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Adventist Journey

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My Journey

If you're not connected with what's going on in the world, how can you talk to people in the language they're using? We are often stuck with yesterday's methods. We need to find the best method to reach segments of society in a way that people understand what we are saying. And also understand that they could live a better life.

Visit **nadadventist.org/ajrajmunddabrowski** for more of Dabrowski's story

RAJMUND DABROWSKI,

most recently Rocky Mountain Conference communication director, previously serving as director in all levels of the church, including the General Conference



Dear Reader: The publication in your hands represents the collaborative efforts of the North American Division and *Adventist World* magazine, which follows *Adventist Journey* (after page 16). Please enjoy both magazines!

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ADVENTIST JOURNEY

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ADVENTIST JOURNEY

Annual Pathfinder Bible Experience

Grows Virtually



Pathfinder Club teams from the NAD and beyond come together for the three-day event.

BY KIMBERLY LUSTE MARAN

hen the COVID-19 pandemic caused the cancellation of the in-person North American Division Pathfinder Bible Experience (NAD PBE) event 18 months ago, organizers quickly mobilized to hold the event online. In anticipation of the potential need to have another virtual event in 2021, planning started after the April 18, 2020, experience. Ultimately, the 2021 PBE event was indeed held virtually.

The uncertainty of how long the pandemic would last slowed the planning for 2021 division-level testing. It wasn't until the fall of 2020 that the NAD PBE core leadership team (Gene Clapp, Marilyn Boismier, Ki Song, Sherilyn O'ffill, Miguel Torres, Nadine Lashier, and Jeff Cooley) officially moved toward holding a virtual event again. This time the efforts would be toward having as many teams as possible participate—and do so as if they were meeting in a physical place. This brought many different challenges, including how to test with many teams not actually being in the same place.

"We put together a new set of rules for online testing, and have incorporated new software to help with the questions," said Armando Miranda, Jr., associate director of NAD youth ministries and club ministries director. "The NAD PBE team also diligently supported our conferences and unions by providing 10-12 technical training sessions since December [2020] to make sure everyone understood the online process. In the weeks preceding the event, we had trainings for online monitors, judges, and Pathfinder scribes."

On April 16-18, 135 teams came together online for a weekend of worship, testing, and celebration, with some of the sessions livestreamed from the NAD's Pathfinder web page, YouTube, and Facebook pages. Additionally 27 Pathfinder teams from the British Union also attended the NAD testing event (as well as participating in their own division testing).

For years the Pathfinder Bible Experience has helped lead youth to Scripture, providing them a way to learn and understand the Bible for themselves—and equipping them to be able to help others. The annual four-step process starts with local clubs testing in their areas/districts, conferences, and unions. It culminates with qualified teams that score within 90 percent of the highest score, at each level, advancing through to the division-level testing in April. This year the teams studied Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, and 2 Peter.

The 2021 PBE included more than testing as those attending and those watching the livestream enjoyed Friday



← An ensemble of Pathfinders from different clubs throughout Ontario, Canada, perform the song "When You Believe" during the April 17, 2021, PBE worship service. Screenshot from PBE livestream.

evening vespers, Sabbath worship, and the awards ceremony finale on April 18. But of course, the testing was paramount in the minds of the Pathfinders and staff.

"The pandemic has changed how we do so many things in the world! Yet our Pathfinders, though tested in very different ways from the past, have determined that they will study and learn Scripture," said Clapp, PBE coordinator. "The dedication and learning capacity of these Pathfinders is unbelievable; and they have learned to have a very intimate understanding of God's Word."

Clapp worked with the NAD youth and young adult ministries team comprised of Miranda; Tracy Wood, director; Vandeon Griffin, associate director; Gael Murray, admin-

istrative assistant; Kevin Watson, webmaster; and a team of union and conference Pathfinder leaders, including David Salazar, who produced the Friday night vespers program with Ernesto Hernandez from the Washington Conference.

The Sabbath morning worship experience, produced by Eduardo Loo, a young adult from Texas, was hosted by a team of Pathfinder leaders from across the division—Manny Cruz, youth director of the Arizona Conference; Damion Bascomb, lead area coordinator for the Greater New York Conference; Nancy Cabansang, an assistant Pathfinder director and PBE coach for the Dallas-Fort Worth Fil-Am Seventh-day Adventist Church in Arlington, Texas; and Denison "El Guapo" Sager, youth director for the Iowa-Missouri Conference.

Added Clapp, "It would not have been possible to have put this testing program together without the dedication, knowledge, and wisdom of each of these team members and more, filled with the Holy Spirit!"

In fact, the active participants for the 2021 PBE division-level testing totaled 1,102. This number includes the 135 teams (810 Pathfinders), judges, judge technicians, monitors, monitor helpers, administrators, scoring techs, and Zoom administrators.

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International Collaboration

In the spirit of collaboration across divisions, the British Union "sent" close to 30 teams to the NAD testing event. "On behalf of my union, thank you for making space for us," said Dejan Stojkovic, British Union youth director.

And the Trans-European Division (TED) Youth department has been working with NAD youth PBE team to conduct their own division testing. They had the arduous work of translating the materials into 14 languages in order for the Pathfinder Bible Experience to work



for them. "They accomplished their testing online and are in full collaboration with us," said Miranda. "It's so exciting that they're having their own division-level event too—PBE is expanding to another division this year through our collaboration with them!"

"I'd like to thank the NAD leaders for designing and organizing this wonderful program," said Zlatko Musija, TED youth director. "We want this to grow the [Pathfinders'] love for the Bible and Jesus."

"We hope the collaboration with the NAD will continue in the future, and that the PBE will continue to spread in our division and worldwide!" Musija added.

Andreas Peralta, the Pathfinder director the General Conference, expressed his excitement and awe of the Pathfinders at the NAD event. "Trust that God will help you each step of the way. In Him you are victorious. You make us proud."





"The Pathfinder Bible Experience is a wonderful opportunity to study God's Word."

The Virtual Livestream Experience

On YouTube alone, the three-day event had 5,894 total views live.

Friday evening more than 400 watched the livestream vespers. Salazar, the evening's host, introduced the musical group Cornerstone Ministries, from the Columbia Union, and other participants from several of the NAD's union conferences, including the vespers speaker, Pedro Perez, Pathfinder director for the Florida Conference in the Southern Union.

"I wish you all of God's best as you go through your testing tomorrow as you study these books and refresh them in your mind. But more important, Pathfinders, I wish you success in your spiritual journey with God," Perez said during his talk. "I hope that as you look to God in those moments of temptation, you will find that He can give you strength that's beyond your own. He can help you to say no, and

you can grow closer and closer to Him [as] you mature."

Nearly 550 viewers from around the world, including the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, the Philippines, the Bahamas, and Guatemala, tuned in to the Sabbath morning program. The four hosts interacted with the virtual audience through live chats on both platforms by conducting lighthearted trivia questions. It was announced that some participants will receive a \$25 gift card for AdventSource, the official carrier of Pathfinder supplies.

The event also included a Sabbath morning video greeting from G. Alexander Bryant, NAD president. "The Pathfinder Bible Experience is a wonderful opportunity to study God's Word," Bryant said. "I know you have studied for this event. . . . All those who have studied are winners, because you get to keep the lasting impact—your minds will

Collaboration Key From the Start With "Do It Together" Sabbath School Convention

be sharper for all of your other schoolwork; your decision-making will be clearer."

Bryant continued, "Your Spirit will be more in tune with God's Spirit, and your ear will be more discerning to hear God's voice. And that's just for this life—the eternal rewards are simply out of this world."

The Saturday morning program itself was filled with diverse musical performances. The Pathfinder song was performed by Tucson Central Spanish Seventh-day Adventist Church in Tucson, Arizona; an ensemble made up of Pathfinders from different clubs throughout Ontario, Canada, performed "When You Believe," from The Prince of Egypt sound track by singing and playing string and wind instruments; and the Baltodano family from the Georgia-Cumberland Conference sang a song of worship.

At the conclusion of the worship service the program transitioned to the official division-level testing led by Clapp, who provided directions and read questions in English, and Ada Gomez, director of the Adventurers' Resource and Development Committee, who carried out the same in Spanish. There were 90 questions asked, with points per question depending on levels of difficulty. Teams had 30 seconds to respond to each question.

After the testing was complete, the scores were tallied, and the livestream returned Sunday afternoon for the awards ceremony. Of the 135 participating, 114 scored within 90 percent of the highest score, earning them a first-place prize. Nineteen earned second-place, and two earned third.

The Do It Together Sabbath School Leadership Convention is described as leader training for Sabbath School superintendents, secretaries, creatives, youth pastors, pastors, teachers, and those interested in growing their Sabbath School attendance and engagement. The convention will be held virtually on September 9-11, 2021. (Learn more/register at https://oneteamplaybook.org/2021-nad-ssc/; register before August 9 to receive a "swag bag.")

NAD youth and young adult ministries is partnering with adult ministries and children's ministries to encourage leaders of all age groups to come together. General sessions and workshop training will be led by all three ministries, showcasing exciting ways to lead Sabbath School in the local church. The event will also include devotionals and special music. Resources, networking, and intergenerational training will be offered for a \$20 fee per registrant. This unique training will emphasize teaching lessons in tandem. Beyond the training will be a plethora of resources that can be used in small groups, offsite Sabbath Schools, and virtual Sabbath School spaces.

"We are anticipating a complete relaunch of the vision and the mission of Sabbath School in North American Division. This is going to be it," said Tracy Wood, NAD youth and young adult ministries director.

"The whole 'Do It Together' theme is about saying that the better way to do Sabbath School, and the strength and the power that comes when we all decide that we're going to do it, is together," added Vandeon Griffin, youth and young adult ministries associate director. "That's where the power comes—when we just all

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come together, intergenerationally, and do this thing. All of us are taught of the Lord."

"This has been a work in progress for the past three or four years," said Armando Miranda, Jr., youth and young adult ministries associate director. "There was not even anything close to what we're doing right now with online Sabbath School programming and partnerships."

Miranda explained, "For this [convention], we started with youth Sabbath School training requested by union youth directors. Our administration caught on, and they funded www.YouthSabbath-SchoolIdeas.org. Then children's ministries and adult ministries partnered with us—we are doing this together."

"We're excited about the possibilities," added Griffin. "The entire family gets a chance to go to Sabbath School! It's not boring. It's exciting. We want to transfer our excitement to others so they say, 'I can't wait to be a part of Sabbath School!' Let's all go and see what God does for us."

ADVENTIST JOURNEY



"Being part of the PBE was one of the best opportunities of a lifetime."

"The books for next year are 1 Kings and Ruth," said Clapp. "Start studying tomorrow. Those books have great stories!"

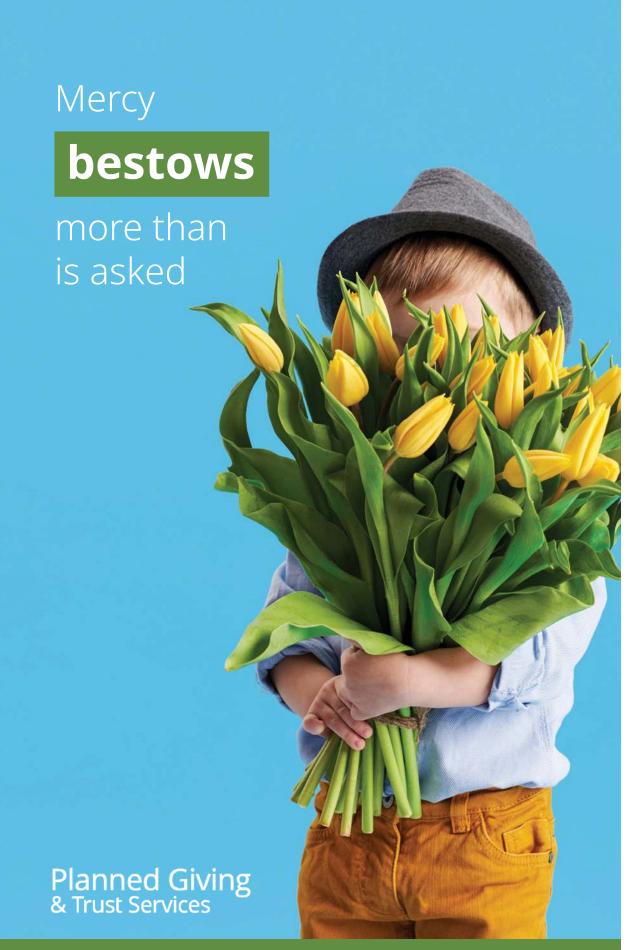
Why PBE?

During one of the livestreamed sessions, Thomas Harris, director of the Glendale Raptors Pathfinder Club from Glendale, Arizona, asked his daughter why she thinks the PBE is important and what it has taught her. "I think it helps young people gain confidence in knowing they are capable of memorizing enormous amounts of Scripture," she said. "The PBE has taught me a lot about teamwork and that anyone can do great things for the lord, no matter how young they are."

"Being part of the PBE was one of the best opportunities of a lifetime. I was able to grow with every one spiritually and learn more about the Lord," said Nomhle Moyo, a Pathfinder with the Airdrie Ignite Pathfinder Club from Alberta, Canada. "The opportunity I had was amazing. I just want to thank everyone for the amazing time and for our awesome leaders."

Kimberly Luste Maran is editor of Adventist Journey; Mylon Medley contributed to this report.







NORM MIDDAG, FORMER NAD PATHFINDER, ADVENTURER, AND CAMP MINISTRIES DIRECTOR, PASSES TO HIS REST

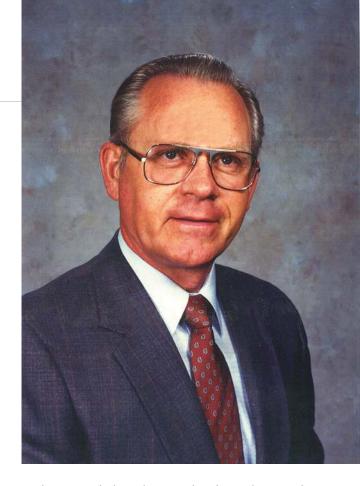
orm Middag, former North American Division Pathfinder, Adventurer, and Camp Ministries director, died suddenly on June 23, 2021, in Florida, where he and his wife, Barbara, retired in 2001. He was 91.

Middag was an educator, pastor, and youth director in a career spanning more than four decades of ministry at all levels of the church, from the local church to the General Conference, where he served as youth ministries assistant director in 1980. He served in the Michigan, southern California, northern California, Florida, and Potomac conferences before joining the NAD in 1982.

While at the NAD, Middag spearheaded the development of the ministry manuals for Adventurers, Pathfinders, Teen Leadership Training, and many other resources and curricula. He also developed the Association of Adventist Camp Professionals (AACP), which is now a network of 300-plus camp ministry staff throughout the 60 camps of the NAD. In addition, he was instrumental in the creation of National Camps for Blind Children; and he also coordinated the 1991, 1992, and 1993 Witness Through Rose Parade floats sponsored and decorated by Pathfinders.

As chairperson of the camporee coordinating committee, Norm spearheaded the North American Division camporee program, including its first national gathering of Pathfinders in 1985 at Camp Hale near Leadville, Colorado. This later grew into the International Pathfinder Camporee held in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, since 1999, until its scheduled move to Gillette, Wyoming, in 2024.

Middag firmly believed that every church needed to have some type of youth ministry. Integral to starting the Pathfinder Teen Leadership Training program (TLT)



at Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church in Takoma Park, Maryland, he was quoted as saying, "If your church isn't doing anything for youth, start with the 13-year-olds."

"Norm was such a blessing to our church, not only in the North American Division but throughout the world. His kind, Christ-centered spirit was an inspiration to all," said Elden Ramirez, NAD undersecretary. "When I became a youth director, he took me under his wings, sharing a wealth of knowledge with me. Mentoring was his passion. Many church leaders today who at one point served as youth directors as I did will forever be grateful for his mentorship and inspiration."

"Norm Middag was a mentor. He was a passionate youth ministries leader, a visionary. Many of us in youth ministry are standing on the structures and programs he dreamt and implemented," said Armando Miranda, Jr., NAD associate director for youth and young adult ministries and NAD club ministries director. "As a trailblazer, we can only be inspired by his commitment to God and helping young people know Him better. Truly he was an inspiring man with an inspiring life."

From a Farm in Minnesota

Middag was born into a family of seven siblings on March 15, 1930, living on an 85-acre vegetable farm with seven greenhouses to support a family nursery business in Duluth, Minnesota. At the age of 12 Middag was baptized.

During World War II the family moved back to Michigan, home of his parents. In 1954 he graduated from Emmanuel Missionary College (now Andrews University) in Berrien Springs, Michigan, with religion, education, and history majors. Middag also met Barbara Popp while they were students at the college in 1950. The two married in the summer of 1952.

He began his ministry as the grade 7-8 teacher at Battle Creek Academy. Supportive in ministry, Barbara, who would later take a break from classroom instruction to help raise their family, also worked at the academy, teaching French, music, and secretarial science subjects. Middag taught for two years before being invited to serve as youth pastor of the Battle Creek Tabernacle.

Following his Battle Creek experience Middag accepted a call to Adelphian Academy to serve as boys' dean. Two years later he had the opportunity to pastor a 170-member church and a grades 1-8 church school.

In Ministry

In 1960 the Southern California Conference invited Middag to serve as youth pastor at Eagle Rock church, where the Pathfinder Club had 26 members. Within two years a junior club and a teen club were organized, with a total membership of 150. In 1964 Middag served as associate youth director for the Northern California Conference. This was also the Middags' first camp assignment at Pinecrest Camp.

In 1965 Middag was called to be the youth/camp director for Florida Conference. Two years later Camp Kulaqua sponsored its first Camp for the Blind, with 27 campers. Four years later blind camp attendance grew to 200. National Camps for the Blind is now sponsored by Christian Record Services, based in Lincoln, Nebraska.

"An irreplaceable giant of our faith now awaits our Lord's soon return."

In the fall of 1974 Middag was invited to join the Potomac Conference as youth director and director of Camp Blue Ridge. All in all, with Barbara by his side, Norm had more than 20 years of inspiring camp leadership, mentoring camp staff and ministering to campers.

In 1980 Norm accepted the opportunity to become assistant youth director for the General Conference Youth Department under the leadership of Leo Ranzolin. In 1981 the couple both worked at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. In 1982 he assisted Les Pitton, NAD director of senior youth. During the same year, Norm was assigned director of Pathfinder and camp ministries. In addition, he developed the Association of Adventist Camp Professionals of the North American Division.

While Norm was with the NAD Pathfinder ministries, a committee was commissioned to develop the Adventurer Club, a ministry for children in grades 1-4 and family network for parents. Middag designed the NAD Pathfinder logo and updated the Pathfinder uniform patches, outlining them in black. In addition, a committee of lay members and youth directors was formed to develop a curriculum for the Eager Beaver (kindergarten) ministry, Pathfinder ministry, Teen Leadership Training (TLT) Master Guide

ministry, Pathfinder Leadership Award, and Pathfinder Instructor's Award. He also developed the governance concept of the conference Pathfinder coordinator, Senior Youth Leadership Council, NAD Camp Committee, and the AACP.

For the past year and a half Middag worked with author Bruce Coston to write the book *Far From the Norm: Norm Middag's Life in Ministry*, which will be released by AdventSource this fall.

Middag is preceded in death by Barbara, who died on July 7, 2020, a few days after her ninetieth birthday on July 4.

He is survived by three children: David (wife Tricia), Loren (wife Joy), and Renee Brownlow (husband John); six grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren. A memorial service was held on August 28, 2021, at the Spring Meadows Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Orlando, Florida, area.

— Kimberly Luste Maran; Dixie Plata, NAD youth ministry historian; and Renee Brownlow contributed to this story; information also gathered from published materials from the Florida Conference and North Pacific Union Conference.



Milton Peverini García Photo provided by the

Retired La Voz de la Esperanza Speaker Milton Peverini Passes to His Rest

ilton Peverini García, former speaker/director for La Voz de la Esperanza, passed to his rest in Loma Linda, California, United States, in the early

morning on June 27, 2021, after a long illness. He was 88.

In January 1971 Peverini García joined the ministry of La Voz de la Esperanza as associate speaker/director, becoming the speaker/director in 1974, after Braulio Pérez Marcio retired. Peverini Garcia was devoted to the cause of Jesus Christ since his youth, and his theology studies, his training as a lawyer, and his experience as an educator and youth counselor gave him a firm foundation as speaker/director. Throughout his ministry, Peverini García has made a significant contribution to the spiritual life of thousands, not only as speaker/director on the La Voz de la Esperanza ministry where he led for 27 years, but also as a speaker in international evangelism series, and as the author of numerous books and articles.

The current La Voz de la Esperanza speaker/director, Omar Grieve, and associate speaker/director Nessy Pittau Grieve, added, "Thousands of precious souls were moved by the messages imparted by Dr. Milton Peverini. He was a gifted speaker and evangelist who will have many stars in his crown. His words of faith remain engraved in our memory: 'We will find ourselves in a completely new world that none of us can imagine. . . . We want Jesus to come soon, and then the end will come, the end of pain, the end of death; then the family of God will be reunited, and they will live with the Lord forever and ever."

"His iconic voice was heard around the world and inspired millions to draw closer to Jesus. An irreplaceable giant of our faith now awaits our Lord's soon return," said Minner Labrador, recently voted vice president for multilingual ministries for the North American Division, in a press release.

Early Years

Milton Peverini García and his identical twin brother, Tulio, were born to a young pastor named Hector Peverini and his wife, Sotera, on November 13, 1932, in Paysandú, Uruguay. From a young age they were taught to serve the Lord. Returning to Argentina, they began their education in local church schools, then continued their studies at Colegio Adventista del Plata, in Entre Ríos, Argentina.

After receiving his theology degree, Peverini García decided to follow the advice of church leaders to study law to better serve the church and its work. During those years, he married Eunice Meier, the daughter of missionaries who had served several years in Brazil. Eunice was united with Milton in the desire to hasten the coming of Christ.

While studying law, Peverini García taught at the local academy and was then called to be director of youth and education for the Buenos Aires Conference. He received his law degree from the University of Buenos Aires in 1966 and was ordained as a Seventh-day Adventist pastor in 1967.

International Ministry

The couple and their children then moved to California, where he first served as pastor in two local area churches. In 1971 he was invited to join the Spanish language radio ministry La Voz de la Esperanza as associate director. In 1974, when Braulio Pérez Marcio retired, Peverini García became the speaker/director of La Voz, a responsibility he held until 1997.

Peverini García traveled extensively throughout the United States, most of the Spanish-speaking countries of Central and South America, as well as Canada, Australia, and several countries in Europe. He led multiple evangelistic crusades, preached in many Adventist churches, and continually encouraged church members to share their love of Christ with others through the La Voz program and its Bible study courses. He translated many hymns into Spanish, working closely with the quartet Los Heraldos del Rey, authored multiple pamphlets and Bible courses, wrote the book *Del Abismo a la Gloria*, and authored a biography on the life of Braulio Pérez Marcio.

During 1994-2004 he served as associate speaker for Escrito Está (It is Written for the Spanish-speaking world), as well as speaker emeritus for La Voz during 1998-2007. From 2009 to 2016 Peverini García coordinated the production of quarterly audio programs for blind and visually impaired Spanish-speaking audiences, a ministry of Christian Record Services.

As the years went by and his health started to fail, his work for the church became limited to teaching the Sabbath School lesson in his local church.

Along with his wife, Eunice, he is survived by three adult children: Ricardo, Graciela, and Susana; six grand-children; and one great-grandson. A memorial service was held on July 10, 2021, through the Loma Linda University church in California.

— North American Division Office of Communication; the Peverini family contributed to this report.

BY DAN WEBER

The Mentor

ave you ever felt like you needed some advice? Maybe someone to bounce an idea off, or just someone to talk to—sort of like a life GPS that helps keep you on the right path? Sometimes a little guidance goes a long way.

I graduated from Andrews University 30 years ago and started a career as a professional photographer. I had my ups and downs, but there was always someone I could count on: Dave Sherwin, my former professor. He was always a phone call away and would listen as I shared stories about my professional adventures as a small business operator. One time he even lent me some equipment so I could be properly equipped to take on an assignment. I knew I could count on Dave, even after I had finished school. He was a mentor and friend well beyond his time as my professor. I wouldn't be who I am today without his guidance and friendship. And I know that I wasn't the only former student blessed by Dave's mentoring attitude.

This year the North American Division launched a new strategic focus called Together in Mission, and one of the three main emphases is mentorship. This calls for churches, schools, and other Adventist entities in the North American territory to develop mentoring opportunities to promote new leaders and help members find ways to grow and get involved in the mission life of the church. When I first heard this being discussed by church leaders, my thoughts went back to Dave and his role in my early professional career. I wondered how many other Daves there were in the church who could play important roles in guiding others. I then questioned what I had done to be a mentor for others.

God sometimes puts ideas in our heads and hearts so they sit there and grow. Then at some point this thought matures, and God uses it to push us down the path He has put before us.

Now Is the Time

Recently I received a phone call from Dave. This time he was seeking my advice, or at least I thought he was. But it was really God pushing me out of my comfort zone.

I have worked for the General Conference and the North American Division for 19 years, and my life has been blessed beyond belief. I have seen the Seventh-day Adventist Church all over the world, and my heart has been touched by the miracles I have observed. I've also been challenged, but in the end my faith in God has grown. My time with the GC and NAD has been an incredible part of my career. But now the time has come for change. It is now time for me to become a mentor.

This fall I will join Dave and the other faculty members at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan, as a professor with the intent of training young minds and helping them find their path as empowered members of the Adventist Church. It is now time for me to give back some of the blessings I have received and help mentor the next generations.

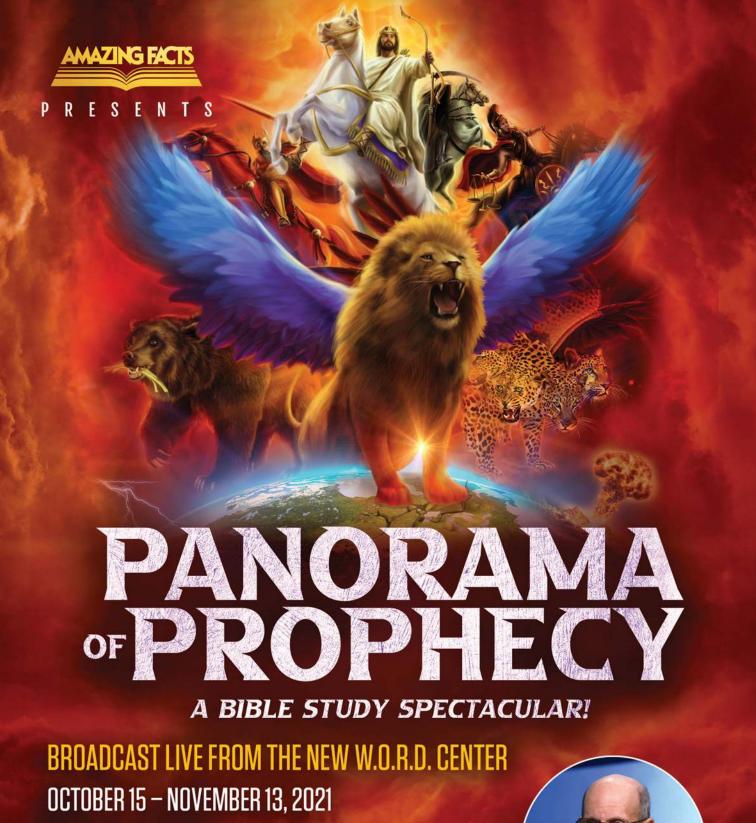
My prayer for all our members in North America is that we take a moment and reflect on the ways God has blessed our lives. Then search our

hearts and see if God has an opportunity for us to serve others and share our wisdom, knowledge, and experience in growing His church.

We are all truly blessed, in big and small ways, and there can be nothing better than helping people find the same blessings God has provided for us. It is time to give back. It is time to mentor. God sometimes puts ideas in our heads and hearts so they sit there and grow. Then at some point this thought matures, and God uses it to push us down the path.

Dan Weber has served at the North American Division since 2012, becoming communication director in January 2014. This fall he will begin to serve as a professor at Andrews University.

/ 21 ADVENTIST Journey



7:00 - 8:30 PM PT









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