

**THE ADVENTIST YOUTH MINISTRIES (AYM)
DEPARTMENT
SOUTHERN AFRICA-INDIAN OCEAN DIVISION (SID)**

**48
TIPS AND ANSWERS TO
COMMONLY ASKED
QUESTIONS**

**By
Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division Adventist Youth
Ministries**

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Introduction

The Seventh-day Adventist Church espouses the empowerment of young people. We base our conviction on inspired writings.

“And when your children ask you, 'What does this ceremony mean to you?'”¹ “Every human being, created in the image of God, is endowed with a power akin to that of the Creator-- individuality, power to think and to do. The men in whom this power is developed are the men who bear responsibilities, who are leaders in enterprise, and who influence character. It is the work of true education to develop this power, to train the youth to be thinkers, and not mere reflectors of other men's thought. Instead of confining their study to that which men have said or written, let students be directed to the sources of truth, to the vast fields opened for research in nature and revelation. Let them contemplate the great facts of duty and destiny, and the mind will expand and strengthen.”²

48 Tips and Commonly Asked Questions seeks to empower our young people and their leaders by responding to questions that are usually asked by those who have interest in the youth and Adventist Youth Ministries (AYM) and we hope that the reader will find the tips we share useful and enlightening.

As much as possible, the contents of this document are backed and corroborated by AYM references, footnotes do provide such sources, but some of the facts are based on experience gathered over the years of working with young people and experienced youth leaders.

This document is not exhaustive as there may be many other questions or tips that are not captured. As the reader gleans the information in this resource, we hope that they will be enriched by the information and that they will share with us other questions and tips that they wish could be included in the second edition of this document.

We hope that this material will give our youth leaders and young people impetus as they serve the Lord and as we proclaim the second coming of Jesus.

May you be blessed and enriched.

¹ *Exodus* 12:26, NIV

² Ellen G. White, *Education*, p. 17

When was the Adventist Youth Ministries founded?

“In 1879 Luther Warren (17) and Harry Fenner (14) began the first youth society in Luther’s home to; 1) Plan Missionary work 2) Raise money for literature 3) Promote the cause of temperance.”³ “The passion for evangelism that spawned leadership skills in teenagers Luther Warren and Harry Fenner seems to have been kindled or nurtured by their local congregation there in Hazelton. According to the Trustees Record Book of the Hazelton church, a special day of prayer for the salvation of the church’s youth had been declared early in 1879.”⁴

This is the abridged timeline of AYM events⁵:

- 1901 – Under the Sabbath School department
- 1907 – Missionary Volunteer Society was founded
- 1909 – Junior Missionary Volunteer Societies Organized (JMV)
- 1922 - MV (now AJY) Progressive Classes introduced Friend and Companion classes, MV classes (now AY Classes) Comrade and Master Comrade (now Guide and Master Guide -- 1951) A. W. Spalding and Harriet Hold advocate basic idea of Pathfinder Clubs
- The Pathfinder flag was designed by Henry T. Bergh
- 1949 – Henry T. Bergh composed the Pathfinder Song, “Oh we are the Pathfinder Strong”
- 1950-1963 – The first World Pathfinder Director was Laurance A. Skinner
- 1963 – John Hancock elected as the second World Pathfinder Director
- 1979 - Missionary Volunteer (MV) was changed to Adventist Youth (AY) Junior Missionary Volunteer (JMV) was changed to Adventist Junior Youth (AJY). The Pre-AJY class was changed to Adventurers Club (4 yrs. - 4th grade)
- 1996 - Basic Staff Training, Pathfinder Leadership Award (PLA), & Pathfinder Instructor Award (PIA) curriculum developed
- 2005 - Youth Ministries Department (Adventurer Club Pathfinder Club, and Senior Youth Society)
- 2011 – Adventist Youth Ministries was effected

What prompted the name change from Missionary Volunteers to Adventist Youth?

As indicated above, Missionary Volunteer (MV) was changed to Adventist Youth (AY) in 1979. The name change was prompted by a valid reason. “During the early parts of the 60s and 70s, the world experienced what was termed as winds of change in the political world. In some countries, the word “missionary” was equated to “colonial” powers. Due to this scenario, the World Church dropped the word “Missionary” and voted for the new name without it.”⁶

³ Paul Tompkins, former youth director of Trans European Division

⁴ Robert Holbrook, *The AY Story*, p. 2

⁵North American Division, www.pathfindersonline.org

⁶ *Youth Ministry Handbook and Leadership Training Manual*, Published by the Adventist Youth Ministries of the General Conference, p. 10

What is the Motto of Adventist Youth Ministries?

In 2010, the Youth Advisory of the General Conference voted to change the word ‘Constraineth’ to ‘Compels’. The rationale was to use a contemporary word instead of the archaic one. Therefore, the motto of AYM is “The Love of Christ Compels us.”

What is the Mission Statement of Adventist Youth Ministries?

The Youth Advisory of the General Conference voted the following Mission Statement in 2010: “To lead young people into a saving relationship with Jesus, and to help them embrace His call to discipleship.” The current AYM’ mantra’ is *Salvation and Discipleship*. The SID Youth Advisory voted that the mission statement should be read and recited at all AYM meetings.⁷

Were some of our pioneers young?

Yes indeed. In fact, most of our pioneers were under the age of 30. “The pioneers of the Seventh-day Adventist Church were in their youth when they established the church by God’s leading. James White started his ministry at the age of 21; Ellen G. Harmon at 17; John N. Andrews at 21; Uriah Smith, at 20. The progress of the church in the past clearly shows that the involvement of our youth cannot be ignored.”⁸

Why do we use the neckerchief/scarf?

The neckerchief is a vital part of the AYM uniforms. The Basic Uniform “Should include the Pathfinder world emblem and the Pathfinder scarf.”⁹ This means if one is not wearing the full uniform but is wearing the neckerchief alone, they can participate in any AYM activity that precludes uniform inspection.

“The Pathfinder scarf should always be worn as part of the dress (Class A) uniform to distance it from the traditional military uniform. Attaching weapons to dress uniforms such as swords, bayonets, or machetes and guns even if they are fake ones should not be allowed even in drill ceremonies.”¹⁰

Another reason why we use the neckerchief is that it serves as a first aid item in case anyone sprains a limb.

Why do we wear the Adventist Youth Ministries uniforms?

“The Pathfinder uniform helps make the Pathfinder program real and visible. It is emblematic and representative of the worldwide club’s ideals and standards. Each individual member becomes a very vital representative of the organization, and wearing the uniform will help to provide a consciousness of belonging to a club that

⁷ *SID Youth Advisory Minutes*, April 18-21 2016, **AYM 2016 – 027 OUR CORE BUSINESS**

⁸ *Youth First*, Published by the Adventist Youth Ministries of the General Conference, p. 10

⁹ GC Adventist Youth Ministries,

<http://www.gcyouthministries.org/Ministries/Pathfinders/Uniform-Specifications>

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

rightly represents the Adventist youth of today. If the uniform is worn as ordinary clothing it will have failed in its purpose.

The uniform should always be neat and clean. To wear it commonly for ordinary play or work lowers its dignity. The Pathfinder Club program should be so valuable to each member that the uniform will be acquired and worn with enthusiasm.

Uniforms should be worn:

- At all Pathfinder meetings
- At any public gathering when any or all act as: Messengers, Ushers, Guard of honor, Color Guards
- On occasions as specified by Pathfinder director
- At special Pathfinder services
- While engaging in witness activity, or community service such as Ingathering, distributing food baskets, flowers, literature, etc.

Uniforms should not be worn:

- By nonmembers
- When engaged in selling or solicitation for personal profit, or for commercial or political purposes
- At any time or place when it's wearing discounts the organization or casts reflection upon the uniform, lowers its dignity and esteem, and makes it commonplace."¹¹

Who wears the Master Guide uniform?

Only qualified Master Guides can wear the Master Guide (MG) uniform. The MG uniform comprises of the green (MG for Pathfinders) and blue (MG for Adventurers) suites respectively. Those who are not MGs should wear the shirt and skirt/pants only.

Is there a special Master Guide curriculum for pastors?

No. There is only one Master Guide curriculum for all who desire to enroll in the MG program. However, in consultation with the Conference AYM director, the local church Pathfinder director or counsellor or instructor, may waive the following MG requirements for **TRAINED** pastors because they are inherently part of pastoral ministry academic training:

- Spiritual Development (This whole section is part of any Theological training)
- Skills Development (**Section #1 ONLY**, the rest of the requirements in this part of the curriculum are compulsory for pastors to do)
- Leadership Development (Sections #1, #3, #4 may be waived **BUT Section #2 should be prescribed to pastors**)

Although pastors are qualified church leaders, they should be informed that as candidates in the MG class, they should display humility and willingness to get instructions from the MG leadership. At same time, the MG leadership should accord the pastors the respect they deserve. The instructor should explain to the other MG candidates why pastors are not expected to fulfill some MG requirements and fairness should always be practiced.

¹¹ GC Adventist Youth Ministries,
<http://www.gc youthministries.org/Ministries/Pathfinders/Uniform-Specifications>

Is it appropriate to wear the sash over the Master Guide jacket?

The sash should not be worn over the Master Guide jacket.¹²
The sash should only be worn over the shirt without the jacket.

What do the Master Guide badge stars and ribbon represent?

The MG badge (Crest) has six stars that represent the 6 Pathfinder classes. The ribbon with six different colors on it also represents the 6 Pathfinder classes. The Adventurer Master Guide scarf also has the MG crest with six stars because the Adventurer class incorporates 6 classes (Little Lambs, Eager Beaver, Busy Bee, Sunbeam, Builder, Helping Hand).

Who is responsible for setting uniform rules, specifications and standards and who should sell these items?

“Each of the World Divisions determines current policy, specs and procedures.”¹³ The SID has its own uniform booklet that outlines the uniform requirements for the entire division. It is therefore improper to apply uniform requirements of other divisions in the SID. The SID youth advisory took this action: “All resources produced by the department, whether free or sold, are the intellectual property of the Adventist Youth Ministries and should not be sold for personal gain. The local church should benefit from all our resources and only official channels of the department should sell and distribute the materials.”¹⁴

Can individuals make unilateral decisions on AYM matters?

“AYM is a ministry of the church which is subject to Biblical, Ellen White, policy, and departmental teachings of the global church. Private interpretation of written material is not only dangerous but it smacks of dissidence. It is true that other written materials and teachings of the church cannot be placed on par with Scripture and Spirit of Prophecy because they were written by man. However, the best and safe practice is to submit to generally accepted principles of interpretation of our teachings and guidelines by the leadership of the church. This does not preclude questioning those things that we do not understand but we should do so within the framework of obedience. Creativity and contextualization is allowed in AYM. But this must not detract from the spirit and thrust of the matter under consideration. **It is always safe to seek the counsel of those who are experienced before one embarks on anything that cannot be backed by facts.**”¹⁵

What is the meaning of ‘demilitarization’ of youth ministries?

Our core business in AYM is to nurture youth in line with our mission statement, motto and AIM. Demilitarization simply means removing those ‘militaristic’ tendencies that we practice

¹² *Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division Adventist Youth Ministries Department Uniforms Booklet*, p. 12

¹³ *Ibid.* p. 1

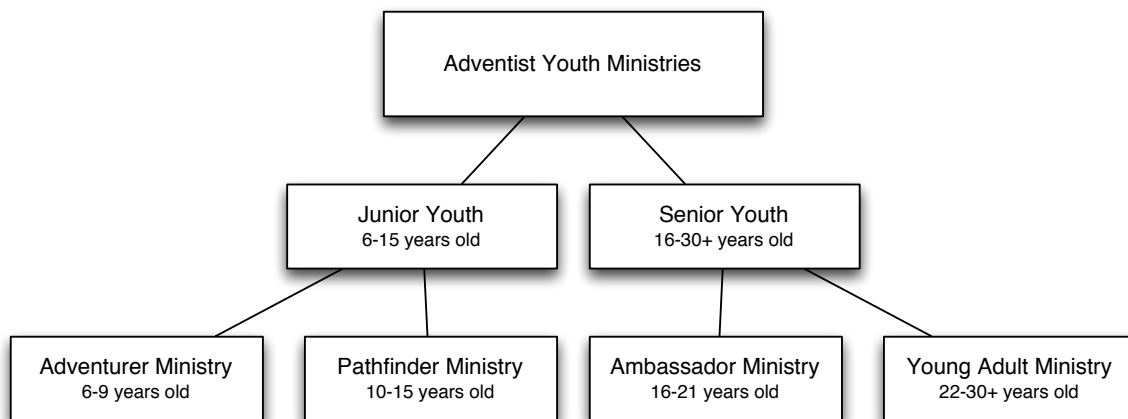
¹⁴ *SID Youth Advisory Minutes*, April 18-21 2016, **AYM 2016 – 010 DISCIPLESHIP 24/7**

¹⁵ *A Renaissance of the Adventist Youth Ministries Department in the Southern Africa-Indian Division*, p. 7

in youth ministries. While some of our activities entail drilling, marching and wearing the uniform, it does not mean we are in the military.

- AYM is not a military camp and the youth are not soldiers. Therefore, we ought “To demilitarize the ministry because each club is a spiritual initiative.
- To focus on the heart of the child/youth because Salvation and Discipleship is our goal.
- To remember that requirements, rules, regulations, standards, curricula, uniforms, programs and events are not an end in themselves but means to an end. Subjecting the youth to embarrassing testing while trying to uphold high standards and to instill discipline is not godly and Christian.
- To educate all stakeholders to desist from lording it over the children and youth as such an approach alienates them from the ministry.
- To remember that it is not necessary to display rivalry and the desire to prove that we have more knowledge than our peers and the youth we lead.
- To model a Christian life.
- To REACH THE WORLD.
- Total Youth Involvement.
- ONE MEMBER ONE SOUL (OMOS).
- The Mission Statement of the department should be read at all Youth Ministries meetings to keep the mind focused on our core business.”¹⁶

What is the Adventist Youth Ministries Structure?



Remember that the Adventurer club now includes Little Lambs and Eager Beavers.

When do we use the full and half salutes?

“A man or woman in a military (full AYM) uniform should give a hand salute (full salute). A man not in uniform salutes by removing his hat with his right hand and holding it at his left shoulder, with his palm inward over his heart. A man without a hat salutes by placing his

¹⁶ *SID Youth Advisory Minutes*, April 18-21 2016, **AYM 2016 – 027 OUR CORE BUSINESS**

right hand over his heart. A woman salutes by placing her right hand over her heart. Women do not remove their hats so to salute the flag.”¹⁷

What is the meaning of Once a Master Guide Always a Master Guide?

This is an unofficial cliché’ or slogan whose meaning is unknown. However, the common understanding is that it means that a Master Guide should not abdicate their responsibilities. When a MG is invested, the charge given to him/her clearly indicates that a MG should not be dormant but should be actively involved in their local church in leading Adventurers and Pathfinders. Some people have understood this cliché’ to mean that one can be a perpetual MG even though they are no longer in good and regular standing.

Let us remember that one of the pre-requisites of being a MG is: “Be a baptized member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in regular standing.”¹⁸

Entrance into the MG program is through baptism and regular membership, but if any MG is under discipline or censure, care should be taken to encourage such a person to be reinstated into church membership following the *Church Manual* guidelines. That person should be encouraged to enlist in the MG class again before they can become a MG. It is up to the Conference director, church Pathfinder director or instructor to determine whether the person should go through all the MG requirements before they can resume their MG status. Going back to the MG class is a symbolic gesture to indicate that one is humble to submit to church procedures and that MG is a high calling in the AYM structure.

Who is eligible for church leadership positions?

The Bible gives us these criteria for those who are elected or desire to be church leaders: “Moreover you shall select from all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.”¹⁹ “Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.”²⁰

The AYM resources do not stipulate that one should be a Master Guide to be eligible for church leadership. However, being a MG is always an added benefit because MG training qualifies one to assume any leadership position.

Should one be a Master Guide to hold youth leadership positions?

It is recommended that anyone one who assumes AYM leadership should be a Master Guide. This is the ideal because Master Guide prepares one to be adequately equipped to lead young people. MG is a training program that imparts youth and general leadership skills to anyone above 16 years. However, it is not uncommon in some churches, conferences and higher church organizations, to find an unqualified person

¹⁷ *SID Pathfinder Drill Manual*, p. 61

¹⁸ *Curriculum Guide for Master Guide*, Published by the Adventist Youth Ministries of the General Conference, 2013 edition, p. 3

¹⁹ *Exodus 18:21*, NIV

²⁰ *Acts 6:3*, NIV

leading young people. Such a person should be encouraged to enroll in the MG class as soon as possible to get the necessary training.

Who should be a member of the church board?

In the context of youth ministries, all four AYM leaders should be members of the church board.²¹

What is the Community Pathfinder Club (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. The SID AYM proposal is simple. Let each local church Pathfinder club 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 the community what we are enjoying in the church. It is as simple as that. Some among us may shudder to do that because they regard the Pathfinder club as sacrosanct and exclusively ours and they may think that taking it to the community will dilute its sanctity.”²²

The meaning of stripes and epaulettes

The stripes and epaulettes serve to indicate the rank and role of the AYM officer wearing them. It is therefore, crucial to know the different stripes and epaulettes that AYM officers should wear. At the end of the term of office, the officer should be ready to relinquish the stripe and epaulette.²³

Who oversees the Master Guide curriculum and what is the period of completion?

“Curriculum must be completed in a minimum of one year and a maximum of three years. Curriculum completion is under the supervision of the Conference/Mission Youth Ministries Director or his/her designated Master Guide.”²⁴ **MG instructors should not impose their own requirements on the candidates**, the GC MG curriculum should be strictly adhered to without deviation. The same principle applies to all AYM progressive classes. AYM leaders should not be task masters but should guide the youth and MG candidates with love and patience while striving for excellence.

Can one do Master Guide if they have not gone through lower classes?

²¹ *Church Manual*, 2015 Edition, Published the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist, pp.130-131

²² *Guidelines on how to establish COMMUNITY PATHFINDER CLUBS (CPCs) in the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division*, p. 1. Read this document for more information on how to establish CPCs

²³ Read the *Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division Adventist Youth Ministries Department Uniforms Booklet*, p. 18

²⁴ *Curriculum Guide for Master Guide*, Published by the Adventist Youth Ministries of the General Conference, 2013 edition, p. 12

Yes, one can do MG without having gone through the lower classes. As the MG teaches the Adventurer and Pathfinder progressive classes, they will also gather knowledge that will equip and qualify them to be invested in those classes.

Definitions of senior youth and young adults

The AYM organogram indicates that senior youth (ages 16-35) is the umbrella term for both Ambassadors (ages 16-21) and Young Adults (ages 22-35).

Guidelines on how to teach the Ambassador curriculum

The GC AYM has published books that provide the curriculum for the Ambassador club. The curriculum has 7 modules to be completed. The books provide guidelines on how to teach the different modules. However, it is up to the instructor to see how best to teach the modules within their own context.

The Ambassador candidates should be encouraged to finish a module per year. Since there are 6 years to finish the 7 modules, the candidate may do the sixth and seventh modules in the sixth year. The candidates will receive certificates at the end of each module at investiture time and they will be awarded a special Ambassador pin at the end of the sixth year. Since the Ambassadors are eligible to do MG because they are 16 years old and above, the instructor may encourage them to do the MG curriculum to fulfill the Leadership Module of the curriculum.

Is it wrong to do marching on Sabbath?

I believe the Bible should guide us. “Then Jesus said to them, “I ask you, which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy it?”²⁵

How much more valuable is a person than a sheep! Therefore, it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.”²⁶

If the marching is a precursor to evangelistic meetings or anything related to outreach, I believe it is not wrong to march on Sabbath. Also, there are times when Pathfinders are required to march during their special events (Pathfinder Fairs, Pathfinder Camporees, Inductions, Investitures, etc.), I do not think this is wrong. There is a difference between marching and drilling. Marching is “to walk with regular and measured tread, as soldiers on parade; advance in step in an organized body.”²⁷ “Drilling is Disciplined, repetitious exercise as a means of teaching and perfecting a skill or procedure.”²⁸ Drilling has to do with practice and precision training, whereas, marching is about moving forward in an orderly manner without demonstrating special skills. Drilling may not be appropriate on Sabbath but marching is fine.

Which activities should youth engage in on Global Youth Day (GYD)?

Global Youth Day (GYD) is about performing deeds of kindness to humanity. As stated above, it is not wrong to do good on Sabbath. However, youth leaders should carefully guide the youth to do appropriate acts of kindness on GYD to avoid offending others. The days

²⁵ *Luke 6:9, NIV*

²⁶ *Matthew 12:12, NIV*

²⁷ *The Online Dictionary*

²⁸ <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/drilling>

before GYD could be utilized to perform those duties that may not be appropriate on Sabbath.

When is it the right time for leaders to pass on the baton to the youth?

“JOSHUA GIVEN THE KEYS 40 YEARS EARLIER. Exodus 17:8,9 - The Amalekites came and attacked the Israelites at Rephidim. Moses said to Joshua, “Choose some of our men and go out to fight the Amalekites. Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hands.”²⁹

It behooves the leaders to pass on the baton to young people at the inception of their leadership. This will show intentionality and determination to empower the youth. Moses chose not to be the one fighting the Amalekites but he assigned Joshua that responsibility while he was supporting him by standing on the mountain with God’s staff.

Is it wrong to have a national flag in church?

It is not wrong to display the national flag or AYM flags in the church building. By displaying the national flag, you show honor and respect to the ruling government. In the wilderness, en route to Canaan, the Israelites used banners/flags which displayed the names of each tribe. "The Israelites are to camp around the tent of meeting some distance from it, each of them under their standard and holding the banners of their family."³⁰ The tabernacle was a holy institution and God instructed the Israelites to camp around it with their flags hoisted.

A flag is a symbol that represents something. The national flag represents the nation of which we are citizens, the AYM flags represent the different clubs in the AYM.

The proper way of displaying the national flag

“a. On a speaker’s platform:

(i) Flat against the wall (as in the flying position) – above and behind the speaker; flag rope on the right of the speaker;

(ii) On a staff – on the speaker’s right as he faces the audience

b. In the main body of the hall: from a staff on the left of the audience as they face the platform.

When displayed with the flags of one or more sovereign nations within a territorial jurisdiction the National Flag should occupy the position of honor.

With the flag of one nation, the National Flag should be on the left of the observer facing the flags. Both should be at the same height. International practice forbids the display of the flag of one nation above that of another in time of peace. The National Flag should however, be raised first and lowered last, unless the number of flags permits their being raised and lowered simultaneously.”³¹

“Display the National Flag to the right (as participants face the audience) of the table and a Pathfinder Flag to the left of the table.”³²

²⁹ *Pass It On*, Published by the Adventist Youth Ministries of the General Conference, p. 9

³⁰ *Numbers 2:2*, NIV

³¹ *SID Pathfinder Drill Manual*, p. 60

³² *The Pathfinder Administrative Manual*, Published by the Adventist Youth Ministries of the General Conference, p. 105

Is it wrong to light candles in church during the induction/investiture programs?

The *Pathfinder Administrative Manual*³³ suggests that candles be used as part of the Induction service. However, this is not compulsory. There is nothing theologically wrong in lighting candles in church because in the holy place of the sanctuary, there was a candle stick with seven branches that was always on and it represented Jesus as the Sun of righteousness.

Is it wrong to invite public officials to address young people?

It is not wrong to invite public officials to address our young people. However, we should bear in mind that the Seventh-day Adventist church espouses the separation of church and state. This means church platforms and programs should not be used to promote personal and political views of individuals. Public officials are welcome to speak to our young people in church provided they speak to the assigned topic by church officials. There are times we may need to invite speakers with special skills to give a lecture on a subject that is part of the AYM curriculum.

Does a neck or bow tie serve as a substitute for the neckerchief?

Not at all. As stipulated before, the neckerchief is a basic uniform item. A neck or bow tie is not a replacement for the neckerchief.

How to prepare candidates for investiture

These procedures apply to all AYM progressive classes:

- The instructor should ensure that each student has a file/portfolio where all the classwork will be kept.
- The instructor should tick off and sign the class record card as and when the student completes the requirements.
- When all the requirements have been completed, the club director should invite the Conference/Mission director or designee to come and do the assessment of the candidates.
- The director or designee should not use strange or foreign standards to assess the students. In the beginning of the year, the Conference should provide all the churches with the prescribed materials for the progressive classes to ascertain that fairness prevails during assessment.
- The assessor's role is to respect the instructor and the students and he/she should trust that the instructor has done their work with diligence, unless they suspect something else. The assessor's duty is not to find fault but to assist the students to be ready for investiture. When the assessor observes that there is insufficient training, recommendations should be given to the instructor and the director to facilitate adequate preparation for investiture.
- During the investiture program, the students should be asked to display their knowledge of the curriculum covered. This is not the time to reassess the students, but it is the time to exhibit what is entailed in their curriculum.
- The Conference official should not seek to subject the students to another assessment on the investiture day but should seek to facilitate a smooth

³³ Ibid. 105

investiture and this is the day to celebrate the achievement of the students and to honor the work of the church director and his/her team.

Adventist Youth Ministries evangelism programs

All church ministries have been established for mission. The AYM is no exception. The following is not an exhaustive menu of AYM evangelism programs:

- The *Pathfinder Club*
- The *Community Pathfinder Clubs* (CPCs)
- The *Caleb Mission* (This is program challenges senior youth to dedicate their vacation time for mission. It entails community service projects and outreach)
- *One Year in Mission* (OYiM). This initiative challenges young people to set aside a year or some significant time to engage in mission work. Being a missionary does not only require one to go far away to witness but anywhere is the mission field.
- *Youth Alive* is a collaboration between health ministries, youth ministries, family ministries, education ministries and women's ministries. The program is packed with resources and tips that help young people to combat drugs, alcohol and evil tendencies.
- *Campaigns*. This is an old and tested method of winning souls. Not all young people have the talents and gifts that this initiative requires. However, we should provide training to young people who have the love and interest to conduct campaigns.
- *Bible Studies*. This is another archaic method of evangelism which may not yield fast and huge results like *campaigns* but it is my favorite method. This method ensures that the recipients of the teachings get a firm foundation before they make the right decision.
- *Health EXPOS*. This is a popular method of reaching out to people because free health screening is provided to communities at no charge. This method softens the hearts of the people and makes them ready to receive the Word of God.
- *Global Youth Day* (GYD). We have already explained what GYD is.
- *Literature Evangelism*. We encourage young people to engage in Colporteur ministry because it gives them an opportunity to raise funds and to witness to others.
- *Social Media*. This avenue presents many possibilities that may touch the lives of many people in a positive way. Young people should be guided to use social media in a positive way.

When should the progressive classes be taught?

It is recommended that churches do their progressive classes every fortnight in the afternoons. So, the ideal time to do progressive classes would be Sabbath afternoon for spiritual requirements and Sundays may be reserved for those activities that are not appropriate for Sabbath. The local church leadership are at liberty to choose a suitable time for classes.

The distinction between the Adventurer and Pathfinder clubs

There is a common thread that runs through the Adventurer and Pathfinder clubs. Such as:

- Both clubs have a curriculum that should be completed in a year.
- In both clubs, young people are required to wear the uniform.

- The administrative structure of both clubs is almost identical.
- Some ceremonies like the Induction and Investiture programs are done in both clubs.

However, there are differences as well:

- There is no marching and drilling requirement in the Adventure club.
- The Adventurer club has Awards and the Pathfinder club has Honors.
- There are not Fairs and Camporees in the Adventurer club.

“It is not intended that we duplicate all the experiences of Pathfinding, but rather that by providing a separate Adventurer Club many needs of the youth aged 6-9 will be met in an exciting and enjoyable way and thus they will be ready to fully enjoy the Pathfinder experience when that time arrives.”³⁴

The distinction between the Pathfinder club and Senior youth

The Senior youth (Ambassador and Young Adults) are not required to do the following:

- To do marching and drilling provided if they are Master Guides or MG candidates.
- To do the Pathfinder honors except if they are doing the Master Guide program or they do honors for recreation purposes.
- To attend Pathfinder events except if they are doing the Master Guide program.
- At senior youth events only the national and Ambassadors/AY flags should be hoisted.
- To sing the Adventurer and Pathfinder songs at senior youth events.

How to minister to youth with special needs

The Seventh-day Adventist church has a new ministry called *Special Needs Ministries*.

“Special Needs Ministries coordinates and facilitates acceptance, support, and inclusion for people who have special needs and for their caregivers. This global ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church encompasses ministry for and with the Deaf; the blind; those with physical, mental health, and emotional wellness challenges; and orphans. The mission of Special Needs Ministries is built around the concept that “All are gifted, needed and treasured.” This ministry emphasizes the recognition of the value and dignity inherent in every person.”³⁵

In my experience in AYM I have met young people with learning disabilities and special needs. If *the love of Christ compels us*, we would do well to get exposure to resources and training that will prepare us to meet the needs of such young people.

The role of Spiritual Gifts in Adventist Youth Ministries

Many young people succumb to peer pressure because they have self-image and identity issues. Because of these challenges young people avoid being involved in the mission of the church and do not want to participate in church programs. It is our responsibility as youth leaders to conduct Spiritual Gifts seminars to empower the youth. If each young person knows their Spiritual Gifts, they will not be intimidated by others but they will seize every opportunity to witness for Christ.

Is competition allowed in Adventist Youth Ministries?

³⁴ *Adventurers Administration Manual*, 2004 Edition, Published by the Adventist Youth Ministries of the General Conference, p. 6

³⁵ You may visit this website for more information, <https://specialneeds.adventist.org>

There is a difference between striving for excellence and being competitive. The former is motivated by the standard that has been set but the latter is generated by the quest to outdo others. We should encourage excellence among young people and we should reward them for it. But we should not make AYM a breeding ground for rivalry.

How do we honor church officials who visit our events?

Very often we have the pleasure of welcoming church officials to AYM events. This is always an honor and we should appreciate such gestures. The best thing to do in this instance is to:

- Present the church officer with a special gift.
- Place the relevant scarf around the neck of the official to make them feel at home.
- Give them a few minutes to greet the young people.

How to relate to young people

- A good youth leader loves young people unconditionally.
- Give them an opportunity and space to express their views.
- Let them be free to be vulnerable in your presence.
- Follow the 3 steps of good mentorship:
 - I lead you follow
 - We lead together
 - You lead and I follow
- Create a pool of leaders who will replace you when you are gone.

How to keep senior youth in the church

Someone said the best way to keep the youth in the church is know their names. Knowing a person's name shows you care about them. Many young people get lost in the church crowd because we do not bother to know them personally.

Many senior youth desire to be accepted and not judged. They want the assurance that church cares about them.

***Messages to Young People and Adventist Home* quotes on love**

The Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy books provide good counsel to young people. *Messages to young people* is a wonderful book that has giving excellent counsels to young people from time immemorial. I am one of the beneficiaries of the good counsels from this book. *Adventist Home* is another excellent book, Ellen White says:

- “Let those who are contemplating marriage weigh every sentiment and watch every development of character in the one with whom they think to unite their life destiny. Let every step toward a marriage alliance be characterized by modesty, simplicity, sincerity, and an earnest purpose to please and honor God. Marriage affects the afterlife both in this world and in the world to come. A sincere Christian will make no plans that God cannot approve.”³⁶

³⁶ Ellen White, *Messages to Young People*, p. 435.2

- “If you are blessed with God-fearing parents, seek counsel of them. Open to them your hopes and plans, learn the lessons which their life experiences have taught, and you will be saved many a heartache. Above all, make Christ your counselor. Study His Word with prayer.”³⁷
- "To trifle with hearts is a crime of no small magnitude in the sight of a holy God. And yet some will show preference for young ladies and call out their affections, and then go their way and forget all about the words they have spoken and their effect. A new face attracts them, and they repeat the same words, devote to another the same attentions."³⁸
- "The strongest temptation is no excuse for sin. No matter how severe the pressure brought to bear upon you, sin is your own act."³⁹

How to manage homosexuality in the church

Homosexuality is a sin that is not different from other sins. We should love Homosexuals but hate their sin. Human brokenness takes many shapes and forms and Homosexuality is one of the manifestations of human wretchedness. This evil behavior is now prevalent in the SID territory. We cannot pretend it does not exist. We recommend that we deal with homosexuals prayerfully and tactfully.

Are the days of miracles over?

Jesus gave a startling promise to the disciples before He was translated to heaven: “Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father”⁴⁰

This means we should expect greater things if we allow the Holy Spirit to use us. Yet, we should not depend on miracles but on God. “The conversion of the human soul is of no little consequence. It is the greatest miracle performed by divine power.”⁴¹

Conclusion

The tips and answers contained in this document may not have satisfied some readers, but it is an attempt at dealing with some of the AYM hot potatoes. I hope that as you were reading this resource, your interest was aroused to study more and be on the cutting edge of what is happening in the realm of youth ministries.

May God bless us as we strive for excellence. May we shun ignorance and let us make friends with knowledge.

³⁷ *Ibid.* 435.3

³⁸ Ellen White, *Adventist Home*, p. 57.1

³⁹ *Ibid.* p. 331.1

⁴⁰ *John 14:12*, NIV

⁴¹ Ellen White, *Evangelism*, p. 289.2

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