may be contacted to ask if they would be willing to help. Please contact the conference registrar (registrar@higherthings.org) for this assistance.

The group will be registered online by a group manager. This individual will serve as the liaison with Higher Things before the conference and receive email correspondence from the events staff. Each group must also identify a group leader from their registered chaperones/adults who will serve as the liaison with Higher Things and receive email correspondence from the events staff. The same person can fill both roles, or they can be different people.

For the safety of the youth and to protect the reputation of everyone involved, including that of Higher Things, alcohol (except for the sacramental wine of the Divine Service) and/or recreational drugs will not be provided to or consumed by adults at Higher Things conferences.

3. Groups

All registrants attending a Higher Things conference must be registered as part of a group. A group consists of one or more youth with one or more chaperone(s) of the appropriate sex(es). All youth and adults should know each other enough that any adult in the group can act as a chaperone for any youth in the group.

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4. Background Checks

All adults and chaperones (registrants age 21+) registered to attend a Higher Things conference must pass a national criminal and sexual predator background check (to be paid for by the registrant) by May 1 of the conference calendar year. Sites may require additional measures to protect the safety of youth at events on their campuses (online child safety training seminars, background checks for registrants 18 and over, etc.). Background checks must be conducted after the completion of the previous year's conference cycle (i.e., since last August).

Beginning in February of the conference year, Higher Things will notify the group leaders attending each conference via email regarding instructions for completing and turning in background checks, any additional site requirements, and how to confirm that these have been completed. Higher Things will accept national criminal and sexual predator background checks conducted through Protect My Ministry, Sentry Link, Trusted Employees, or another company that provides comparable national checks. Communicate with the events executive assistant (tana@higherthings.org) for more information. Higher Things staff retains the right not to accept a previously completed background check.

5. Unregistered Attendees

For the safety of the youth attending the conference, no one (youth, young adult, or adult) may attend a Higher Things conference or portion(s) of a Higher Things conference without registering.

6. Unnamed Registrations

All registrations in a group must be complete at the time of registration. Empty "spaces" may not be reserved for a conference by paying additional deposits or fees without a complete registration to which those deposits/fees may be applied.

7. Housing and Meals

Higher Things conferences are all-inclusive events. Registered groups and/or individuals are not required to stay on campus at the conference site. Nor are groups and/or individuals required to eat meals provided during the conference (Tuesday supper through Friday lunch). However, Higher Things cannot discount the registration fee if groups or individuals choose not to use the housing or meals provided with the conference. Please read the Housing Policies for additional details.

8. Transportation

Groups attending a Higher Things conference are responsible for their own transportation to and from the conference site, including ground transportation to/from airports and bus or train stations. Higher Things does not provide housing for unregistered bus drivers and cannot guarantee on-site overnight parking for buses or campers. Additional fees for parking passes, meters, tickets, etc., are the groups' responsibility, and the fees will vary depending on the site.

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9. Day Passes (HTFAD)

Individuals who wish to attend a conference for a single day may purchase a Higher Things for a Day (HTFAD) pass at a daily rate. HTFAD passes include meals, conference materials, and all programming. Housing is not included. HTFAD passes are available for a maximum of two days per conference per person. HTFAD registration opens online on May 1. Due to capacity limitations, HTFAD may be limited or unavailable at any or all Higher Things conferences. All HTFAD passes are pending approval from the registrar. HTFAD registrants are not required to complete background checks.

10. Additional Days

On-campus housing is available for groups to stay in their conference-assigned rooms for one additional night before and/or after the conference dates (i.e., Monday and/or Friday night). You must arrive between 5:00 pm and 10:00 pm on Monday and depart by 10:00 am on Saturday.

The required ratio of chaperones (7:1) must be on site for all additional days on campus, including situations involving combined groups sharing chaperones. If your group is being linked with another to share chaperones, those chaperones must also supervise the youth on any additional days on campus, or the youth may not stay on campus for those days. Higher Things does not provide supervision for any unaccompanied youth before, during, or after conferences. Meals on campus are not provided before Tuesday supper or after Friday lunch.

11. Registration Fee Schedule

Registration rates are determined by the date a group's registration fees are paid in full.

- Early bird registration is open from November 1 to January 31
- Regular registration is open from February 1 to April 30
- Late registration is open from May 1 until the conference opens

Checks mailed to Higher Things will be processed according to the postmark date. Groups should consider weekends and holidays when the post office is closed before sending any checks. Groups should not pay for certified mail as it takes longer for us to receive the checks and process the payment. Online credit card or e-check payments must be completed by midnight, Central Time, of any given deadline. Unpaid balances and new registrations on or after May 1 will be charged a late fee of \$50/person.

12. Non-refundable Deposits

A non-refundable deposit guarantees that an individual has been accepted as a registrant for a conference if the location reaches capacity and creating a waitlist becomes necessary. Payment of non-refundable deposits does not lock in a group's registration rate.

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Deposits will only be refunded for a cancellation if there is a waitlist for that conference at the time of the cancellation. A deposit may not be transferred out of the space that it saves. In other words, it MAY NOT be transferred toward a group's remaining balance if a cancellation occurs and there is no substitution to fill the space.

Non-refundable deposit policies do not apply to infant, toddler, and child registrations, as those are flat fees.

Included in each non-refundable deposit is an annual membership to myHT Gold. In this online space, Higher Things works to make the same great teachings that you experience at conferences available all year. Each membership will run from May 1 to April 30 and is yours to keep even if you must cancel your conference registration.

13. Final Payment Deadline

All balances (regardless of the conference a group is attending) must be paid in full on or before April 30. Groups paying all or portions of their balance after this date (regardless of the date their group registered and/or paid deposits) will be considered late and charged a late fee of \$50/person.

The online registration system will state that the final payment is due in the fall after the conference season is completed. *This is a product of the system's retention of your credit card information and is not the case.* You must be paid in full by April 30 or will incur a late fee. All payments are due absolutely no later than the start of the conference.

14. Late/Walk-up Registrations

Individuals and/or groups registering for a conference on or after May 1 will be charged the regular registration rate, plus a late fee of \$50/person.

15. Substitutions

Suppose a group has a cancellation and substitutes one registrant with another person. In that case, they must notify the events staff (registrar@higherthings.org) to officially change the group's registration so that Higher Things and the conference site have an accurate record of everyone attending the conference. Substitutions made on or after May 1 will result in a \$25 change fee.

If a substitution is made, the myHT Gold subscription associated with the non-refundable deposit will be for the individual who attends the conference.

16. Cancellations

Because the materials needed for the conferences must be ordered based on registration counts before the first conference, refunds will not be issued for cancellations made on or

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after May 1. Groups with unpaid cancellations that occur on or after May 1 (including no-shows at conference check-in) will be responsible for the outstanding regular registration rate, plus the \$50/person late fee

You must communicate with the conference registrar (registrar@higherthings.org) regarding any cancellations. All refunds will be issued via check. Canceled registrations will still receive the annual membership to myHT Gold from May 1 to April 30.

17. Transferring Between Conferences

A group may transfer from one conference location to another or off of a waitlist to another site without incurring additional fees before May 1. Groups transferring from a waitlist to another conference location should also take note of the waitlist procedure below.

18. Waitlist

Occasionally, Higher Things receives registrations above a site's capacity. When this happens, the events staff will create and maintain a waitlist.

Until June 1, the order of the waitlist will be determined by the date (and time, if applicable) the group registered to be on the waitlist. Registrants will be admitted to the conference in groups or as individuals in the order of the list as spots become available. A smaller group or individual further down the waitlist will not be moved up to fill open spaces.

On June 1, the waitlist prioritization will change to fill all available spaces. The first group or individual on the list will be given the following options:

1. Claim the open spaces for a portion of their group;
2. Transfer to another conference location (including a virtual conference if available); or
3. Receive a full refund of all monies paid towards registration.
4. If an act of God cancels the conference at that conference site, regardless of the date, the conference site cancellation policy will take effect.

When an individual or group is placed on the waitlist, the registration rate is locked in according to the date their deposit was paid. This lock-in rate only applies to those on the waitlist. When moved off the waitlist, the registration must be paid in full at the locked-in rate within 30 days of coming off the waitlist and receiving a regular registration to the conference. After 30 days, the current registration rate will apply.

If a group or individual on the waitlist chooses to transfer to another conference location, their registration fees must be paid in full at the locked-in rate within 30 days of the transfer. After 30 days, the current registration rate will apply. If admitted to a conference after June 1 (either by transfer or as a whole or partial group), registration fees must be paid in full according to the locked-in rate by conference check-in.

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19. Conference Site Cancellation

If a conference site cancels due to an act of God, a government mandate, or medical pandemic, the group may transfer to another conference site with no financial repercussions.

If a site cancellation takes place, Higher Things will provide their registrants with a virtual conference. An individual's non-refundable deposit automatically becomes their registration fee for a virtual conference, and that individual is then considered registered for the virtual conference. If they are on a waitlist for the conference that cancels they will be automatically transferred to the virtual conference (all registrants for the virtual conference must have a unique email address associated with their registration). The following options will be offered for all registration monies less the non-refundable deposits:

1. The group may donate the remaining balance, fully or partially.
2. The group may defer the remaining balance, fully or partially.
3. The balance will be transferred dollar for dollar (not person for person or rate level for rate level)
 - a. The monies must be used for the following year's conference season registration.
 - b. The conference which the group will attend must be decided by December 1st of the year before the conference takes place. The group may receive a refund of the remaining balance.
 - c. The group may receive a refund of the remaining balance, fully or partially.
4. The group may also decide to use a combination of the above options.

20. Images

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Housing Policies

To protect the youth attendees, young adults, chaperones, and the Higher Things organization, the following policies will be observed and govern how Higher Things assigns housing to registrants at a conference.

1. Sex-Specific Units

Participants will be housed in sex-specific units. A unit may be defined by Higher Things as a single room, suite of rooms, a wing, a floor, or building, depending upon the facilities available.

Spouses may not be housed together. Each adult/chaperone will be housed in sex-distinctive units near the youth in his/her charge.

2. Age-Specific Rooms

Young adults (ages 18-20) and adults/chaperones (21+) will not be assigned housing in the same room with any minors unless there is an immediate familial relationship between the youth and adult, AND both persons are of the same sex. An immediate familial relationship is defined as a parent or legal guardian and his/her child(ren), or siblings.

When apartment-style facilities are utilized, adults/chaperones may be assigned to the same unit as their group's youth (of the same sex), but adults will not be assigned to share sleeping quarters with youth unless there is an immediate familial relationship (as defined above).

3. Room and Roommate Assignments

All double-capacity rooms must be fully occupied.

Conference attendees should expect to be housed with at least one roommate unless they request a private room by May 1, and appropriate fees are paid. Those requesting private rooms will be charged an additional \$50/room/night.

The number of single-sex participants in a group may not correspond precisely to the capacities of the rooms available, so it may be necessary for Higher Things to assign attendees from a different group to share a room. Roommates will always be from the same sex and age categories.

Every effort will be made to house conference attendees with their preferred roommates. However, these preferences cannot be guaranteed. Roommate preferences must be entered into each registration by May 1. Roommates are assigned according to the specific guidelines of this housing policy. Therefore Higher Things cannot permit rearranging roommates on site by individuals or groups without coordinating directly with the housing coordinator for that conference.

4. Additional Charges

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Charges incurred by Higher Things due to the conduct of an individual registrant or group at a conference will be billed to the group represented by said individual or group.

Such expenses may include but are not limited to: replacement of lost keys, replacement of lost meal cards, vandalism, other damages (missing linens, stained mattresses, etc.), and fees involved with setting off a fire/emergency alarm, etc. Events staff will contact group leaders regarding these additional charges upon receipt of notification from the campus following the conference.

5. Quiet Hours/Visitation Hours

Common areas are available in all residence halls for fellowship, conversation, and recreation. No one should be in the sleeping quarters of the opposite sex at any time. Quiet and visitation hours as posted by residence hall and/or Higher Things must be enforced by the chaperones staying in that resident hall.

6. Child Protection Policies

Higher Things accepts no responsibility for the enforcement of individual congregational child protection policies. It is the responsibility of the group leader to know and enforce his/her specific congregational child protection policies if there are additional restrictions not addressed by the Higher Things housing policy.

All adults/chaperones registered to attend a Higher Things Conference must also pass a national criminal and sexual predator background check by May 1 of the conference calendar year. See the registration policies for additional information regarding background checks.

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