



SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST
KINSHIP



MEDIA KIT

Mission

Seventh-day Adventist Kinship, International, Inc. provides a safe spiritual and social community to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex current and former Seventh-day Adventists around the world, their families, and those who support them.

Affirming diversity within the Adventist community since 1976

WWW.SDAKINSHIP.ORG



About Us

Seventh-day Adventist Kinship International (“Kinship”) is a diverse, multigenerational worldwide community of individuals who are connected to the Adventist community.

For nearly 40 years, Kinship has worked worldwide with current and former Seventh-day Adventist lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex people and their families, friends, and allies.

Kinship members today are as diverse as the rest of the Adventist community is. What we share is the conviction that God loves all His children equally and unconditionally, no matter our gender identity or sexual orientation.* God created each of us with the healthy desire for companionship (Gen. 2:18), and He uses our social and intimate relationships to teach us what daily lives of love and self-sacrifice look like (Eph. 5:1-2, 1 Jn. 4:11-12, Col. 3:12-14, 1 Cor. 13).

From Colin Cook’s Quest Learning Center and Homosexuals Anonymous (established in 1980) to today’s Coming Out Ministries, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has subsidized or promoted reparative or change “therapy” and so-called “ex-gay” ministries that target vulnerable LGBTIQ people, same-gender couples, and the congregations they are part of.

Kinship members who’ve graduated from these ministries know their teachings and accounts of abuse, addiction, and “change” through spirituality or divine intervention. We also know these ministries’ outcomes all too well. We will never confuse destructive patterns of substance abuse, domestic violence, or sex addiction with a person’s underlying gender or sexual orientation, and we’re happy for those who, with therapy, have lessened their distress about who they are. Having picked up the pieces these ministries left behind, however, we

also know that “interventions” based on treating non-heterosexual orientations as essentially sinful, deviant, or inferior have devastating psychological, relational, and spiritual impacts on youth and adults alike.

We appreciate the consensus of the American Medical Association (2003), National Association of Social Workers (2000), American Psychiatric Association (1998), American Psychological Association (1997), and the American Academy of Pediatrics (1993): Non-heterosexual orientations are not in themselves problematic and so do not merit therapy, suppression, or change. These clinical and medical professionals and scientists have learned from study what Kinship members have learned from experience.

Because of God’s work in our lives and families, our knowledge of change organizations, and our experiences with thousands of LGBTIQ and heterosexual people since 1976, we encourage our members to accept their baseline orientation, and we affirm loving, committed same-gender or mixed-gender relationships for members who choose them. At a recent Kinship Kampmeeting, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of one same-gender couple—not because of their gender or orientation but because they’ve sustained a time-tested relationship of loyalty, mutual care, and healthy affection, and they’ve done this despite persistent demonization from their religious community.

We respect our members enough to honor their consciences about faith and what they believe God requires of them. Some have chosen committed relationships, some have built families with children, and others are celibate; all must be convinced in their own mind as the Lord leads them. Whatever our members and friends choose, we believe love is worth celebrating, and we support all of them as they grow in grace.



What we are not

Seventh-day Adventist Kinship is not a church or new theological system.

Many Kinship members still worship in local Adventist churches on nearly every continent, despite the fact that some of them must be silent about who they really are.

In addition, members who are Adventist Christians represent all facets of the church's theological spectrum and have learned to have vigorous, mutually respectful discussions about their beliefs.

Others are no longer associated with Adventism at all, but members respect each other's conscience, and conformity is not required or

expected. Kinship is also not a change or reparative ministry designed to pressure members into suppressing or reshaping their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Instead, Kinship encourages members to form a healthy sense of self and harmoniously balance their identity, spirituality, and social relationships.

Our History

In the early 1970s, several Adventist gay people independently began to look for other Adventists with whom they could discuss their feelings. One placed a single, small notice in the classified section of *The Advocate*, a national gay news magazine. It resulted in 37 responses from all areas of the United States and Canada; all were current or former Adventists.

1976

Kinship was founded with a meeting in Palm Desert, California, as a result of an ad placed by two gay Adventist men. Within four months, Kinship had 75 members, a temporary chairperson, and four committees: membership, educational, social, and spiritual. The new group met twice a month. Kinship soon joined forces with an individual in northern California who had established a gay SDA pen-pal list throughout the United States, and another group that had been meeting informally in New York City since 1974.

1978

Kinship published an official newsletter, later to become known as the Connection. In 1985, the Connection was first produced on a computer.

1980

The first annual Kampmeeting was held in Arizona. At Kinship's request, two Adventist pastors and three seminary professors attended as official delegates of the General Conference. Thirty-five courageous members attended this historic meeting, breaking ground for the larger numbers that now attend with less apprehension.

1981

Seventh-day Adventist Kinship International was incorporated.

1987

The Seventh-day Adventist Church filed legal action in a federal district court in California against Kinship for trademark infringement for using "Seventh-day Adventist" in the name.

1990

Kinship participated in the first church-sponsored AIDS conference. As the organization became impacted by the AIDS epidemic, we developed a quilt to memorialize members who were lost to AIDS. The Kinship AIDS quilt has been displayed in several Adventist churches.

1991

Kinship won the lawsuit brought against it by the General Conference, which sought to bar Kinship from using "Seventh-day Adventist" as part of its name. A California judge ruled in favor of Kinship, stating

1992

Kinship's online service was developed, first as an email listserv and later as an online discussion and chat group called KinNet.

1997

Carrol Grady, author of *My Son, Beloved Stranger* (1995), started a support group for parents and families of gays and lesbians, which included a monthly newsletter and later an email group and the website Someone-to-Talk-To.org.

Our History (continued)

2000

First IMRU? group for gay Adventists ages 18-29 was launched. In 2001 it became an official Kinship chapter.

2001

Beginning of Women & Children First weekend preceding Kampmeeting as a social time for Kinship women and their children.

2002

First European Kinship Meeting was held in Tunhem, Sweden.

2003

Kinship's logo created.

2005

Conference on Homosexuality at the Ontario Convention Center attended by over 300 denominational leaders. Organized by the Kinship Advisory Council.

2008

Kinship coordinated the publication of the book *Christianity and Homosexuality: Some Seventh-day Adventist Perspectives*. The book has been sold and distributed to numerous pastors, educators, and libraries. It triggered a one-sided conference on homosexuality at Andrews University in October 2009, to which no book editors or authors or even Kinship members were invited or asked to participate.

2009-2012

Straight allies Stephen Eyer and Daneen Akers, professional filmmakers, produced the documentary *Seventh-Gay Adventists: A film about faith on the margins* and began screenings in strategic locations across the United States and in other countries.

2012

Groups of students at Adventist colleges and universities formed a network of official and unofficial gay-straight alliances to provide resources, programs, and support for LGBTIQ students. The Intercollegiate Adventist Gay-Straight Alliance Coalition (IAGC) was organized to bridge the gap between our Seventh-day Adventist faith-based institutions and the LGBTIQ students who attend them.

Present

Kinship has a board of directors, regional coordinators, and chapter leaders in the United States and in other countries. At the time of this writing (2017) SDA Kinship has 2874 registered members, including both LGBTIQ and straight allies, plus many more individuals who benefit from our website and resources.

Kinship's goals for the future are reflected in its stated mission: to [provide] a safe spiritual and social community to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex current and former Seventh-day Adventists around the world. This means reaching those rejected and sent away by the organized church with the news that a different view exists, a biblically sound view of love and acceptance.

Our Logo

In June 2003, Seventh-day Adventist Kinship announced a new logo, designed to help communicate its mission and outreach to LGBTIQ Seventh-day Adventists.

"If there's one thing we hope the new logo does, that is to let others know that Kinship exists to provide a safe and inclusive place for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people—along with their friends and family—who may feel they aren't welcomed other places," former President Bob Bouchard said.

Kinship is excited that its logo "communicates some important messages about us, because we're not always given the opportunity to do that face-to-face." The new logo represents Kinship's ongoing efforts to improve its visibility.

THE LOGO WAS CREATED TO SHARE THE FOLLOWING ABOUT ITS MISSION:

- Kinship is a place for current and former Seventh-day Adventists of all backgrounds to join together, especially those who may have been hurt or rejected by the Seventh-day Adventist Church because of their Creator-given sexuality.
- Kinship is a loving, inclusive organization that embraces people and their Creator-given differences. Like the embraces and support many members provide their Kinship family, the image reflects this hospitable nature and characteristic.
- Kinship believes all people have access to the cross upon which our Savior died and that no one is denied the salvation it represents. Kinship believes Christ died for all people regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity and that no one is denied God's love and grace.
- The inverted triangle is a common image used by the gay community to represent solidarity, and here represents Kinship's important work within the gay community.





About the Seventh-day Adventist Church

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is a Protestant Christian denomination distinguished by its observance of Saturday, the seventh day of the week in Christian and Jewish calendars, as Sabbath (a day of rest), and by its emphasis on the imminent Second Coming (advent) of Jesus Christ.

The denomination grew out of the Millerite movement in the United States during the mid-19th century and was formally established in 1863. Among its founders was Ellen G. White, whose extensive writings are still held in high regard by the church.

Much of the theology of the Seventh-day Adventist Church corresponds to common Protestant Christian teachings, such as the Trinity and the infallibility of Scripture. The church is known for its emphasis on diet and health, "wholistic" understanding of the person, promotion of religious liberty, and conservative principles and lifestyle.

The world church is governed by a General Conference, with smaller regions administered by divisions, union conferences, and local conferences. It currently has a worldwide baptized membership of about 19.1 million people. It is ethnically and culturally diverse and maintains a missionary presence in over 200 countries and territories.



Publications

WEBSITE

SDA Kinship can be found online at www.sdakinship.org. The website provide opportunities to connect with and engage with SDA Kinship, has resources for the LGBTIQ community, and more.

CONNECTION E-NEWS

Connection E-news is SDA Kinship's monthly e-newsletter shared via email to SDA Kinship subscribers. To subscribe, send an email to info@sdakinship.org.

CONNECTION MAGAZINE

Connection magazine is the official newsletter of Seventh-day Adventist Kinship International, Inc. and is published quarterly online in an e-magazine format, shared via email to all SDA Kinship subscribers, and made available for download on our website. To subscribe, send an email to info@sdakinship.org.

CONNECTION BLOG

The blog can be found at www.sdakinship.org, and exists as an extension of the *Connection* e-newsletter and *Connection* magazine. It features articles, news and events, and other content.

BOOK: *CHRISTIANITY AND HOMOSEXUALITY: SOME SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST PERSPECTIVES*

In this book is a collection of chapters and responses that cover a wide range of topics from scriptural analysis to personal experience, written by respected professionals from within the Adventist community. It seeks to open the door to discussion without making any claim to provide ultimate answers. Each chapter and each response concludes with a series of questions that can be used to stimulate discussion.

Common Conversations about Homosexuality

HOMOSEXUALITY IS UNNATURAL (Rom. 2 & Gen. 1 & 2)

While it may not have been part of the original creation, it is a well-established fact that being gay is not a choice. While it can't be proven that there is a "gay gene," there is evidence that sexual orientation is established prior to birth; and factors in the very early years of a child's life may further lock in that orientation. Genesis makes it very clear that God intended that no one should live alone. Many species exhibit same-sex attraction. It is a natural part of creation. See the work of brain-function specialist Dr. Arlene Taylor (www.arlenetaylor.org) for quotes. The presenters from the social sciences at the 2014 Cape Town Summit presented the position that being homosexual is not a choice and change should not be attempted.

SODOM AND GOMORRAH

The biblical record is clear about several points that make it clear this was more than a story about homosexuality, though it has been used this way for hundreds of years. "All the men" of the city came to molest the angels. Nowhere else in history or in current society do we find an entire city where all of the men, both young and old, many of whom were obviously married, are homosexual. It was common practice in the middle east to humiliate an enemy by penetrating him, thus treating him like a woman. That is still practiced in some societies today and is also seen in prisons. This is a form of dominance, not an expression of sexual orientation. Ezekiel also makes it clear that there were many other reasons for the destruction of these cities. See the book *Christianity and Homosexuality: Some Seventh-day Adventist Perspectives* chapter on Scripture, available on Amazon.

IF YOU HAVE ENOUGH FAITH, ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE WITH GOD

No one questions that all things are possible with God, but to claim a person doesn't have enough faith if they are still gay after trying exorcism, laying on of hands with oil, and countless years of praying for change and seeing no change, is an affront to God and the church. It means not only the homosexual, but psychologists, psychiatrists, and pastors who sought to bring about change also did not have sufficient faith. Most psychologists and psychiatrists no longer attempt or encourage homosexuals to change their orientation. For these reasons, continuing to insist on change and "praying away the gay" are seen as psychologically damaging and often lead to suicide.

CHANGE IS POSSIBLE

Research from Exodus International would indicate that change may be possible for a very small percentage, probably those who are still confused about their orientation.

IF YOU ARE GOING TO BE GAY YOU MUST BE CELIBATE

Celibacy is seen in Scripture as a gift of the Spirit. It is never viewed as something that is imposed on a whole group of people. This might be a choice for a person to make, but is never something that should be forced on a person.

LGBTIQ Terminology and Definitions

GAY

Generally refers to a male who is physically, emotionally, and/or spiritually attracted to other males. May also refer to females who are attracted to other females, as well as the gay community in general.

LESBIAN

A female who is physically, emotionally, and/or spiritually attracted to other females.

BISEXUAL

A person who is physically, emotionally, and/or spiritually attracted to persons of the same or opposite sex.

TRANSGENDER

While most person's gender identity matches the anatomical sex with which they were born, some person's does not. A person whose gender identity is different from his or her anatomical sex may (or may not) elect to undergo chemical and/or surgical alteration. Many transgender people have heterosexual identities. Since both the legal system and the general public tend to discriminate against them similarly to discrimination against other sexual minorities, organizations have enlarged their mission statements to include transgender persons.

TRANSSEXUAL

A person who not only has a transgender identity, but who relates physically, emotionally, and mentally as a member of the opposite sex. Surgical procedures are sometimes undergone to physically accommodate this identity, and so

transsexuals are often referred to as either “pre-op” or “post-op.”

INTERSEX

Person born with mixed sexual physiology; a sex is often “assigned” at birth, though this practice is under attack as violating one’s well-being.

QUESTIONING

An individual who is currently questioning his or her gender or sexual identity.

GENDER IDENTITY

Many people equate being gay with being effeminate and being lesbian with being mannish and assume that gay men really want to be women and lesbians really want to be men, but that is a mistake. Gender identity is distinct from sexual orientation. Gender identity, the sense that one is a male or a female, is usually manifested by the age of 3 or 4 years.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Sexual orientation, the sense that one ought to claim a gay, lesbian, bisexual, or heterosexual identity, does not manifest itself until much later in life, usually after puberty and often not until full adulthood. People who insist that, for example, a man who wants a sexual relationship with another man actually wishes he were a woman are, in effect, denying the reality of same-sex desire and insisting that everyone really wants to be (and really is) heterosexual. This is offensive.

Social Media



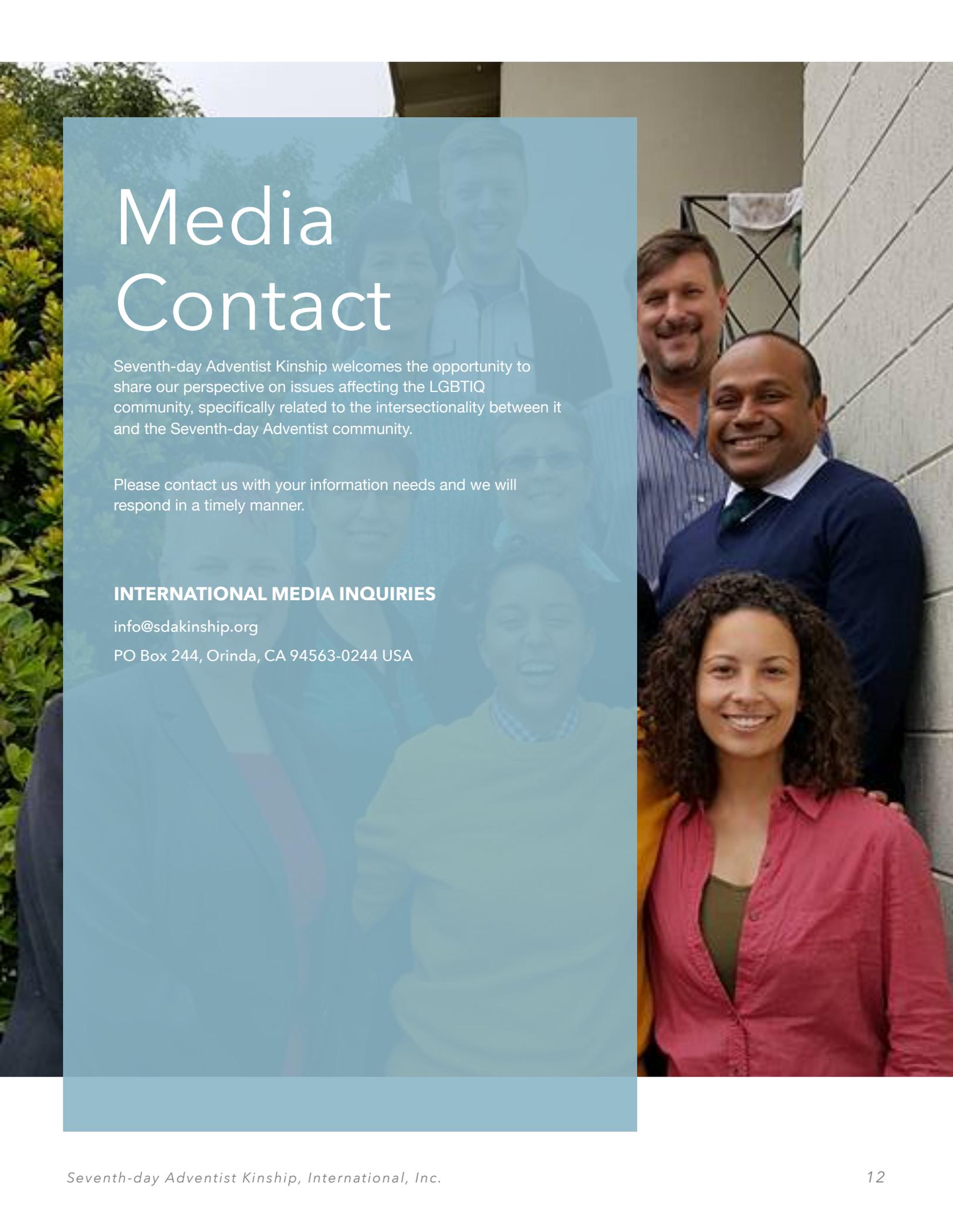
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Media Contact

Seventh-day Adventist Kinship welcomes the opportunity to share our perspective on issues affecting the LGBTIQ community, specifically related to the intersectionality between it and the Seventh-day Adventist community.

Please contact us with your information needs and we will respond in a timely manner.

INTERNATIONAL MEDIA INQUIRIES

info@sdakinship.org

PO Box 244, Orinda, CA 94563-0244 USA

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info@sdakinship.org

www.sdakinship.org

