

# Adventist Youth Leader Magazine

*Spiritual Youth Leaders Resource*



- ▶ “Community Pathfinder Clubs: A Paradigm Shift”
- ▶ The Tent: Ministry By Faith
- ▶ Cure for Hezekitis
- ▶ World Pathfinder Day 2019 Sermon:  
Created with Purpose







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# Editorial

JULY – SEPTEMBER 2019

I couldn't believe it! The man was proudly holding a decade old copy of our former Accent Magazine. With eyes shining he showed it to me. It was faded, marked up, dog eared, creased and looked like something an archeologist might dedicate to a museum. But with a big smile on his face he said, "Pastor I have been using the articles in this magazine to help me be a better youth leader in my church for years. Thank you for making this resource available to us!"

I was blown away, not only by the appreciation this man expressed for the dated resource, but also by the profound need around the world for resources for Adventist youth leaders. It was after meeting this man that I felt a real urgency to create a resource. A magazine that would come out regularly and would be free, downloadable, consistent, fresh, practical and unashamedly Adventist. A magazine designed with Adventist youth leaders in mind!

So what you are holding in your hands or reading on your iPad is legit. It's a magazine designed for Adventist youth leaders like you, who want to effectively pass on identity (in Christ), mission (as Seventh-day Adventists) and leadership (in the local church) to both Millennials and Generation Z. As far as I know, we don't have anything like it for our global community of youth leaders.

It is our prayer at the General Conference Youth department that this resource will be a blessing to you as you lead God's army of youth. So, go ahead, mark it up, crease it up, dog ear it, copy it, translate it, whatever; it's yours with love and with the sincere prayer that ten years from now your ministry will also have been blessed by using it.

Sincerely,



**Gary Blanchard, MDiv**  
Youth Director  
General Conference of the  
Seventh-day Adventists



In recognition of the Oshkosh Camporee and the upcoming World Pathfinder Day, we are highlighting the Pathfinder Ministry in this issue of the AYL Magazine.





# “Community Pathfinder Clubs: A Paradigm Shift”

## Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division Adventist Youth Ministries

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### INTRODUCTION

**T**he Pathfinder club is a well-known brand in the Seventh-day Adventist church. Pathfinderism is to the Adventist church what Coca-Cola is to the world. One cannot be an Adventist and not be familiar with the Pathfinder club. We know and appreciate this ministry because it is part of the DNA and psyche of Adventism.

Those who have been Adventists since antiquity have fond memories of the Missionary Volunteer (MV) organization.

Although I am not that old, I am privileged to have been part of the MV movement. We used to relish the progressive classes, the voice of youth campaigns, the camps, the honors and many other activities associated with MV, now referred to as Adventist Youth Ministries (AYM). My generation and the one before us speak about MV with the fondest memories because we know that we owe our spiritual foundation and legacy to it.

It is no secret that youth ministries have metamorphosed over the years to adapt to the times we live in. But the main tenets of this ministry have remained

untainted. The Pathfinder club, which is part of AYM has stood the test of time. I have observed that ‘new’ Adventists are fascinated by the Pathfinder club because there was no such ministry where they came from. As we know, the progressive classes are age specific for relevance and easy assimilation. But many older children who join the Adventist church do not mind enlisting in lower classes because the Pathfinder club in its entirety presents well thought out and quality lessons for the youth. The Pathfinder club is a full house that presents holistic training to the youth. In the curriculum, you

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find a balanced menu suitable for the youth (spiritual content, fun, recreation, family values, relationship values, societal values and much more).

Yours truly was molded by the Pathfinder club; I owe my existence to God, but I also credit this ministry for what I am today. It is a common feature of this ministry to draw many youths to the Adventist church. By its very nature, the ministry magnetizes the youth. Consequently, the parents of the youth who have become Adventists, appreciate the positive change they see in their children and in many instances, these parents have also become Adventists.

Apart from the club being a church-based program, the Adventist church also utilizes the Pathfinder club as a drawcard. It serves as a precursor to evangelistic meetings, Pathfinders are dispatched to welcome dignitaries, Pathfinders serve as ushers in big church convocations, Pathfinders are part of public awareness campaigns, Pathfinders engage in community outreach programs and many other functions.

In the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division (SID), it is common for senior youth to participate in Pathfinder related activities such as marching, drilling, and even wearing

the Pathfinder uniform. That's how contagious the Pathfinder ministry is in the SID. I have observed that one does not need to advertise Pathfinder events, but you would have to work thrice as hard to advertise senior youth events. Why? I believe the Pathfinder club is a well-oiled-machine. No one will annihilate the Pathfinder club.

So, what is my point? If the Pathfinder club is such an important brand and feature of the Adventist church because of its proven track record, then let us take this ministry to another level. The Pathfinder club by its very nature is housed in the local church. This is the baby of the AYM, and this ministry is sponsored by the church. Our children automatically join the club as they grow up (I say this because they find themselves in the church by birth and they end up joining the club by default) but we also welcome children into the club whose parents are not Adventists.

The thrust of this article is that we should take the Pathfinder club to the community where the people are. Of course, since the Pathfinder club is based in the local church, it is logical that the local church Pathfinder club should be the one that establishes a Community Pathfinder Club (CPC).

## WHAT IS A CPC?

We believe through the Pathfinder club we can mingle with people the way Jesus desires us to. Pathfinding is not an event but a lifestyle. The curriculum of the club spans the whole academic year, so it requires one to get into some routine just like in an academic setting.

In April 2016, the SID Youth Ministries advisory voted to implement CPCs. The idea is that each local church Pathfinder club should go into the community and establish a 'satellite' club which will be monitored by the church. The church club need not be dissolved to start a CPC, NO, but we give to the community what we are enjoying in the church. It is as simple as that. Some youth leaders in the SID were not happy about the CPC idea because they regard the Pathfinder club as sacrosanct and exclusively Adventist, their argument is that taking the Pathfinder club to the community will dilute its sanctity.

Those who have such fears should be reminded that the Adventist church has other programs that are based and conducted in the communities like Vocational Bible School (VBS), Adventist Disaster and Relief

Agency (ADRA), Meals on Wheels (MOWCS) Adventist Community Services (ACS), Dorcas and others. It is obvious that each of the mentioned programs is different from the others, but the bottom line is that we are taking our programs to the people. The difference with the Pathfinder club is that we will be spending more time with the people and we will be sharing with them exactly what we do in the local church albeit in a contextualized way.

In the SID we are proposing two models of the CPCs. The first one is to go out into the community and establish a Pathfinder club. The second model is to go out into the community and recruit children and the youth to come to our church and become members of the Pathfinder club. Both models are achieving the same objective, and that is to reach out to the community with the Word of God couched in the Pathfinder garb.

The SID Youth Ministries produced and distributed a handbook in 2017 to guide those who wish to establish CPCs. A number of Pathfinder clubs have appreciated this resource because they believe it is practical and provides easy-to-understand guidelines.

## WHY IS THERE A NEED TO ESTABLISH CPCs?

There are many avenues and strategies for soul winning and evangelism. There's a plethora of ideas available in the field of missiology that anyone who loves evangelism can glean for their edification and motivation for soul winning. As stated above, a paradigm shift is inevitable as we ponder how we can involve many of our young people in outreach and soul winning. Total Youth Involvement (TYI) is an audacious initiative that requires all of us to put our hands to the plough and labour while it is still day for the night is coming and Jesus's coming is imminent. The days are evil and "Men's hearts are failing them for fear..." (Luke 21:26 KJV) Each one of us should pray for guidance so that we may find our niche in evangelism.

We believe we have not exploited the full potential of the youth and God is ready to use anyone who is willing to be used by Him. The Pathfinder club is a mine that is ready to be researched to see if we can reach many young people who may otherwise not be reached through conventional evangelism strategies.

We have already stated that the church on numerous occasions deploys the youth into the community to draw the attention of the populace to any event or program we desire to embark upon. As the young people march through the streets of their communities, a lot of interest is generated, and we leave members of the public panting for more and having scores of questions about us. In most cases, we hardly go back to take advantage of the interest that is generated. The Adventist church has ministries that leave many people awestruck. Regrettably, we always engage in hit-and-run tactics. We do not touch base with people in a meaningful way. It is precisely for this reason that we should reach out to people not for our own interest but for their benefit.

Ellen White aptly states: "We are not to wait for souls to come to us; we must seek them out where they are. . . There are multitudes who will never be reached by the gospel unless it is carried to them." (Christ's Object Lessons, p. 229) I believe the CPC method is the best way to reach people where they are.

## THE CPC OUTCOMES

The main objectives of the CPC in our division are:

- To promote Total Youth Involvement.
- To share the love of Jesus with youth in the community in a friendly and none threatening way.
- To impart life skills to the youth by teaching them honors and lessons that prepare them to be responsible and productive citizens of this world and the one to come.
- To promote good behaviour among the youth and to combat dangerous lifestyles that lead to substance abuse, immorality and criminal practices.

We are encouraged by the reports we are getting from our unions because most of them have CPCs. Some of the feedback we get from the union's states:

- The Pathfinders are excited to be a part of the CPC because this gives them an opportunity to reach out to their peers in the community.
- Pathfinders are encouraged to be involved in the mission of the church.
- Youth are getting baptised because of CPCs.
- Community leaders and the governments appreciate what

the Adventist church is offering the youth in the community.

We acknowledge that many Pathfinder clubs in the SID have not yet formed CPCs and much education still needs to be given to our churches regarding the importance of CPCs. Yet, we are inspired by the CPC reports we are receiving. Space does not allow me to share many CPC stories, but allow me to cite one story. There is a CPC that was founded by a few youth leaders in Pretoria, South Africa. This club is unique because its members are deaf and they do come from Adventist families. You can imagine the challenges that present themselves to the ones who are leading these youths. How will they communicate the instructions and commands to the deaf youth? God resolved the communication problem by inspiring two people who know sign language, Nozipho Legwara and Welcome Nhlapo. Welcome Nhlapo gives commands in sign language to the club members when they march. There are over 20 members in this CPC and these youths are excited to be members and they told me that the Pathfinder club has made a big difference in their lives. A few CPCs including this one in particular,

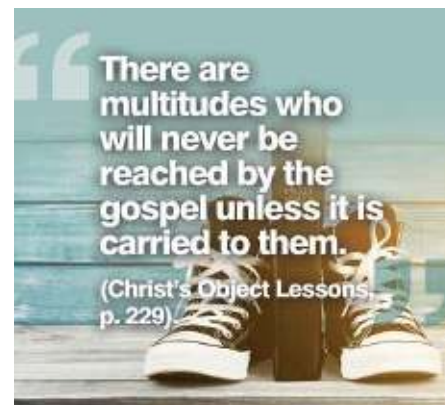
attended the SID Pathfinder camporee that was held in Pretoria, South Africa on April 15th-20th 2019. We gave the CPC of the deaf youth publicity to demonstrate to the delegates their unique marching and drilling skills and commands. This display challenged the able-bodied Pathfinders to appreciate the gift of hearing and to reach out to their friends in various communities.

We are buoyed by the CPC success stories. Our conviction is that if more clubs in the SID form CPCs, we will have an evangelism explosion such as has never been witnessed by our generation.



**Busi Khumalo, M.A.**

Director for Adventist Youth Ministries and Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries  
Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division





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# The Tent: Ministry by Faith

If you want something done right, you have to do it yourself." This seems to be the unspoken mantra of ministry--especially youth ministry. In a world where quality programming is found around every corner, we often find our churches trying to keep up. Getting things done right and doing things yourself was not the discipleship model that Jesus left for us, and it is not the best practice when it comes to ministry today.

To help paint the picture, let me tell you about an evangelistic series put on by 7th and 8th graders in a little corner of Michigan.

For 6 years here on the campus of Andrews University in the small town of Berrien Springs, the 7th and

8th grade students of Ruth Murdoch Elementary School have put on a week-long evangelistic series, called "The Tent," each May. "The Tent" is not a prepackaged series that has been planned out for them. Rather, the kids spend months prayerfully wrestling with messages and methods for sharing them.

The speakers, anywhere from 9 to 11 of them, spend an entire semester prayerfully preparing their messages. These young preachers are mentored in a prayer-driven process by one of their teachers, Chris Davisson. This gives the Holy Spirit an opening to connect with each of them.

It is not only the preachers who are involved in an active role. Every Junior High student is invited to take an active role in the Body of

Christ during "The Tent." There are students greeting attendees and running the sound system. There are students setting up and operating cameras. There are students behind the scenes praying and running the slides from the computer. There are students leading song service and inviting people to come. There are a lot of moving parts, a lot of responsibility on the shoulders of these young teens--and for 6 years in a row "The Tent has been a success."

"The Tent" works because the kids throw themselves into it, and their pastor and teachers provide the support they need. Is it a lot of work? The answer is yes, for everyone involved! It would be a lot easier, to be honest, if the pastor just planned everything out, assigned topics, and helped the kids memorize pre-

written sermons. Because, if you want it done right you've got to do it yourself, remember?

## WELL, MAYBE NOT

Let's look at some of the issues we run into when we try to do ministry ourselves, rather than collaboratively:

The first problem we run into when we go it alone is that we operate under the assumption that we have everything figured out. When it comes to ministry, we should always remember that we are telling others about the infinite God of the universe whom we cannot pretend to fully comprehend. None of us has it all figured out.

Almost every night of "The Tent," year after year, the young preachers get up and, at some point in their sermons, admit that they don't have it all figured out. They know they're still growing in their faith, still sojourning with their Savior to get to know Him better little by little. It's honest and refreshing, and we can learn a lot from them. It's tough for those of us in ministry to admit from the pulpit that we don't know it all, that we are limited in our understanding—but it's true and relatable, and we would do well to learn a lesson in humility from our teens.

Another reason that it does not make sense for us to try to do ministry all on our own is that it limits what we can accomplish. We are all finite beings with limited resources. There is only so much each person can do. Working with and empowering others to join us in ministering expands our reach and deepens our impact.

This year at "The Tent," one really exciting baptismal decision was that of the sister of the 8th grade girl who preached that evening. Sharing ownership of our ministries with those around us gives each of them the opportunity to reach their own sphere of influence. Each one of our student speakers draws a different crowd each night. This is a good reminder that the Body of Christ has a further reach than the pastor does on his or her own.

The final reason that ministry should never be a solo operation is that working alone is an exclusive, rather than an inclusive, model of ministry. The true Gospel and the telling of it are always inclusive and the goal is to reach and involve every possible person. When we use exclusive methodologies to share the Gospel, we are saying one thing while modeling something rather different.

There is now research to show us that if we want to decrease the median age of our church members

(which was 51 in 2008), (Grow Young) we need to give ownership to the next generation. This is not earth-shattering news—any volunteer ministry can only thrive when there is shared ownership. Giving these Junior High students real ownership in spreading the Gospel at "The Tent" is exciting. Teens respond well to the sincere partnership with adults in sharing the Good News about Jesus with their friends, families, and peers. And their friends, families, and peers respond well to them, too! This year, there were 30 different people who made decisions for baptism during the 9 nights of "The Tent," responding to the Holy Spirit and prompted by heartfelt calls made by Junior High students.

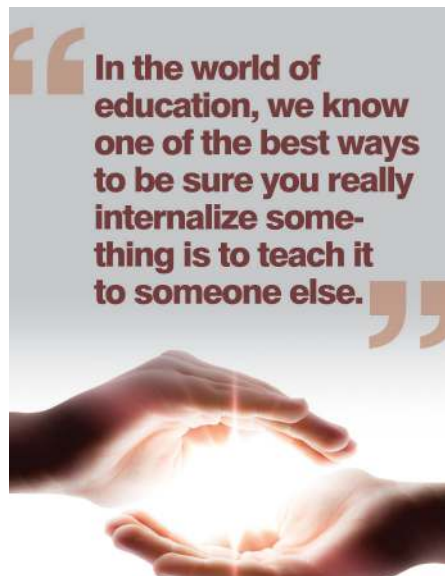
Of all of the people who have been reached in this ministry the students who put on the series are often the ones whose lives are most transformed. In the world of education, we know one of the best ways to be sure you really internalize something is to teach it to someone else. These students, as they prepare their messages, wrestle with their picture of God in a way that many older and more seasoned church members have not.

I believe the greatest thing we have learned in six years of "The Tent" is the power of doing a ministry that forces us to rely on God. From

the very beginning we had to step out in faith to do this series and every year we have depended on Him to show up. When you operate in a way that necessitates God, He never disappoints! God shows up! Night after night, year after year, God moves from the theoretical to the tangible. So, I would say that if you want to see something done better than you could hope or dream of, partner the God of the Universe up with teenagers! It is so much better than doing it yourself.



**Ben Martin, MDiv**  
Youth Ministries Pastor  
Pioneer Memorial Church



# EAST-CENTRAL AFRICA DIVISION

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GUEST SPEAKER

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# Cure for Hezekitis

**H**ow do we reach and retain the younger generation? Without a doubt this is one of the biggest questions being asked by parents, youth leaders, teachers and church administrators around the world. Especially, as we hear reports that between 60-70% of our youth disappear from active church life in their twenties and never return. Interestingly, but not shockingly, the reason for this crisis is clearly spelled out for us in the word of God. Go figure!

In Isaiah 38 we learn about the God-fearing King Hezekiah who was diagnosed with a terminal illness but by the grace of God was healed and given 15 more years of life (vs 5). However, in the next chapter we learn that visitors from Babylon came to

"congratulate" him on his recovery and in an act of complete stupidity King Hezekiah showed them all the treasures of the kingdom. (39:1-2) When the delegation left, Isaiah the prophet confronted the king, prophesying that the Babylonians would return, take the treasures for themselves, kidnap and castrate their kids making them slaves in Babylon.

Now notice Kings Hezekiah's shocking response to this terrible news! "This message you have given me from the Lord is GOOD. For the king was thinking, At least there will be peace and security during MY lifetime." (Isaiah 39:8 NLT)

Why are we losing so many young people today? Why are they being dragged away from the church and assimilated into the world? Because this kind of attitude, we will call it Hezekitis, is also coming

from the older generation! Notice king Hezekiah was a Godly man and was one of the greatest kings Israel ever had but like many Godly church leaders today, he was more concerned about the present, about his generation, and gave little thought to the future and those who would one day lead!

Sadly, it was during the extra 15 years of life God had granted him that Hezekiah and his wife had a child that would become one of the most wicked kings in Israel's history! He was Godless, lawless and heartless and the Bible testifies that he became a leader who "led them (Israel) to do even more evil than the pagan nations that the Lord had destroyed when the people of Israel entered the land." (2 Kings 21:9 NLT)

Currently in the United States everything from guns to drugs is being blamed for the state of

affairs among our nation's youth. Violence is high and you can't watch the news without another school shooting or violent act being committed by the younger generation. Of course, this reality is reflected in other countries as well, but few are aware of the real systemic problem behind the moral free fall among the younger generation. It is the conviction of this writer, that Hezekitis is the problem—like king Hezekiah we are either preoccupied with our own generation or unconscious of the desperate need of the younger generation for our proactive attention. Among this generation is a deep need realized or not, for spiritual fathers—an older generation who cares for the lives and souls of the up and coming Manasseh's (Millennials and Generation Z).

But there is great news! God has a cure for Hezekitis and real hope for a Manasseh generation! God's word predicts that just before His return, He will send "Elijah the Prophet" who will "turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of children to their fathers." (Malachi 4:6) Interestingly, Ellen White compares Elijah to those living at the end of time. She writes "Elijah was a type of the saints who will be living on the earth at the time of the

second advent of Christ and who will be "changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump," without tasting of death" (PK 227). So, just before the return of Christ, God will raise up a generation that will cure His church of Hezekitis as they wholeheartedly pursue intergenerational youth ministry.

Elijah the Prophet was without question one of the greatest youth leaders in the Old Testament. He was a Godly man like Hezekiah, but one who cared for the younger generation and did more than just preach "total youth involvement." Elijah "rolled up his sleeves" and invested compassionately into the younger generation as if the future of the church depended upon it! Elijah understood that effective youth ministry is intergenerational, and he did three profound but simple things to cure Hezekitis!

## CARE

First, he cared for them. You will remember when the widow of Zarephath's son died, it was Elijah that carried the boy's body upstairs, stretched himself over him three times and cried out to God to bring him to life. Intergenerational ministry follows a simple formula—proximity + prayer = revival. When the Older generation builds close relationships with the younger

generation (proximity) and cries out earnestly for their spiritual revival (prayer) supernatural things happen! You will remember in Ezekiel 37, that it was only after Ezekiel prayed for the Spirit to revive the dry bones that the army of God came to life (verse 10). I believe this prophesy applies specifically to our army of youth, but that's another article. Caring for this generation is about praying earnestly for their spiritual revival as we pursue close relationships with them.

I love how Ellen White herself appeals for more proximity and prayer in regard to intergenerational youth ministry:

"The youth are the objects of Satan's special attacks; but kindness, courtesy, and sympathy which flows from a heart filled with love to Jesus, will gain their confidence, and save them from many a snare of the enemy. There must be more study given to the problem of how to deal with the youth, more earnest prayer for the wisdom that is needed in dealing with minds...we should seek to enter into the feelings of the youth, sympathizing with them in their joys and sorrows, their conflicts and victories... we must meet them where they are if we would keep them...

let us remember the claim of God upon us to make the path to heaven bright and attractive" (*Gospel Workers* p. 207-212).

## HELPFUL RESOURCES

The General Conference Youth Department has an excellent resource that will help you, your church, Conference, Union and Division become more effective and intentional about caring for the younger generation and curing the Hezekitis among us. The resource is called "Intergenerational Churches of Refuge" or iCOR. It is a resource that church leaders can study preferable with their leadership teams in order to intentionally and effectively care for the younger generation. You can download the resource for free at [youth.adventist.org](http://youth.adventist.org). Also stay tuned for training opportunities at [@gcyouthministries](https://twitter.com/gcyouthministries) and [youth.adventist.org](http://youth.adventist.org).

## CHALLENGE

Second Elijah challenged them. On mount Carmel he did not preach smooth and comfortable messages. Instead he shook the younger generation up by challenging them to get off the fence and follow the Lord wholeheartedly. "If the LORD is God, follow him! but if Baal is God, then follow him!" he declared (1 Kings 18:21 NLT)

Once a young man was sitting on the fence and Jesus approached him challenging him to get off the fence and follow him wholeheartedly. The young man said, "No thank you Jesus, I want to remain on the fence." Jesus went away sad. Next the devil appeared to the young man and invited him to follow him wholeheartedly as well. The young man replied in the same way, "no thank you, I am going to remain on the fence." The devil smiled and said, "that's ok young man, you can remain on the fence, after all I own the fence!"

Yes, the younger generation needs to know that Jesus loves them, and His grace covers their sins and that justification is theirs by faith alone and not by works BUT, where are the challenging messages today? Where are the messages calling young people to live holy lives for God, to keep His Sabbath, to live pure, to grow in grace, to be Spirit-filled and sanctified? Where is the challenge to live counterculture for Jesus even when it's dangerous? Where are the messages calling for health reform, mission service, tithing responsibility and respect for religious and political authority? Maybe you've noticed we feature tons of David testimonies but few Joseph and Daniel stories of God's grace. Moreover, where are the

warning messages that the end is near and faith as well as repentance is required of those who wish to be saved?

Ellen White writes:

"The smooth sermons so often preached make no lasting impression: the trumpet does not give a certain sound. Men are not cut to the heart by the plain, sharp truths of God's word...when will the voice of faithful rebuke be heard once more in the church... If they were not so rare, we should see more of the power of God revealed among men... it is not form love for their neighbor that they smooth down the message entrusted to them, but because they are self-indulgent and ease loving. True love seeks first the honor of God and the salvation of souls... God calls for men like Elijah, Nathan, and John the Baptist—me who will bear His message with faithfulness, regardless of the consequences; men who will speak the truth bravely, though it call for the sacrifice of all they have" (PK pg. 140-142).

I believe it was the great Charles Spurgeon that warned "A time will come when instead of shepherds



feeding the sheep the church will have clowns entertaining the goats." Oh Lord how we need church leaders who will courageously challenge the younger generation like Elijah!

## HELPFUL RESOURCES

There is no better resource for this than Scripture and Spirit of Prophecy. We encourage leaders around the world to learn from credible Christians authors but always prioritizing Scripture and Spirit of Prophecy! We challenge ADVENTIST youth leaders to make young disciples for Christ teaching them to "OBEY ALL" that Jesus taught even the countercultural and dangerous truths (Matthew 28:19-20, NLT).

## CALL

Thirdly Elijah called young people. In the eyes of most, Elijah was an example of ministry success. After-all he was well loved and respected by the church but apparently in the eyes of God his ministry was incomplete. In 1 Kings 19:16 God "commands" him to pass on leadership to the younger generation! Someone once said, "no success without a successor" and apparently God agrees. Ellen White writes "As Elijah divinely directed in seeking a successor, passed the field

in which Elisha was plowing, he cast upon the young man's shoulders the mantle of consecration" (PK 219).

Like many of us, Elijah seems to have obeyed God's command here half-heartedly. I may be wrong with this assumption, but you will remember when he found Elisha, he threw the mantel over him and kept walking (1 Kings 19:19). This seems to be the common way we mentor young people today. Instead of training them for ministry and giving them responsibilities, they can handle, we throw the mantel over them and shout "sink or swim kid," "Don't let us down" after all "you are the church of today!" But calling the younger generation into ministry and leadership is about passing it on, not dumping it on them! Jesus took the young people on his ministry team through a process which took three years. He began with observation (watch me do it), then participation (help me do it) and finally activation (you do it). Elijah did the same thing over a period of several years. Sister White writes "Ministry comprehends far more than preaching the word. It means training young men as Elijah trained Elisha, taking them from their ordinary duties, and giving them responsibilities to bear in God's work—small responsibilities at first, and larger ones as they gain strength

and experience" (PK 222).

Thankfully Elijah grew too be an amazing mentor to Elisha. Some might even argue that he was so good at it that his young successor exceeded him! Ellen Whites seems to affirm this when she wrote, "When the Lord in His providence sees fit to remove from His work those to whom He has given wisdom, He helps and strengthens their successors, if they will look to Him for aid and will walk in His ways. They may be even wiser than their predecessors; for they may profit by their experience and learn wisdom from their mistakes. Henceforth Elisha stood in Elijah's place. He who had been faithful in that which was least was to prove himself faithful also in much" (PK 228.4).

The greatest compliment to the older generation is when the younger generation that they have cared for, challenged and called into ministry become even wiser than they! Unlike king Saul who grew jealous of his young successor, and even worked to sabotage him, Elijah encouraged and equipped Elisha and became a spiritual "father" to him. You will remember that as he ascended in a fiery chariot Elisha shouted "...My father! My Father! I see the chariots and charioteers of Israel" (2 Kings 2:12, NLT). What a compliment to the older generation when the

younger generation responds to their fatherly love expressed through caring, challenging and calling! So, leader never forget, if the ones you are mentoring grow to be better speakers, teachers, administrators and even leaders than you...than praise God you're in good company with empowering leaders like Elijah, Barnabas and yes even Jesus who empowered His followers to even greater things. Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even GREATER works, because I am going to be with the Father." (John 14:12 NLT) Wow think on that!

## RESOURCES

The General Conference Youth Department has some wonderful resources for those who want to grow as youth leaders who care, challenge and call the younger generation to ministry for The Master. Senior Youth Leadership (SYL) is one of these training resources. We also have the new Adventist Youth Leaders Magazine designed to equip leaders around the world to more effectively pass on leadership to the younger generation. Both of these resources are free for download at [youth.adventist.org](http://youth.adventist.org). Why not make sure all the youth leaders in your area of influence have these resources in hand?

## THANK YOU!

My deepest respects and appreciation go out to the parents, youth leaders, teachers, club directors, pastors and administrators around the world who are investing their time, talents and treasures into the generation coming behind them. You are the fulfillment of Malachi's Promise!

On behalf of the General Conference Youth Department, we thank you! Only in the future will we know how much we owe to your vigilance, dedication and hard work.

Hopefully this article has stimulated your thinking and strengthened your resolve to intentionally lead God's church in caring, challenging and calling the younger generation. I believe this article contains the key to reaching and retaining the younger generation. The cure for Hezekitis is simple but not easy for sure. We as church leaders must act intentionally now!

What matters most in these last days, is that we pour into the younger generation and resist the urge to care only for ourselves and our generation. Now is the time for the Elijah leaders to step up and stand out in behalf of the younger generation. It's time to intentionally care, challenge and call them! As mentioned above, Hezekiah was a godly king and no doubt he cared

deeply for his son Manasseh, but life has a way of forcing priorities and if we are not careful, it is highly likely that our priority will be for ourselves and will naturally lead to neglecting the needs of the younger generation. But Jesus will help us; He prioritized children and He can put this same desire within each of us.

Why not take some time in the next few days or weeks to come up with a written and intentional plan to "turn the hearts of the fathers to the children" in your area of influence.

Never forget that Malachi 4:5-6 is not just a promise it's a warning! "Look I am sending you the prophet Elijah before the great and dreadful day of the Lord arrives. His preaching will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers. Otherwise I will come and strike the land with a curse."



**Gary Blanchard, MDiv**  
Youth Director  
General Conference of the  
Seventh-day Adventists

“True love seeks first the honor of God and the salvation of souls.”  
(PK pg. 142)

# CALENDAR 2020

## GENERAL CONFERENCE ADVENTIST YOUTH MINISTRIES

- OYIM UNIVERSITY
- GLOBAL YOUTH DAY
- YOUTH WEEK OF PRAYER
- GC SESSION
- IMPACT INDIANAPOLIS
- WORLD PATHFINDER DAY
- eWEEK OF PRAYER

JANUARY 21-26

MARCH 21

MARCH 21-28

JUNE 25 – JULY 4

JUNE 25 – JULY 4

SEPTEMBER 19

NOVEMBER 10-16



*Nako E. Mokgwane*  
Associate Youth Director



*Gary Blancard*  
World Youth Director



*Andres J. Peralta*  
Associate Youth Director



[YOUTH.ADVENTIST.ORG](http://YOUTH.ADVENTIST.ORG)







# Pathfinders in Public Schools in Jamaica

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| Adventist Youth Leader | **AYL** | 03 | 2019

**T**he impactful presence of the Pathfinder Ministry in Jamaica is admired by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information (MOEYI). In 2017, Jamaica Union (JAMU) Pathfinder Ministry received a Youth Development Award in recognition of exemplary contribution and service to Youth Development in Jamaica. As a result of the impact of the Pathfinder Ministry in transforming lives, and nurturing disciplined behavior, the MOEYI invited the Jamaica Union Conference to make a proposal for the inclusion of Pathfinder Clubs as a uniformed group in Public Schools. It augurs well that as the MOEYI in Jamaica seeks to increase uniformed groups in public schools

to improve discipline, the proposal to implement Pathfinding in the nation's education system, received a favorable response. With over 10,000 members, Pathfinders contend to be the largest uniformed youth group in Jamaica.

## BACKGROUND

The MOEYI considers it a strategic imperative to strengthen safety and security measures in schools, especially since there has been a spate of grievous offences committed by students. Research has shown that students involved in uniformed groups do not only perform better academically, but also lead disciplined lives. It is against this background that the Pathfinder Ministry was considered as an effective tool for behavior

modification, which will result in disciplined behavior and improved academic performance. Pathfinders in Jamaica have a longstanding tradition of strong involvement in national civic, and ceremonial activities. The partnership being forged between the Pathfinders and MOEYI provides a tremendous opportunity to demonstrate that the Pathfinder Club prepares boys and girls to be world-class citizens of impeccable integrity. Pathfinders are ambassadors of kindness, truth, and purity, who are not ashamed to stand on the platform of human dignity and be non-discriminatory servants of God, and friends to all. The initiative to implement Pathfinding in public schools promises to be a beneficial experience for all involved, as youth will be inspired to become their best selves; improve discipline in

schools; and be prepared to be well-adjusted members of society, ever-ready to make a positive contribution.

## CONTEXTUALIZATION

The initiative is being contextualized to reflect the standards as outlined by the General Conference Youth Ministries Department. As is customary, clubs will operate under the leadership of Master Guides, who will be standard bearers. Considering that some activities done in Pathfinder Clubs may already be done during school, the curriculum is being reviewed, and where necessary, adjustments will be made after consulting with the GC Youth Ministries Department.

## TARGETS

Whereas there are four Pathfinder Clubs operational in the Public School System, the target is to establish at least five public school Pathfinder Clubs in each of the five conferences in Jamaica by October 2019, with a view of each conference implementing an additional 5 annually for the ensuing years until there is saturation. The indicators from meetings of Master Guides who work in Public Schools, strongly suggest that it is highly probable that targets will be surpassed. All Youth Ministries Directors of the Jamaica Union Conference are committed to

realize targets. Mr. Courtney Berry, Safety and Security Coordinator, of the Safety and Security in Schools Unit of the MOEYI attended all meetings, where he promised to give the best support for this initiative.

## A COMPREHENSIVE CLUB

The meetings with teachers who are Master Guides in public schools also highlighted the comprehensive nature of the Pathfinder Club. Among the teachers present at these meetings, was an enthused Lisa Powell. Lisa is a teacher who is passionate about the initiative and believes that Pathfinder Clubs in Public Schools is God's way of bringing her back into active service. According to her, "Pathfinding is a combination of the Red Cross, 4-H, Cadet, and the ISCF Clubs – if it is established effectively. At my school, we already have a Master Guide who comes to teach Cadets Knots and Lashing. For us, human resource should not be a problem."

Another remarkable point made by Lisa is that in the past, she entered Pathfinders from her Church in 4-H competitions, and the first year they won four medals: 1 gold, 2 silver, and 1 bronze. Herein lies the quality and versatility of the training in Pathfinder Clubs.

## TRAINING TEACHERS AS MASTER GUIDES

Many Adventist teachers who are not yet trained Master Guides are eager to be engaged in the process. All Youth Ministries Directors are committed to see these teachers trained as Master Guides so that they can be equipped to provide effective and efficient leadership. Additionally, there is a renewed interest among many inactive master guides, as they are now ready to be re-engaged in the Pathfinder Ministry. Whereas the thrust is for public schools, some independent schools are also desirous of having Pathfinder Clubs in their schools. For this reason, representatives from some independent schools were present at meetings because they do not want to be left behind in this initiative.

## CONCERN

Pathfinding in Public Schools has attracted the interest of many. Some of whom, especially non-SDAs, are concerned that the Seventh-day Adventist Church will have an unfair advantage within the Public School System to proselytize the nation's children. The truth is that some Pathfinders may choose to be SDA, but as is customary within Pathfinder Clubs operated

by Church or Church Schools, it is not mandatory for club members to be SDA. Pathfinder in Public Schools is an extracurricular activity, which makes it optional. Additionally, as practiced in all Pathfinder Clubs, parental consent is required for a student to become a Pathfinder. The Pathfinder Club can serve to strengthen the parent-child relationship.

**ENDLESS POTENTIAL**

The MOEYI recognition, admiration, and appreciation of the Pathfinder Ministry should lead Adventists to consider whether

or not the full potential of this powerful ministry has been realized within the Church. Perhaps there should be greater intentionality to incorporate Pathfinder as part of the Adventist experience, so that all churches will have Pathfinder Clubs in like manner as all churches have Sabbath Schools. This may require collaboration between departments and may also require a revision of how we do church. The Pathfinder Club may very well be God’s appointed instrument through which identity, mission, and leadership are passed on to the mighty army of youth, even as they

are equipped, and empowered to be engaged to enter danger zones for Jesus.

With God's help, the Pathfinder values of kindness, truth, and purity, will permeate the fabric of the Jamaican society where youth will lead disciplined lives, and be equipped to make a positive contribution to Jamaica – and beyond! Pray to this end!



**Dane Fletcher, M.A.**  
Youth Ministries Director  
Jamaica Union Conference

A promotional graphic for GC Youth Ministries Global Youth Day. The background is a light blue textured surface with several white dice scattered on the left, each featuring a different social media icon (Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, YouTube, etc.). On the right, there is a large blue 'v' logo. The text is arranged in several blocks: 'GC YOUTH MINISTRIES GLOBAL YOUTH DAY' in large blue letters; 'GCYTHMIN' in white letters on a pink rectangular background; 'YOUTH.ADVENTIST.ORG' in black letters; '@GCYTHMIN' in white letters on a blue rectangular background; 'GENERAL CONFERENCE YOUTH MINISTRIES' in white letters on a red rectangular background; and 'YOUTH MINISTRIES – SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS' in black letters on a white rounded rectangular background at the bottom right. A small red die with a white '8+' is also visible at the bottom center.



# Irish Mission Camporee

**T**he magnificent Newmarket-on-Fergus Seventh-day Adventist Grounds have been hosting Irish Mission Pathfinder and Adventurer Camporees every year during the first Bank Holiday of May.

In 2019, seven clubs from the Mission (Newmarket, Longford Lyons, Galway, Cork Clovers, Ballinacrow, Dublin Dacians and Dublin Royals) gathered together and participated in the most extraordinary camp organized by the Irish Mission to practically and spiritually practice what it means to be a Youth 4 Christ.

Pastor Dejan Stojkovic, our main speaker, lifted the hearts of Adventurers and Pathfinders with the spiritual message. The activity team prepared the young and old for the second coming by challenging the participants through life skills. Over 220 Pathfinders, instructors, Adventurers and parents were dynamically involved during the weekend. They were being tested on different real-life skills and concurrently challenged also to unveil their Scripture knowledge.

Big thank you to all the staff involved in planning and conducting the activities. Big thank you to all parents for the extra financial sacrifice. Big thank you to all the Pathfinders and Adventurers, who did so well and worked so hard not only for this camp, but also for the PBE. Big thank you to all our leaders who are sacrificing their time and resources, and to the kitchen staff who made sure we are well fed.

Until next year's camporee, we hope to see you at the TED Camporee where you are invited to visit the Tabernacle with all the furniture build by Pathfinders and Adventurers across the Mission.

God Bless you all and may the peace of our Saviour Jesus Christ be with you.



**Dejan Stojkovic, M.A.**  
Youth Ministries Director,  
UK & Ireland

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

## West-Central Africa Division

### Senior Youth Leaders (SYL) Launch

**Host**  
**Western Nigeria Union Conference**

**Chief Host**  
Pastor Ugochukwu **ELEMS**  
WAD Youth Director

**Other Host**  
Pastor Abiodun **OLAOYE**  
Elder Thomas **UMORU**  
Margaret **AREMU**

**venue**  
**Babcock University**  
Ilishan-Remo, Ogun State

**Date**  
**August 1st-4th 2019**

Registration and material **Free**  
Feeding & Accommodation **\$15 / #5000**

**Facilitator**  
**Pastor Pako EDSON**  
General Conference Senior Youth Director

# My Testimony - Entering UNHEVAL College

**M**y name is Gabriel Huaman Malca and I am from Huanuco, Peru and I am 12 years old. This year I applied to the pre-University school UNHEVAL. I will tell you my testimony which occurred during the two months I spent in preparation for school. I started my academic preparation on January 4th and had two months to work hard and gain admission into the school by passing the entrance exam. I spent many hours of hard work and dedication. Days that started at 8am and ended at 11pm. I studied so much and I remember the first week was very difficult and complicated but I started to get into the rhythm of things and I was able to get one of the first places and compete with more than 200 other kids who came from different private schools, and I was coming from a public school. But God helped my effort and desire to excel.

I remember that the final exam which would cement their decision was February 23rd, my birthday but most importantly, a Saturday. When I heard the day of the exam, I was sad and became very upset. Sad because that is special day for God and for me. Upset because all my effort and the energy I put into this was in vain. I got home and told my mom everything. She looked into my eyes and firmly told me "you will continue studying as fervently until the end and we will pay the registration for the exam. If God wants you to go to that school, you will go. He will take care of everything!! So, chin up! Not all is said and done. Let's pray and trust in our God who can do

wonders!" I pondered on this and realized my mom was right. I told myself to trust in God. That's how I started to study again and continued preparing myself.

A few days before the test, on February 21st, a regional strike began in protest regarding the Chaglla Dam in Huanuco. Because of this schools, shops and all kinds of institutions were closed. To my surprise the test was then suspended, and the date was changed to Wednesday February 27th. I was able to take the exam and placed 2nd out of those 200 other kids. God always does His part, we only need to trust and believe in Him. Today I am a student at UNHEVAL, and I know God has a purpose for each of His children and that's why I remain faithful. I invite you to trust God as well.

**Gabriel Huaman Malca**

Pathfinder

Leonés de Huanuco Pathfinder Club



# Finally a Pathfinder and Loving it!

I grew up in a family where my mother attended church on Sundays, and my father was an agnostic musician. I had never even heard of the Seventh-day Adventist religion or their club called Pathfinders; that is until I became an Adventist in 2011. By this time, I was about 9 or 10 years old. I attended a church that was about 45 minutes to an hour drive near the city. I noticed there were many kids in the church who were involved in Pathfinders. I realized it wasn't possible for me to join because my family lived so far away. My mom promised me that if we were able to find a church closer to home, I would be able to join.

Four years later we moved from New York to Michigan. I was a little reluctant to join Pathfinders because now I was much older and entering high school. I felt I would be too far behind. Eventually I overcame my hesitation. I have now been in the Pathfinder Club at my church, Michiana-Fil-Am for about three years, and I am enjoying every moment of it.

When I joined, I was worried that I wouldn't be able to handle the concepts in Pathfinders. After the first month I realized that Pathfinders is more than reading and understanding the Bible, it involves experiencing all aspects of life as a Christian. This was very surprising to me. When I became Adventist, I learned about a list of things I cannot do, I was left not really knowing what I could do. However, the Pathfinder club has helped me to grow in my Christian walk.

I've been able to form friendships not only with those in my club, but also with Pathfinders from various parts of the state of Michigan. Pathfinders allows me to

experience things like camping, hiking, and backpacking in different states, things I would never have done on my own. I wish that I would have been able to join earlier. I definitely will never forget the things that I have learned in my club. Being a Pathfinder has been an amazing experience for me and my family. We are now looking forward to our first Oshkosh experience.



**Verlencia Senatus,**  
Pathfinder  
Michiana-Fil-Am Followers  
Pathfinder Club





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# A New Man

I can't imagine what my life would be like today, if I had refused to surrender to Jesus 6 years ago. From age 16, I was deeply engaged in partying, irresponsible drinking and other activities that portray a riotous living. I refused to attend church, even though I believed that God is real. I thought that most people became Christians or attended church as a way to cover up their sinful lifestyle. I believed most Christians were hypocrites. This was one of the reasons I avoided visiting church.

However, even while I continued living riotously, I always felt the need to change my lifestyle, because I needed to be the best that I can be. Unfortunately, I was not strong enough to turn away from it, and peer pressure was always the main factor that was hindering me from changing. At some point, I felt like I had gone too far in this unrighteous living. It seemed I had reached the point where it was now impossible for me to change.

I would regularly become very intoxicated whenever I drank alcoholic beverages. By age 17 this

became a habit. I had graduated from high school, however I was not able to attend college due to the lack of financial support. I did not have anything productive to do with my time, so I focused my attention on partying and drinking with friends. I was developing a passion for singing and being a DJ, so my intension was to become a dancehall artist one day. I knew the negative effects of drinking alcohol, but I became addicted and couldn't resist it. This led me to believe that I was an alcoholic.

One of my skills is graphic designing which was self-taught. I started my own graphic design business. Posters and invitations for dancehall parties were the main products I designed and published. However, there were times when I felt the need to do more with this skill.

In December 2012, I had an undesirable experience that caused me to do some self-reflection. I went to party with a group of friends and got very drunk. My friends took advantage of my situation spending all of my money on themselves. I was left to find my way home broke. I felt so betrayed and disappointed

with myself. I realized that drinking alcohol was really a bad habit and I needed to break it. Overall, I needed to change my life, I needed better friends, I needed to find a better way to enjoy my life. I realized I had wasted a lot of money partying and drinking throughout the years and I wanted to be more fiscally responsible. Therefore, I made a New Year resolution to change my life and to be a better man for the year 2013.

It was a struggle for me to stop attending parties and drinking. The desire to spend time with my friends was not there anymore. For 3 months (January to March) I was fighting my desire for worldly pleasures. One evening in April 2013, I was invited to attend a gospel campaign at the Hampstead Seventh-day Adventist church, which is very close to my home. I accepted the invitation with an open mind. The first time I attend the campaign, the Word of God was presented to me and it felt like a rod that was chastening me through my conscience. However, I was curious to hear more, so I decided to attend the campaign every evening for 3 weeks. As I began to

learn about God and the benefits of living according to His Word, I wanted a change in my life. Without hesitation, I confessed and repented of my sinful lifestyle. I was baptized on April 21st 2013 at the age of 19.

On the day of my baptism, I became a new man. No more partying and drinking, no more unnecessary spending on alcoholic beverages and expensive party clothes. Today I am more financially responsible because I have found a better life in Jesus Christ. I am currently a member of the Hampstead Seventh-day Adventist church, where I serve

as an AY Leader, and a newly ordained Deacon. I serve as the VP of Evangelism for the East St. Mary AY Federation. I am also an active member of the Islington District Youth Choir, and I am currently in training to be a Senior Youth leader. I no longer use my Graphic Design skills to design dancehall Party posters and invitations. God opened an avenue for me to use this skill to design better content, such as posters or invitations for church events and other publications that can bring honor and glory to His name.

Today I am very thankful for the Seventh-day Adventist church and the Advent Message. I am also thankful that through Jesus Christ my life has been transformed in such a way that I can be a vessel for Him, as I serve His church and prepare for His return.



**Terrence Marshall,**  
AY Leader  
Hampstead Seventh-day  
Adventist Church

# 2018 ANNUAL STATISTICAL REPORT FOR YOUTH MINISTRIES

Divisions	Number of AY Societies	AY Membership	Number of Ambassador Clubs	Ambassador Membership	Number of Pathfinder Clubs	Pathfinder Membership	Number of Adventurer Clubs	Adventurer Membership
ECD	27,460	783,998	6,137	223,508	15,772	252,493	11,751	200,708
EUD	745	12,885	459	4,457	702	6,549	959	9,172
ESD	161	1,760	2	59	387	3,575	165	1,434
IAD	20,326	781,836	732	8,620	5,694	151,580	4,645	98,561
NAD	1,027	not recorded	N/A	N/A	1,464	56,625	1,660	24,730
NSD	523	8,551	441	6,082	378	6,668	44	712
SAD	23,198	752,496	N/A	N/A	12,138	325,053	7,702	158,208
SID	13,633	567,231	11,341	137,594	12,918	698,762	10,433	913,714
SPD	1,787	34,660	459	13,913	1,562	42,720	1,453	31,319
SSD	7,426	345,029	2106	63,868	3,212	83,427	3,749	64,015
SUD	785	94,580	100	7,535	265	19,840	283	13,344
TED	291	7,589	14	112	323	4,978	233	3,162
WAD	3,509	49,661	7600	16,413	3,530	76,460	2,970	38,065
MENA	7	65	N/A	N/A	4	43	4	21
ISRF	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	12	190	11	128
TOTALS	100,878	3,440,341	29,391	482,161	58,361	1,728,963	46,062	1,557,293



● East-Central Africa  
● Inter-European  
● Euro-Asia  
● Inter-American  
● North American

● Northern Asia-Pacific  
● South American  
● Southern-Africa & Indian Ocean  
● South Pacific  
● South Asia-Pacific

● Southern Asia  
● Trans-European  
● West-Central Africa  
● Middle East & North Africa  
● Israel Field

**PASS IT ON**  
YOUTH.ADVENTIST.ORG

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# World Pathfinder Day 2019 Sermon

## Created with Purpose

### INTRODUCTION

I'm so happy to share God's message with you on World Pathfinder Day. We now have approximately two million Pathfinders around the world as we celebrate the 69th anniversary of Pathfinder ministries. This ministry has expanded to over 150 countries preparing people for eternity.

Pathfinders and church family, have you ever wondered why you are here? Have you contemplated why God created you? Have you considered the main reason He made you? I hope that today you will discover God's plan for your life and understand that He created you with purpose.

The well-known author, Dr. Myles Munroe once said, "The greatest tragedy in life is not death, but a life without a purpose," he also said, "You are not important because of how long you live; you are important because of how effective you live."

Pathfinders, friends and brethren your purpose in life goes beyond your goals, achievements, career, desires and victories. One of the most published female writers, Ellen G. White wrote "Those who live for a purpose, seeking to benefit and bless their fellowmen and to honor and glorify their Redeemer, are the truly happy ones on the earth, while the man who is restless, discontented, and seeking this and testing that, hoping to find happiness, is always complaining of disappointment. He is always in want, never satisfied, because he lives for himself alone."

To understand more of God's purpose in placing you on this earth, you must begin with His words found in Genesis chapter 1.

Before we look at our Bibles, let us pray: Loving Father and Creator of all, we come to you today deeply grateful for your creation. As we look around us, we are amazed at the greatness and majesty of all that you have made. Nature all around us speaks of your greatness - the sky, mountains, trees, lakes and streams speak of your great design. You have given us such beauty in the colors of the rainbow, the beauty of flowers and fields. Words cannot fully express the magnificence of all you have created. We join in praise with the writer of the Psalm when he says, "O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth." May we show our love and reverence to you, our Lord, by caring for all that you have created. We humbly give you praise and thanks. In the name of Jesus, Amen!

### • GOD THE CREATOR

The book of Genesis is considered one of the most important books in the Bible. Without the book of Genesis, the whole Bible would have been difficult to understand. The book deals with the origin of the world, human kind and with our purpose. Go with me to the first book of the Bible written by Moses, the book of Genesis. We are going to read chapter 1 verse 1.



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## Genesis 1:1 "In the Beginning God Created the heavens and the Earth"

In the "beginning" God created not only this planet but the whole universe and later He created you and me also. One thing that is clear, it is God that created everything. He is the initiator of creation. He made us for His purpose and until we discover that purpose, we will not have the peaceful sense of belonging. **In the Beginning God**, the writer wants us to understand that there is no beginning without God. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. He is the one who created in the beginning, He is the source of life, existence and purpose. God appears in the beginning because without Him there is no creation.

I would appeal to each one of you to put God first in your life. Beginning and Creation happened because of God. God should be the most important person in our lives. If you are going to begin a task or do anything in life put God in the "Beginning." When we wake up in the morning instead of grabbing the phone, taking a shower or doing any other chore, start the day with God first. There are many reasons why violence, murder, rape, suicide, and discrimination are increasing, but one reason is because God is not in the beginning of some people's lives.

God should be in the beginning of our decisions, dreams, career, finances, and relationships. He should be in the beginning at school, at work, and even when we are making our social media posts it should reflect God as our beginning. So many people live purposeless lives, with no joy or hope, and sometimes it is because God is not their priority. So, let me ask, Pathfinders and church family, what place does God have in your life? Matthew 6:33 says "but seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (NKJV).

There are blessings that result when we put God first in our lives; there is order, light, growth, and abundance. Without God, life has no meaning or purpose and without purpose, life has no value. Without value, we have no hope. The name God means a Supreme Being, in Hebrew, "Strong," "Mighty." It shows invincible power. God is the most important word in this verse. He is subject, the one that does the action and deserves all the credit. He gives purpose to His creation.

What God does no one else can do. Jesus said in Matthew 19:26 "but Jesus looked at them and said to them, 'With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible' " (NKJV). God is the subject of this work, not only the most important One, but indeed the only One. The theologian Jacques Doukhan put it this way, "God is the only Leader, not simply because He is the Creator, or because of His creating power, but more importantly because He is the One who preceded everything and everyone else."

One key verb that we cannot ignore is the Hebrew word for "Created." It shows that what was formed was new and perfect. This definition of create is always and only used with God as its subject. It is used only with God's activities of initiating a thing or project. No one else can do it, only Him. The same word is used in Psalm 51:10 "Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me" (NKJV). David is saying you are the only one that can change my life, you are the only one that can change my circumstances, you are the only that can help, cleanse my life. God is the only one that can create a sense of belonging, a sense of purpose in your life. The Bible says in Philippians 2:13 "for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good

pleasure." God wants to create a new person filled with hope. God wants to give you His identity so you can fulfill your purpose. This act of creation sends a message to the different philosophies of this world:

- To the atheist it says that creation was the work of God.
- To the polytheist it says there is only one God.
- To the pantheist it says that God is apart from and independent of His creation.
- To the evolutionist it says that the universe was created and did not evolve.
- To the materialist it says that matter is not eternal but was itself created.
- To the existentialist it says creation has a purpose.

God created the heavens and earth and the Bible declares in Colossians 1:16 "For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him." (NKJV)

The British poet William Cowper once said, "Nature is a name for an effect, whose cause is God" and the British Mathematician Lord Kelvin commented "If you think strongly enough, you will be forced by science to the belief in God. We must pause, face to face, with the mystery and miracle of Creation."

In Isaiah 45:18 says, "for this is what the Lord says—he who created the heavens, he is God; he who fashioned and made the earth, he founded it; he did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited—he says: "I am the Lord, and there is no other" (NIV).

## • GOD CREATED WITH PURPOSE

We just read that God created the earth to be inhabited, to have a purpose. But we have a situation, the earth is without form, empty and in darkness. In Gen 1: 2 says "Now the earth was formless and empty (void), darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters" (NIV).

### A. FORMLESS AND EMPTY

We find here that the earth is formless. In Hebrew the word used here means "nothingness." The word used for "empty" or "void" means absence of life. God appears and starts a process which will teach us God's purpose in our life. Let's see what happened in the first three days of creation:

• **First day: creation of light** (Gen 1:3–5): "Then God said, 'Let there be light.'" He then divides the light from the darkness.

• **Second day: creation of space and water** (Gen 1:6–8): He separates the atmospheric, upper water from the earthly, lower water.

• **Third day: creation of plant life** (Gen 1:9–13): First He separates the water from the land.

Then He brings forth green grass, plants, trees, and vegetation of every kind on the earth. As you can see, in the first three days God forms and organizes. The earth was without form and God begins to shape it. What happened in the following three days?

• **Fourth day: creation of sun, moon, and stars** (Gen 1:14–19)

• **Fifth day: creation of fish and fowl** (Gen 1:20–23)

• **Sixth day: creation of land animals and people** (Gen 1:24–31; 2:7–20)

1. The brute creatures: livestock and all wild beasts (Gen 1:24–25) 2. The blessed creature, who is given two things:

a. The image of God (Gen 1:26–27)

- b. The instructions from God (Gen 1:26–31; 2:15–19)
- (1) They are to rule over all nature (Gen 1:26, 28),
  - (2) to fill the earth with their own kind (Gen 1:28),
  - (3) to cultivate and care for their beautiful home, the Garden of Eden (Gen 2:15),
  - (4) to eat from any tree except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen 2:16–17),
  - (5) and to provide names for all the other creatures (Gen 2:19–20).

• **Seventh day: God rests** (Gen 2:1–6): His creative work is complete and is pronounced good. God blesses and sets apart the seventh day.

To summarize, the first three days God forms and the last three days God fills. God gave purpose to His creation. On the 1st day light was divided from the darkness, on the 4th day the sun and the moon were given purpose to provide light during the day and night.

The heavens were filled with the stars and birds flying in the sky. The sea was filled with the sea creatures. The earth was filled by humans and animals to walk on it. Everything that was created had a purpose.

What God did was give purpose to His creation. Then God created Adam, “formed” him and filled him with the Spirit, and he became a living creature. God gave him purpose. Adam was full of God. What is your purpose? God created you to be full of Him. He gave Adam and Eve the task to fill the earth, to be steward of the earth, and to be a blessing to others. Why did God create you? Number 1, to fill you with His Spirit and number 2, to be a blessing to others.

Maybe there is someone here that feels formless, empty and in darkness.

• **Formless (Disordered)**- Maybe there is chaos in your life. Your family is a mess, your school is a mess, your self-esteem is very low, and you feel like you have no purpose.

• **Empty**: Maybe even though you are here in church, you are still feeling empty. Your heart is full of hate and pain, but empty of hope and God. I am speaking to someone that is here feeling that life is meaningless. Some of you are even planning to go back home empty.

• **Darkness**: Maybe you are not only formless and empty, but you are in darkness. Nicodemus came confused when it was dark. Judas betrayed Jesus when it was dark. Jesus was apprehended when it was dark. Peter was confused, became violent and denied Jesus in the dark. You might be in darkness; you are confused not knowing what the future holds.

• **But one thing I know**: God can organize your life if you allow Him. He can fill the emptiness in you with hope, strength and power. He can be the light directing your decisions. He can illuminate your life and give you purpose. God created you to be like Him; full of love, full of passion, full of courage, full of hope, full of energy. HE created you in His image, you have a purpose.

## CONCLUSION:

You were created with purpose. God has a plan for you. You are important to Him. Since you were in your mother's womb, He was there for you. Psalm 139:13–14 says “For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well” (NKJV).



### Listen to the words of this poem, written by Russell Kelfer

You are who you are for a reason. You're part of an intricate plan. You're a precious and perfect unique design, called God's special woman or man. You look like you look for a reason. Our God made no mistake. He knit you together within the womb, you're just what he wanted to make. The parents you had were the ones he chose, and no matter how you may feel, they were custom designed with God's plan in mind, and they bear the Master's seal. No, that trauma you faced was not easy. And God wept that it hurt you so; But it was allowed to shape your heart So that into his likeness you'd grow. You are who you are for a reason, you've been formed by the Master's rod. You are who you are, beloved, because there is a God!

Rick Warren put it this way "Your birth was no mistake or accident; your life is no fluke of nature. Your parents did not plan; God did. He was not surprised by your birth. Indeed, He was waiting. Long before you were conceived by your parents, God had already conceived you in His mind. He thought of you first. It is not because of fate, nor chance, nor luck, nor coincidence that at this very moment you are breathing."

You are not an accident, "You were born by His purpose and for His purpose." You were created by God and for God, and until you understand it, your life will be meaningless.

The benefits of a purpose-driven life are: gives meaning to your life, simplifies your life, focuses your life, motivates your life and prepares you for eternity.

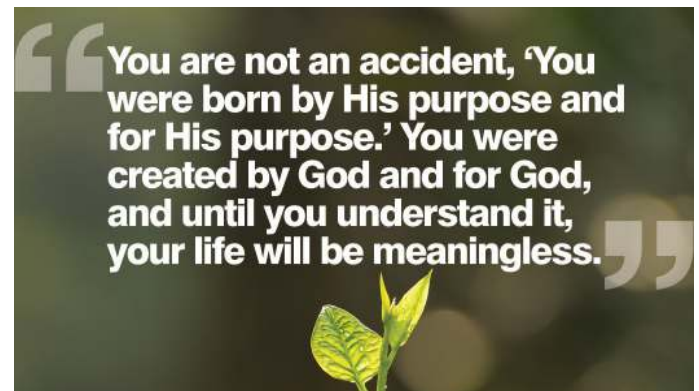
**Psalm 138:8 reads;** "The Lord will fulfill His purpose for me; your steadfast love, O Lord, endures forever. Do not forsake the work of your hands." (ESV)

If you want God to fulfill His purpose for you stand with me as I pray.

**Final Prayer:** Our Father and our Creator as we stand before you, we praise you because you are God and there is no one like you. We thank you because you created us with a purpose. You have filled us with your Spirit and made us living creatures. You have asked us to be a blessing to those around us. Your plan for our life is the only thing that will fill us and bring light and order into our lives. Lord we want to be what you have created us to be, so help us to fulfill your plan for our lives. We ask for you will to be done in the life of each person here today. Lord bless us and help us to be a blessing to everyone we come in contact with. Help us to share your love and the hope that we have of living with you forever. Thank you for the 2 million pathfinders around the world, our parents, our church family and all the staff that make this Pathfinder day possible. In Jesus name I pray Amen!



**Andres J. Peralta, D.Min.**  
General Conference of the  
Seventh-day Adventists



# Leader Spotlight



**Magulilo Mwakalonge, Director**  
*East Central Africa Division*

Pastor Magulilo Mwakalonge was born in Kigoma Tanzania and raised in a Seventh-day Adventist family. He has served the Church as a Bible Instructor; District Pastor; Departmental Director of a Conference, Union and Division;

and as a Union President. He did Ministerial Training and attained BA in Theology from University of Eastern Africa Baraton (Tanzania Adventist College Campus), and MA in Theology (New Testament) at Newbold College, UK Campus. Pastor Mwakalonge has deep love for Youth Ministries, and he strongly believes that the Youth Ministries has greatly contributed to who he is. He is married to Winnie, and they have two lovely children- Grace and Gladness.



**Zlatko Musija**  
*Trans-European Division*

Zlatko Musija was born in 1975 in Croatia, and grew up in a small church where young people were very active and involved. He studied Adventist Theology and Biblical Studies at Adriatic Union College in Croatia and Newbold College in the

UK. Prior to his appointment as the Youth Director in charge of Senior Youth ministry in the Trans-European region he served in the Adriatic Union Conference as a Pastor, Youth Director, Associate Dean of Seminary, Conference President and Union President.

"My own blessed experience of being involved and active in church life from my childhood, and the opportunity I have

had to serve in different leadership responsibilities despite being relatively young, gives me a passion to see our many young people involved in the mission of the church. I want them to experience the blessings of being active for Jesus, not out of pressure or fear but out of love for our beautiful Savior."



**Carlos Campitelli, Director**  
*South American Division*

Pastor Carlos Campitelli was born in Paraná, Entre Ríos, Argentina. He studied at the Adventist University of Plata, where he graduated in Pastoral Theology, Religious Education and Social Assistance.

In 2010, he graduated in the Master in Pastoral Theology from the Adventist Faculty of Bahia. In 2016 he obtained the Master's in Leadership from Andrews University. He is married to Lislei Freire, a native of Brazil, a graduate in Psychology and Music from Adventista do Plata University.

Carlos began his pastoral ministry in Barreirinhas, Maranhão, Brazil. He was then transferred to the capital, São Luís do Maranhão, where he also worked as a district pastor. In the same field, he was called to be director of the YouthMinistry of the Maranhense Association. Subsequently, he was called to be director of the Youth Ministry of the Western Amazon Association. He then worked as director of the Youth Ministry of the Northeast Brazilian Union and the Argentine Union. Campitelli is currently the director of the Youth, Music and University Ministry of the South American Division.



**“The LORD has APPOINTED the  
YOUTH TO BE HIS helping hand.”**

Testimonies for the Church 7:64