

connection

The Newsletter of Seventh-day Adventist Kinship International, Inc. Vol. 33 No. 6 – June/July 2009



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STONEWALL JUNE 1969

KINSHIP BOARD

President: Bob Bouchard
 Vice President: Isis Montalvo
 Secretary: Bev Winsted
 Treasurer: *To be appointed*
 Director of Church Relations: Dave Ferguson
 Director of Communications: Jacquie Hegarty
 Director of Diversity: Obed Vazquez-Ortiz
 Director of Women: Brenda McColpin
 Director of Youth Interests: Ruben López
 Directors-at-Large: Carrol Grady, Ruud Kieboom
 Connection Editor: Catherine Taylor
 Kampmeeting Coordinator: Naveen Jonathan
 Membership Services: Fred Casey

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 Communications: Jacquie Hegarty
 Executive: Bob Bouchard
 Finance: Samuel Pang
 Governance: Bev Winsted
 International Growth and Development: Floyd Pönitz

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 Region 9 (AZ, CA zip 93599-): region9@sdakinship.org

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OTHER COORDINATORS

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 Transgender/Transsexual: Sandra Hoffecker, transgender@sdakinship.org
 Older Adults: Ren Reynolds, olderadult@sdakinship.org
 IMRU? (Young Adults Under 30): Ruben López, imru@sdakinship.org
 Webmaster: Linda Wright, webadmin@sdakinship.org

WHO WE ARE...

Seventh-day Adventist Kinship International, Inc. is a non-profit support organization. We minister to the spiritual, emotional, social, and physical well-being of current and former Seventh-day Adventists who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex individuals and their families and friends. Kinship facilitates and promotes the understanding and affirmation of LGBTI Adventists among themselves and within the Seventh-day Adventist community through education, advocacy, and reconciliation. Kinship is an organization which supports the advance of human rights for all people.

Founded in 1976 the organization was incorporated in 1981 and is recognized as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in the United States. Kinship has a board made up of thirteen officers. There are also regional and population coordinators in specific areas. The current list of members and friends includes approximately 1,550 people in more than forty-three countries.

SDA Kinship believes the Bible does not condemn or even mention homosexuality as a sexual orientation. Ellen G. White does not parallel any of the Bible texts that are used to condemn homosexuals. Most of the anguish imposed upon God's children who grow up as LGBTI has its roots in the misunderstanding of what the Bible says.

SUPPORT KINSHIP

Kinship operates primarily on contributions from its members and friends. Help us reach out to more LGBTI Adventists by making a tax-deductible donation to SDA Kinship International. Please send your check or money order to the address below or donate securely online at sdakinship.org. (You can also donate using your Visa or MasterCard by contacting treasurer@sdakinship.org. You will be phoned so that you can give your credit card information in a safe manner.)

SDA Kinship, PO Box 69, Tillamook, OR 97141, USA
 or visit SDA Kinship's website at:
www.sdakinship.org.



From the Editor



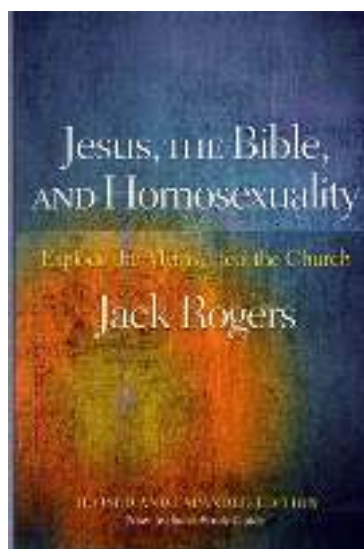
Whew, this is a packed time of year! In the month of June alone, there are Gay Pride marches all over the world. Most of them will be celebrating the fortieth anniversary of the Stonewall riots. At the same time, Kinship members in the U.S. are contemplating how

they will respond to a California Supreme Court ruling against gay marriage. Kinship leaders just got home from a remarkable meeting in Scotland with European Adventist church educators and administrators. It's time to have elections for Kinship Board members. This year we are piloting a new electronic voting system with the election for Director of Women's Interests. The first meeting of Kinship members in the Netherlands happened last weekend. Kinship Australia now has a regional leader for women on that continent. In a few weeks you could be filling your suitcases to leave for Kampmeeting in Seattle. We are just now advertising a North Carolina Kinship ocean-side weekend retreat for September. Kinship Australia is finishing up plans for their Kampmeeting in September. The European Kinship Meeting and holiday week in October are open for registration. We're getting the advertising ready for the November Vermont Mini-Kampmeeting. Connection editors used to wonder what they would do to fill our pages; these days I worry that I have forgotten something or, worse, someone important. To honor members of our community who came out before Stonewall, we chose to highlight Ren, Bruce, and Eddie in articles this month. We're starting a monthly devotional that Ben is kind enough to share with us. We're introducing our candidates for election, their platforms, and this year's voting processes. We've put together a report of European events and plans. We've got a couple of books noted that we think you will find helpful. Finally, Ruud has designed some wonderful advertisements of upcoming events. We try to keep the Connection quite current; but if you want up-to-the-day, if not the minute, news of interest to Kinship, keep checking in with our website at sdakinship.org. Our webmaster, Linda, has something new for each date of the calendar. She and her team have done heavy-duty cyber work to get our new site up and running. We invite you to enjoy it. Mostly what we want is for you to take care of yourself, for you are infinitely valuable.

Catherine

Some Books

**we think
you will find interesting**



Jesus, The Bible and Homosexuality

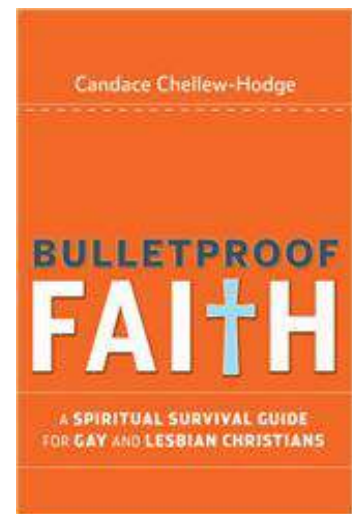
by Jack Rogers

"Rogers' deep understanding of both Reformed and natural law theology yields a brilliant rebuttal to the crucial misuse of natural law as a fall-back argument in Robert Gagnon's rambling reductionism of sexuality to body parts." Dr. Ralph Blair, Evangelicals Concerned

Bulletproof Faith

by Candace Chellew-Hodge

Recommended by Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu who says, "It is an amazing truth that gay and lesbian Christians need to develop a bullet-proof faith in order to survive the attack of other Christians. That, however, is the experience of many homosexual persons. Candace Chellew-Hodge has in this book committed herself to the task of making that survival a reality. I salute her and her work." ▽



A Sunbeam from Ren

Friday, September 21, 2001 - 06:34 pm

I am only one, but still I am one.
I cannot do everything, but I can do
something, and because I cannot do
everything, I will not refuse to do the
one thing I can do..

- Edward Everett Horton

June 28, 1969

*Eddie Acosta, Bruce Tichenor,
and Catherine Taylor*

Eddie Acosta and Bruce Tichenor will have been together for forty-nine years this November. They met and have lived in New York City for practically their entire relationship. To hear the story of how they got together is to make any listener smile and hope that we will have the same laughter after almost five decades. Their reminiscences about what New York City was like for gay and lesbian people in the sixties are quite sobering. They talk of the paucity of places where gay and lesbian people could really feel safe and have a sense of community, in spite of there being quite a number of gay-oriented bars, restaurants, and dance venues. They even talk of a prevailing atmosphere of secrecy and caution partially necessary for the preservation of their jobs.

Since the early forties New York had had a regulation on the books making it illegal to serve homosexuals in a licensed premise. Most gay businesses were owned by the Mafia and depended on it for protection from the police. As a matter of policy, harassment of gay establishments and their patrons by law enforcement officers was common and quite regular. News about gays was often related to a raid or arrest, with "invert," "pervert," or "deviate" as part of the accompanying description.

Attitudes began to change in New York City during the sixties. Some of the factors partially responsible for those changes were the new awareness of civil rights issues; a new, more liberal-oriented city administration during the second half of the decade; and a greater role played by gay organizations such as the Mattachine



Society. Bruce and Eddie say that while there was fun to be had and greater freedom of expression, one couldn't help but feel that there was an element of risk. In many ways, it was like living on the edge of society.

We want to share with you part of that story found on Wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stonewall_riots):

*The **Stonewall riots** were a series of spontaneous, violent demonstrations against a police raid that took place in the early morning hours of June 28, 1969, at the Stonewall Inn, in the Greenwich Village neighborhood of New York City. They are frequently cited as the first instance in American history when gays and lesbians fought back against a government-sponsored system that persecuted homosexuals, and they have become the defining event that marked the start of the gay rights movement in the United States and around the world.*

American gays and lesbians in the 1950s and 1960s faced a legal system more anti-homosexual than those of some Warsaw Pact countries. Early homophile groups in the U.S. sought to prove that gay people could be assimilated into society, and they favored non-confrontational education for homosexuals and heterosexuals alike. The last years of the 1960s, however, were very contentious, as many social movements were active, including the African-American Civil Rights Movement, the Counterculture of the 1960s, and antiwar demonstrations. These influences, along with the liberal environment of Greenwich Village, served as catalysts for the Stonewall riots.

Very few establishments welcomed openly gay people in the 1950s and 1960s. Those that did were often bars, although bar owners and managers were rarely gay. The Stonewall Inn, at the time, was owned by the Mafia. It catered to an assortment of patrons, but it was known to be popular with the most marginalized people in the gay community: transvestites, effeminate young men, hustlers, and homeless youth. Police raids on gay bars were routine in the 1960s, but officers quickly lost control of the situation at the Stonewall Inn and attracted a crowd that was incited to riot. Tensions between New York City police and gay residents of Greenwich Village erupted into more protests the next evening and again several nights later. Within weeks, Village residents quickly organized into activist groups to

concentrate efforts on establishing places for gays and lesbians to be open about their sexual orientation without fear of being arrested.

After the Stonewall riots, gays and lesbians in New York City faced gender, class, and generational obstacles to becoming a cohesive community.

Within six months, two gay activist organizations were formed in New York, concentrating on confrontational tactics; and three newspapers were established to promote rights for gays and lesbians. Within a few years, gay rights organizations were founded across the U.S. and the world. On June 28, 1970, the first Gay Pride marches took place in Los Angeles and New York commemorating the anniversary of the riots. Similar marches were organized in other cities; today Gay Pride events are held annually throughout the world toward the end of June to mark the Stonewall riots.

On June 28, 1969, Bruce and Eddie had already taken off for their annual summer excursion to Europe and had not heard about the Stonewall riots. They were more aware of the notorious student riots in Paris that spring than of anything special going on in NYC. When they got back two months later, they wandered down to Greenwich Village as part of their homecoming. Driving down Seventh Avenue, they stopped for the traffic light



Bruce and Eddie then

at Christopher Street when an unusually large group of people crossed the avenue and suddenly proceeded to lie down in some sort of demonstration. They stopped all traffic on the avenue for more than fifteen minutes and were joined by many local residents and visitors to the area. That's when Eddie and Bruce first learned of what had taken place at the Stonewall Inn two months prior. When they realized the meaning of the scene, a range of emotions overcame them. They were deeply moved by the sight of their brothers and sisters so bravely protesting on behalf of our community. Forty years later, in the café at the New York City Botanical Gardens, as Eddie told this story, the tears welled up in his eyes, again.

This year as the Pride Parade marches down New York's Fifth Avenue, television networks will be covering the events. Meanwhile, thousands of onlookers and marchers will be texting friends and sending live action



Eddie and Bruce now

videos and photos around the world. Such is our world of instant communication today. Forty years ago, such interaction would have been only a dream. The events related to the Stonewall Riots have achieved legendary status; and as we commemorate their 40th anniversary, let's celebrate the role they

have played in defining our LGBT identity. ▽

Speaking of New York City...



the beautiful sights the Lord has created. I appreciated being able to share all this with my newfound family. We had such a great time sharing stories in the car that Catherine made wrong turns trying to both listen to us and to find her way. I liked getting to know Bruce and Eddie. By the end of the day, I was sad to say good-by. ▽

Region One celebrated spring by gathering on May 9 at 126th Street and Amsterdam. We met for the Forum Sabbath Service to hear Ginger Harwood of La Sierra University share Adventism's history of social justice. Then we took a fascinating tour of the New York road system to meet Bruce and Eddie at the New York Botanical Gardens in the Bronx. If you ever want spectacular tour guides, join those two in their home city or in almost any hamlet of Europe. The flowers and trees were beautiful. Even more enjoyable was spending time with each other, sharing stories, and laughing. Angel Rivera (on the right on the picture) described his reactions this way:

I liked learning that our church's founders were people who stood up for the rights of others, that they believed all people were equal. Those founders were not afraid to be different for the right cause. I enjoyed our fellowship together. I loved walking around the botanical grounds with everyone and seeing some of

We would like to introduce you to “Ms. Sunbeam”:

Virginia “Ren” Reynolds

I was born in Colorado in 1928 and spent my educational career in the Adventist school system. I took music classes and some other subjects at Boulder’s public high school. I graduated from Union College in Nebraska.

After college I took adaptive physical education classes so that I could teach that course to children who were partially sighted or blind in Sacramento, California. This government experiment funded my junior high school to buy equipment so that kids who had used Braille and large print to study got to play and learn to use muscles that they did not know they had. These students played softball and learned to play horse. By measuring and weighing other class members, the students felt themselves growing as they played. They learned how muscle felt as it formed. The physical activities improved both class work and the enthusiasm for it. The most exciting part for me was to see changes in the way my students walked; their bodies became upright, they held their heads up, smiles crossed their faces. My proudest day was the first one when all our students crossed the horizontal bars, hand over hand, unaided and uninterrupted by a loss of grip. Teaching at a California junior high school was always an exciting adventure as long as we had an innovative principal who encouraged and shared leadership with the entire faculty and our students. We were a team, and every person won respect just by being there.

My dad’s father made the first mock-ups of the equipment that produced shredded wheat. I remember that he ate that cereal and drank Ovaltine for



the rest of his life after that. My grandmother ended up being a typist for Ellen White. My dad’s parents met at Union College when Dr. Kellogg sent my grandfather there to help build and install the heating system for the school. The administration building was built but not fully functional when my grandfather proposed to my grandmother on its roof. The clock in the huge tower of that building still chimed when I attended Union. The five-story hospital had become the women’s dorm.

Campion Adventist Academy of Loveland, Colorado, was founded in 1909; and is where my parents met during its first years of operation. I found out that they broke school

rules by sneaking away at night to go ice skating together. My dad worked in his father’s machine shop until he took over and became the owner. He had a fascinating career. Part of his work involved contracts with NASA where he built beryllium finders for the Indian Ocean and parts of life-support systems for the lunar modules. My mother was raised in Fort Collins, Colorado, and near a town on the Wyoming border called Virginia Dale. (Good guess, but no, I did not get my name from that town.) My older brother also went to Adventist schools. He attended La Sierra when it was still a two-year college.

When I was younger I loved the out-of-doors—fishing, camping, and hiking. I have built rock and mineral collections. I enjoy reading. I have collected bits of history from my family—quilts, photos, and documents. Many of them are now missing from my home, and this leaves me sad.

A Sunbeam from Ren
Friday, January 02, 2004 - 03:15 am

*Yesterday is history. Tomorrow is a mystery.
And today? Today is a gift.
That's why we call it the present.*

- Babatunde Olatunji

I heard about Kinship in an interesting way. I was in a gay and lesbian club in the late 1970s. As we were leaving I picked up two papers lying near the exit. Both of them had ads for Kinship! I called several times, but Vern was moving from Sacramento to San Francisco and it took ages before he answered my call. I was skeptical of the entire organization by that time. Ira Loop was the first Kinship member I met when I attended a meeting at his apartment. Joyce called me several times before that meeting. Her persistence helped get me there. I joined Kinship either right before or right after the second Kamp-meeting.

Soon after that first meeting at Ira's, Bob appointed me to the Board of Directors. I enjoyed my years of working for Kinship in that capacity. We went through some difficult times but we all kept sharing our time, energy, and work. I believe folks are still doing that now. I am sad about the people who are no longer with us who gave such gifts to the family of Kinship.

Board meetings and Kamp-meetings were always extraordinary experiences. Each was very different. The Colorado Kamp-meeting (1984) was held in a most spectacular location. We had a wonderful turn-out of women. At these meetings, I loved most the closeness and sense of family. I would enjoy hearing from some of you if you also miss that sense these days.

I get concerned that those of you who live far away from other Kinship members won't get to experience the caring and the closeness and the sense of family. I tell Board members to spend more time on KinNet, and I think the new website will help all of us to work on ways to communicate with each other more often. No one should allow our differences to separate us.

No two family members are exactly alike in how we think, feel, or believe.

I would like to recommend that all of you talk on KinNet or write for the *Connection* or go to Board meetings if you can make the trip. Be open to everyone. Try to avoid lecturing. Individuals **and** organizations make their way toward maturity in stages. I think it is important that we remain inclusive. It's important for me that I remain part of this FAMILY.

Living in my eighth decade has led me to evaluate and weigh what has made me a spiritual being. I have attempted to define what spirituality means because it is a daunting subject to me. What factors play important roles? Even figuring out those factors is QUITE a task!

My first impressions were taught by my parents and family through words like "good" and "bad." What was good for me? What was bad for my safety? I wonder how much I learned just from their tone of voice. Since we were isolated and did not have extended family or "classes" around us, I think my parents taught us a lot by instinct. I was a Great Depression child. I am sure some of my values come from how my parents struggled though that time.

I believe that my spirituality grew sporadically and not always in a specific pattern. Some of it may have been inborn. Our nature from birth might explain how various members of the human race can



follow their belief systems in rigid, moderate, or liberal ways. We pick churches that have patterns that are correct for us.

It's a bit like music. I don't remember how music entered my life but my cousin has given me hints. At age three he would ask, "What makes that sound?" when music played on the radio. He grew to be able to identify various instruments by their tones. He always had a questioning curiosity. His ability to listen and to question has made him a self-taught participant in the music business. I think listening, questioning, and keeping our curiosity is also important in our spiritual journey. This skill helps us choose, hold, or change our pathways. I think it's important to carry on our spiritual journey with curiosity and enthusiasm. We're all very different. That is why we are all very wonderful.

The most important thing I have learned in my spiritual journey is that I am going to learn many of the same life lessons time and time again. Most of us forget that measure of our learning. We must forgive ourselves and try again to live true and honest lives with ourselves. Ren ▽

(renone23@gmail.com)

Ren is very active on KinNet, Kinship's online discussion board. She regularly contributes "Sunbeams," quotes designed to brighten your day or makes you contemplate important issues. The Connection staff have dubbed her Ms. Sunbeam of Kinship!

A Sunbeam from Ren
Wednesday, October 16, 2002 - 05:36 pm

If you assume that there's no hope, you guarantee that there will be no hope. If you assume there is an instinct for freedom, that there are opportunities to change things, there's a chance you may contribute to making a better world. That's your choice.

- Naom Chomsky

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST KINSHIP'S ELECTIONS

We imagine you have already heard the call, in both *eNews* and the *Connection*, for people interested in being on Kinship's Board of Directors. As you may remember, there are four positions open this year: President, Vice-president, Director of Church Relations, and Director of Women's Interests. Elections for President, Vice-president, and Director of Church Relations will take place at Kampmeeting.

The Board of Directors has decided to pilot our proposed use of electronic ballots with the voting for Director of Women's Interests. The electronic voting requires each Kinship woman to log into Kinship OnLine (KOL), the members-only area of the SDA Kinship website, and to click on the correct link. Only those members who have email addresses and user names that have been approved to vote will be able to access the ballot, and each member will be able to vote only one time. Electronic voting will take place from July 3 to 16. All women in Kinship with a valid email address will receive an email giving them specific instructions. Women without an email address but who attend Kampmeeting will be able to vote electronically there.

Voting for the other positions will take place on Friday with paper ballots.

The *Connection* asked the candidates to write a brief summary of their experience with Kinship and their plans for work in the position for which they are running.

Our Candidates for Election



President
Yolanda Elliott

During my 14 years in Kinship, I have been a Regional Coordinator and Women's Coordinator, Vice-president, Kampmeeting Site Facilitator, and member of various committees.

I have a Bachelor of Science degree with emphasis in interior design, a certificate in Nursing Home Administration, and own Yolanda's Home Assisted Living.

I am fully committed to Kinship, its mission, and its members, and have the professional leadership experience to meet the requirements of this position. I believe that my success at running my own business, which includes daily interactions and managing people and situations, and my success in various Kinship leadership positions, qualifies me to accept and successfully execute the duties of the President of Kinship.

My vision for Kinship is that it is a place where every member—long-time or new, and regardless of age or ethnic diversity—will feel that there is a special place just for her or him.



Vice-president
Naveen Jonathan

I have been a member of Kinship since 2001. Since 2004 I have served on the Board as a member-at-large representing IMRU? and as Kampmeeting Coordinator. I was part of the Strategic Planning Committee, Nominating Committee, and Bylaws Revision Committee. I have been part of the Region 9 and IMRU? leadership groups. I work as a licensed Marriage & Family Therapist and Adjunct Professor and am a PhD candidate in Marriage and Family Therapy.

As vice-president I will chair the Member Services Committee and work with the Board to support the goals and projects of Kinship. My vision for Kinship is for it to be an active, safe, and supportive group for all lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered people who are current or former Seventh-day Adventists. I intend to explore ways that the organization can attract and retain members from all age groups. Kinship is very near to my heart, and I would be honored to serve in this leadership capacity.



**Director of
Church
Relations**
Dave Ferguson

During the time I have held this position I have at various times attended an Annual Council, a General Conference Session, and the initial European Kinship Advisory Meeting. I was key to the development of the U.S. Kinship Advisory Council (KAC), developed a process for responding to those making negative comments about LGBTI Adventists, maintained contact with Adventist leaders, established and maintained contact with other LGBTI groups and allies, and have helped former Adventist pastors find work.

Through the Kinship Advisory Counsel a DVD and a book have been produced and distributed. I plan to pursue completing an interactive feature on the SDA Kinship website that will provide responses to negative comments regarding our family. I am working to help develop a documentary film about gay Adventists, designed for wide release. I want to help build web access for parents, pastors, and educators and develop a team of Kinship members who will help pursue these goals.



**Director of
Women's
Interests**
Karen Wetherell

When I worried that I would lose my community as I came out, Kinship was there to support me, talk to me, laugh with me, and let me know that I was not alone. When I realized that the church I have loved would not easily let me use the gifts I had shared with it for decades, Kinship honored me with its trust. As treasurer for four years, I developed financial reports that were easier for non-accountant members to understand, helped develop mailing systems that decreased the cost of the *Connection* by several thousand dollars per year, set

up systems to support Kinship Europe, and worked actively with Kampmeeting Coordinators, learning how the inner workings of Kinship activities and Board all fit together.

I am excited about the opportunity to serve our Kinship community as Director of Women's Interests. I would like to make a place in KinWomen where you, the women of Kinship, can let me know what you would like to see happening. This is, after all, your organization. I want to create Friday night and also Sabbath afternoon "chat" options on our new website where different women all over the world will take turns hosting each month so that, no matter where you live, there will be a time that will work for your schedule. I think this will help us feel more connected and get to know each other better, even though many of us have never met. I will use the website, *Connection*, and *eNews* to let you know who will be hosting each month.

I plan to arrange an activity once a month somewhere in the world with a specific woman set up to host dinners or meetings so that we can have more of a chance to meet and get to know each other. I have met several of the women of Kinship Europe and want to work with them and the new Australian Women's Coordinator to create ways for the women of Kinship to connect and support each other. I would like to begin a thread in KinWomen for prayer requests and establish a small group of prayer warriors that will take a specific time every day to pray for the specific requests. I want to get Kinship women all over the world involved in a variety of leadership roles so that you can participate more in your Kinship community. I look forward to hearing from you and serving you.



Impressions from Kinship's Board Meeting, March 2009, Glendale, CA



Building the Kinship Future in Europe

The 2009 SDA Kinship European Advisory Council



Scottish Churches House – Dunblane, Scotland

Mike Lewis

If you think the title is long, then just try to imagine the length of time and the amount of effort that went into the meeting, from its first conception in May 2008 to the final review this month.

Some years ago I felt I had to choose (*mostly because I do not have enough hours in the week to do both*) between chucking Adventism and throwing my lot in with Metropolitan Community Church (MCC), or remaining within the fold of the church of my upbringing, culture, belief system, and religious heritage. I knew that where I chose to stay would be where I chose to work. I felt led to remain where I was most theologically comfortable, where I thought I could do the most good. So, I am still a member of the Adventist Church, and I work within it and outside it to try to help gay and lesbian Christians.

When I came out in church, I was accused of having An Agenda. Well, actually, I do. Here are four points of my seven-point agenda that I shared with my Crieff Church a few months ago:

1. To help bring about healing between the church and its LGBT members.
2. To help bring about reconciliation between church members who hold varying views of this (and perhaps other) subjects.
3. To bring an awareness of the needs of LGBT Christians to the (Seventh-day Adventist) Church.
4. To be true to my God, my conscience, and my church.

With this background I volunteered to organise the “Dunblane Meeting.” There were lots of administrative things to do, lots of planning and discussion with the

other leaders, and lots of prayers. Much to my relief, in hindsight, it seemed to work out well.

A small group of Kinship leaders met with Adventist pastors, administrators, and teachers for a weekend of intense discussion and presentations. We found we had many similar goals and values. Because the meeting was held thirty minutes from my local Adventist congregation, some members of my group visited and took part in the discussions. It was somewhat embarrassing to have our story (*“what happened after Mike came out in church one Sabbath”*) discussed in detail. However, I think our experience served as a useful model, enabling the group to be able to focus on an actual situation rather than just on a theoretical one.

Despite occasional differences of opinion and methodology, I believe we all made big strides forward. Hearing the supportive statements given by those who came from the church was hugely encouraging. I could see light at the end of the tunnel, albeit a long way off. By Sunday afternoon my assessment of our time together was of a weekend mentally, emotionally, and spiritually exhausting, but well worth it. I realized, yet again, that we in Kinship are not alone in our struggles; and for that I am profoundly grateful. So M and D and H and R and L and C and D and S and J and F and F and K and V and thank you.

And now, having cleaned the house and washed the last remaining dishes after a houseful of Kinship visitors (*I can't believe how quiet it is here now that they've all gone home again*), it's time to take the next steps as I pick up my life. ▽

Mike Lewis



A Sunbeam from Ren
Friday, September 15, 2006 - 09:11 am

Do not go where the path may lead,
go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

We would like to share a little of what it was like to participate in our services.

The Dunblane Meeting Worships

Communion Service

*Cameron Abernethy -
Metropolitan Community Church of Edinburgh*

Based on: **'It would not have been God's table'**
written by Cheryl Lawrie and taken from
<http://jonnybaker.blogs.com/jonnybaker/2007/07/it-would-not-ha.html>

Picture yourself in a small, rounded, stone chapel 800 years old.

Gathering prayer

Welcoming God,
In our bustle and busyness
We come as your beloved children,
Different and unique.
We pause
To worship You,
To be held in Your eternal peace.

Communion

As we join with one another for communion this evening, I am very aware that the words I say may sound very different. I invite us all to come to this table with a heart open to God, and pray that all are able to find a blessing in this communion together.

On their own, the bread and wine are nothing. To become a foretaste and a promise of love made real and a world made whole, they need a story and a blessing and a people who believe.

It would not have been God's table if they hadn't all been gathered around it: the betrayer and the friend, the power-hungry and the justice-seeker, the faithful and the fickle.

When Jesus poured the wine, and the bread was broken; when everyone could eat—the outcast and the beloved, the arrogant and the gracious, the wrongdoer and the wrongly done by—the table became a foretaste of love made real and of a world made whole.

Your company at this table will include the betrayer and the beloved, the wrongdoer and the wrongly done by. It would not be God's table without them. The promise is that when we are together, when we tell the

story and give the blessing, when we break the bread and pour the wine, we will discover a foretaste of love made real and of a world made whole. Let us join with one another as the people who believe, to share the story and the blessing.

What aspect of this oh-so-familiar story do you remember as we gather around this table? Jesus washing the feet of his disciples? Peter saying he would never deny Jesus? The eyes of Jesus resting upon one who would soon go out and sell him to the authorities?

As I come to this table tonight, the table of God, I remember the words of Jesus who took the bread and blessed it before all of the disciples, the betrayer and the beloved. Jesus offered that bread to them saying, "Take and eat. My body, like this bread, is broken for you. Each time you break this bread, remember Me." Jesus took the cup and he blessed it before them, the wrongdoer and the wrongly done by. Jesus offered them the cup saying, "This cup is a sign of my life poured out for you. Each time you drink from this cup, remember Me." As we remember together, this story is as true now as it was then. At this table, it is Jesus who offers you bread for the journey and the cup for renewal. As we gather around this table, like those disciples of long ago, we come with all that is in our hearts and minds. Here at this table we can find what we need, for all are welcome at God's table. I believe with all of my heart that God's invitation is for all of God's children. For in this meal, each of us can discover a foretaste of love made real and a world made whole. ▽



Interior of the Dunblane Chapel

Planning for the Future

From the European Kinship Leadership Team

Because we promised to protect the confidentiality of the people who attended the Dunblane meeting, we won't share the conversations or the names of the people who attended. However, we are delighted to share some of the outcomes and plans.

First of all, we think everyone present will agree that the Holy Spirit was very much with us. The weekend was filled with a thoughtful gentleness as well as laughter and mealtime conversations. And then:

1. A European Advisory Council was formed.
2. Mike is collating an orientation booklet for new council members that will include information about Kinship and Kinship Europe as well as our leaflet and articles that might be of interest. Each council member will receive a copy of *Christianity and Homosexuality: Some Seventh-day Adventist Perspectives*.
3. A discussion group for members of the European Kinship Advisory Council has already been set up by Linda and Floyd, who are part of Kinship's web team.
4. The next meeting of the European Kinship Advisory Council has been scheduled.

There was also a European Kinship planning meeting. Here are some of the outcomes.

Netherlands: On 24 May, Ruud and Kees hosted the first Dutch Kinship meeting. There were eight people who told their stories, walked in the dunes, and shared dinner. They planned their next meeting for September in Emmen (northeast Holland). The group is interested in inviting pastors to the meetings.

Ruud is arranging a meeting for the people who could not come on the 24th. He is also organizing a meeting for English-speaking Kinship members from abroad who live in Holland right now.

Germany: Kinship leaders are collaborating with a German pastor to have a dinner with LGBTI German Adventists in October.

United Kingdom: Mike is working on ways to contact more pastors.

Training Opportunities: Carrol and Floyd have agreed to come to Europe late next spring to do a training in the UK and to meet with pastors, family ministries leaders, and women's ministries leaders in the Netherlands.

European Kinship 2009 goes on holiday. The Kinship Europe holiday venue was finalized for October 2009. It is near the ocean in a very, very renovated 16th-century house with nine bedrooms, gorgeous gardens, and, well, it's rather grand.

European Kinship Meeting 2010 will be in the Netherlands.

And to give you a sense of what we were like when relaxing after the conference, Mike wrote this description of our food shopping style.

Team effort. Millions of people all going 'round the store (after, that is, they have lengthily decided which of the many stores to go around). There will then be endless discussions about whether McVities is the right brand to buy, whether they are green, eco, or otherwise. We will all have to discuss (also at great length) which particular flavour or

flavours to purchase so that everyone is included and nobody feels left out. We should have to consider carefully the implications of the ingredients, the additives, the gastrointestinal effects of each one, and the advice given and the wisdom received. Such a vast group will disrupt the store, blocking aisles, and causing inconvenience to the

little old people of all ages and sexes who are dithering about which newspaper(s) to buy, in fact, perhaps, whether to buy a newspaper at all. Not that these are serious objections to your proposal for group retail therapy, you understand. ▽



Impressions from Dunblane, Scotland

This issue begins Ben Kemena's series of monthly devotionals.

Devotional

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit! 1 Corinthians 12:4

Not all of us have the confrontational nature of militant protestors. We don't all have the emotional stamina to provide personal support as a primary caregiver. Some of us do not have the ability to speak or write about the lesbian or gay Adventist experience. And we don't all have the financial resources to support gay community centers or allied organizations.

However, we all have the ability to share something, rather than nothing. It may be as simple as serving on a committee, baking cookies for a meeting or fundraiser, teaching a Sabbath School class, or hosting a Sabbath potluck. It may be as profound as offering prayer, whether that be spoken or silent; we share as one with our God. We all have gifts to offer.

Our heritage has often prioritized gifts rather than celebrating a giving heart. We all have time, talent, and treasure to share as we are able; and this should not separate us by scope or magnitude, but rather remind us that our diversity in giving is a real blessing. Our differences provide a broader reach and allow the example of our lives to shine brightly into corners beyond our imaginings!

There are varieties of gifts within our Adventist community, and it's important to remember that the same Spirit inspires all of them! It may be appropriate to challenge ourselves and one another at times; but none of us sit in a position to dictate another's contribution. Rather, all of us must celebrate that which we may give.

We thank our Holy God for sanctifying the gifts we place at the altar.

(Inspired in paraphrase by Chris Glaser, *The Word Is Out*)



▽ Kinship ▽ News ▽ Kinship ▽ News

Kinship Australia – Noel Thorpe

"Incurably Gay and SDA"

Is the theme for our annual Aussie-style Kampmeeting. It is a wonderful gathering of members from all over the country and other parts of the world who share the same Adventist background and sexual orientation. We welcome our friends who support us and value an inclusive environment. We look forward with keen anticipation to this time of the year when we are invigorated physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. At this time we are surrounded by old and new friends--our extended family.



The venue is Uniting Conference Centre (Bulayu House), 16 Masons Drive, North Parramatta, NSW 2151. The full price for this weekend is AUS\$120. This includes Friday evening supper and catering for Saturday. Dinner for Friday can be arranged at AUS\$30 per head. All vegetarian menu. Sunday will be extra if wishing to attend

Women's Coordinator

I would like to introduce Patricia Veliz. Patricia comes to Kinship with a wealth of knowledge and has offered her services as Women's Coordinator. I have taken up Patricia's offer to look after the women in Kinship. I wish Patty God's blessings in her role as the Women's Coordinator.

A Sunbeam from Ren
Wednesday, October 12, 2005 - 07:21 pm

We only grow by taking risks,
and the most difficult risk of all is to be honest with ourselves
and with others.

- Rick Warren

U.S. Region 2 – Yolanda Elliott

Remember June 13, 2009. We are again registered to march (drive) in the Washington, D.C. Pride Parade. We must line up by 4:30-5:00 p.m. If you are willing to help decorate our truck you can contact me at yselliot@aol.com. I would really love to have our truck make an awesome impression on folks.

Women & Children First, July 13-15, 2009

This year's Women and Children First event is being held in beautiful Mount Vernon, Washington, USA. We will be staying in the Best Western CottonTree Inn which provides spacious rooms, a full breakfast buffet, pool, and free high-speed internet access. Children 17 and under are free in room with one paying adult. Dogs are allowed with a \$25.00 refundable fee. Deadline for registration is June 15, 2009.



Kinship Kampmeeting 2009

– Naveen Jonathan

Kampmeeting will take place in Seattle, WA, July 15-19, 2009. Online registration for Kampmeeting is available on the Kinship website. Please visit

<http://www.sdakinship.org/km2009.htm> to register and to obtain the most updated information about Kampmeeting.

For more information, please feel free to email kmcoordinator@sdakinship.org. *See you all in Seattle!*

European Kinship Meeting 2009 – Mike Lewis

We invite you all, Europeans and non-Europeans, to join us for our 22-25 October gathering. We have an outstanding speaker. His work touches Adventists in many countries. Each Kinship gathering has its own special feel. This yearly meeting has brought people from such different places as Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Scotland, England, Kenya, The Netherlands, France, Spain, Germany, the United States, Norway, Canada, Australia, and South Africa. It is a place where, despite the effects of the Tower of Babel, people who speak many languages find common laughter, common hope, and common ways to communicate with each other.

The meeting will be held in St Marks College, an Anglican (Episcopal) Retreat Centre located approx 40 m / 60 km northeast of London. Parts of the building go back to the 17th century. The accommodation will be adequate, the fellowship fantastic, the scenery stunning, the spirituality stupendous, and the worship wonderful!

St. Marks College



After the weekend you might want to join us also on a vacation at the south coast of England. For more information and registration go to Kinship's website at <http://www.sdakinship.net/sdakinship/ekm/ekm2009.html> and see the back cover of this *Connection!*

You are invited to a weekend of "The Beach and The Book"

We have reserved a cottage in Nags Head, North Carolina, across the street from the ocean, for the weekend of September 25-27, 2009. The ocean will still be warm. We have ordered sun-drenched days. Our focus for this weekend is to have discussions of *Christianity and Homosexuality: Some Seventh-day Adventist Perspectives*, using the discussion questions at the back of each chapter. You can pick which topics interest you. There were be time for walks on the beach, board

games, meals cooked and eaten together, laughter, and making plans for further beach weekends. Some supportive members of a North Carolina Adventist congregation are looking forward to meeting and spending this time with Kinship members. We're going to have a very relaxed schedule. The beach house has three floors, two kitchens, and room to comfortably sleep up to 28 people. \$75.00 covers both room and board. We look forward to having you join us. For more information you can contact Catherine at region1@sdakinship.org. You can register on our website, sdakinship.org, by clicking on "Events." ▽



Cottage in Nags Head



Start a Kinship Chapter in Your Area

Nearly all LGBTI Adventists have
one thing in common
– the need to connect with other LGBTI Adventists.

You can change this
by starting a

Kinship chapter
in your area.

Contact the Kinship office
for more information
at office@sdakinship.org.



Books

*Christianity and Homosexuality:
Some Seventh-day Adventist Perspectives
and
My Son, Beloved Stranger*
can be ordered online at
www.sdagayperspectives.com.

Leaflet

Homosexuality: Can We Talk About It?
in different languages can be printed from
www.kinnet.org/leaflet.

Public Relations Cards

These 4" X 10" rack cards have information on one
side about our book, *Christianity and Homosexuality*,
and can have Kinship regional information on the other
side. They are perfect to have in any gathering place
for LGBTI people, such as pride parades, or other public
events. For more information you can contact us at
communications@sdakinship.org.

connection

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Kinship Europe is delighted to invite you to join us for our Holiday!



After our meeting at St. Marks we will be heading south to Dorset for the week of 25 October to 1 November 2009. The pictures you are seeing here depict our renovated 16th-century country house within site of Corfe Castle. We will be four miles from the ocean. The property includes its own courtyard and gardens. There are large bedrooms for couples and still comfortable ones for those of you who are traveling singly. We are planning a one day trip to Stonehenge, Avesbury, and Salisbury Castle and another that will take us to a local island. Other days will include ocean walks, visits to the castle, tours of the village, and our famous four-course breakfasts and

sunset dinners. To see more of our home for the week you can check out its website.

http://www.dorsetcoastalcottages.com/cottages/602_wellcourt cottage.htm



Cost of lodging for the week at this sumptuous locale is £ 143 (US\$ 230 / € 165) per person. You can register online and pay using your credit card by accessing sdakinship.org. Click Events and then European Kinship Meeting on the link at the left. Or you can use the form enclosed in the postal copy of the *Connection*. Registration form with

cheques in pounds sterling can be sent to Mike Lewis at Lorandene, Milnab Street, Crieff, PH7 4EA, Scotland. You can pick your rooms based on the order in which you register.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact Catherine at katgurian@aol.com.

We look forward to having you join us!



The next *connection* will be issued in August and will report on the USA-Kampmeeting