

connection.

The Newsletter of Seventh-day Adventist Kinship International, Inc. Vol. 34 No. 9 – November 2010

Thanksgiving



Giving Thanks

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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 a global organization which supports the advance of human rights for all people worldwide.

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.

Seventh-day Adventist 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

Seventh-day Adventist 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 Seventh-day Adventist 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.)



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



From the Editor

Many countries and cultures have regular “feast days.” While Americans are known for their obsession with food, we really only have one official *feast day*. We begin making shopping lists in August for our November Thanksgiving culinary extravaganza. New Englanders all eat about the same items: turkey (or Special K loaf), dressing, root vegetables, creamed onions, peas, breads, cranberry sauce, pumpkin pie, and/or apple pie. People in the Atlantic south appear to enjoy candied yams (with marshmallows on top), some very odd (to me) mix of beans cooked in ham jelly (to this vegetarian that would seem to be a call for fasting and prayer), crab, collard greens, and pecan pie. I am certain that Texans must have hot sauce included. Floyd reports that in some Texas places tamales are more traditional than turkey. My favorite memory of my Californian mother’s Thanksgiving meal is her papaya, pineapple, and banana salad. We tend to watch a variety of parades in person or on television. There are some who spend their afternoon glued to the TV watching American football players attack each other. There are some that hike mountains. The one commonality that comes from our history is that this is a day that was designed for us to consider the parts of our life for which we are thankful. To honor that history, this month we gave Kinshippers the chance to share things for which they are grateful. We tried something a little different. Our communications team sent out a broadcast email asking for responses. Thank you to those of you who wrote. We’ll send one out each month to get your feedback on different topics. We’ve continued our series of “We’d like to introduce you to....” We included some news bulletins that concern us to give you the opportunity consider ways to help vulnerable LGBTI people. As I have put this issue together, I realize again how thankful I am for each of you: for your stories, for your courage, for your persistence. For this reason, I want you to take good care of yourselves and to remember that you are infinitely valuable. Thanksgiving blessings to you all.

Catherine



Note of Thanks

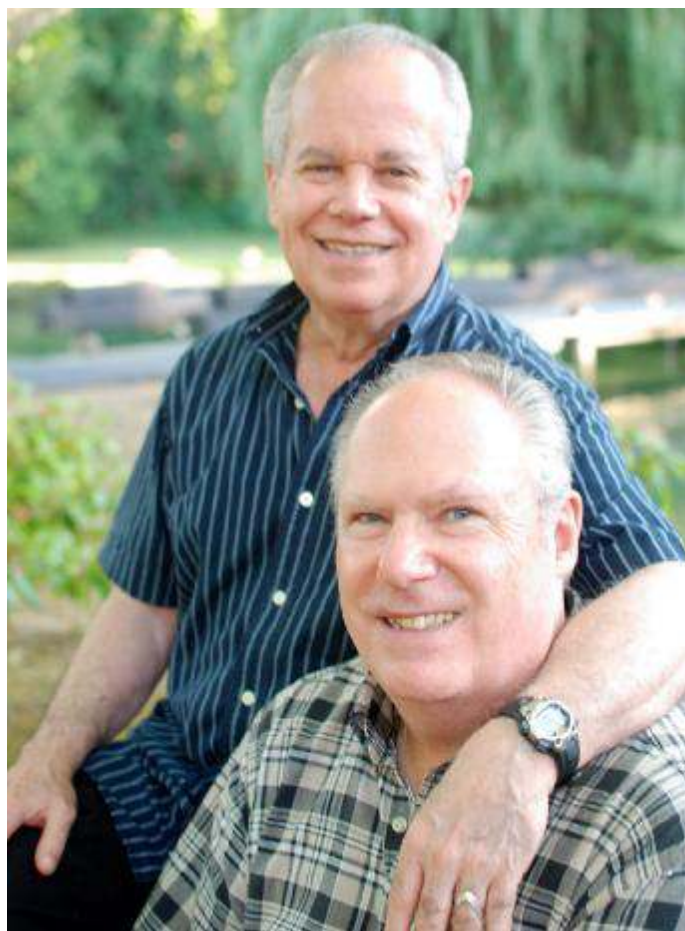
Dear Kinship,

You really know how to pull off a surprise. Thank you so much for everything you did to celebrate our 50th anniversary on the Friday night of Kampmeeting in Atlanta. We know it was a team effort. Your kind and gracious messages brought back many pleasant memories to our hearts. The specific moments blend in our minds; at the moment, we could not believe it was happening. First, there was the wonderful booklet full of love and fond memories. Next, the reaction of Kinship friends to our half-century relationship filled the room. Finally, we saw the incredibly beautiful and delicious cake. What a presentation! It felt like a dream, and all a part of Kinship Communion Service, the spiritual highlight of the year for us.

You are very special to us, and we hope to have many more adventures together.

Love and hugs,

Bruce and Eddie





Thanks Giving Thanks

Thanksgiving is a great time to share what we are thankful for, so here goes. I'm thankful for my former wife, Kathy, her husband Jim, and the close relationship we still enjoy. I'm thankful for my gay son Sid and my straight son Victor, and the love we all share. I'm thankful for two very well-paying jobs that have given me the opportunity to finally be debt-free and start to build a retirement fund. I'm thankful for The Portland Gay Men's Chorus, one hundred thirty wonderful men who are my brothers in song and my extended family. Finally, I'm thankful for all my SDA Kinship friends, both near and far, who have given moral support and encouragement over the years since my coming out in Vermont in 2003.

—Terry Phillips

I am truly thankful that I am no longer a Seventh-day Adventist.

—Braden

I'm thankful for how God has blessed me by giving me a full-time job as a chaplain in a city where an Adventist college is right nearby, and for having the support I need to be as "out" as I can here in Walla Walla. I have such great "gay" support through Kinship, at my Eastgate Seventh-day

Adventist church that supports much of my outlook on life, and from the many people I've come across who individually love and accept me for who I am. And to have this in a polarized environment (mostly right-wing), is truly amazing. I'm learning not to expect acceptance, but to live with personal acceptance of myself and acceptance of others I meet. I'm thankful for living in my first owned house, a birthday filled with love, and friends who act with love.

—Terence Rice

I'm thankful for my friends in Kinship, for the positive difference they have made in my life, and for their willingness to "hang in" with the church—thus modeling for the rest of us courage and grace in spite of [others'] attempts at marginalization.

—Larry Geraty

I am forever thankful and grateful for having Robert Bouchard in my life. Ever since the first day I met him at Andrews University several decades ago (in fact, it was [his] first day on campus and within seconds after he arrived), Robert has had the friendship and patience that I needed from then until this day. Whenever I have needed him, he was there; and

whenever I need him [now], he is there. I have been through a lot; but, as always with my "ups and downs," Robert has remained steadfast and reliable. I love him. I value his true friendship. Thanks, Robert.

—Terry Flowers

As many in Region 2 know, my Astory includes drug addiction and ensuing surrender to God and the 12-step program. Most sponsors encourage you to write a gratitude list, so counting my blessings goes back over 10 years now. I have literally filled a small book with my gratitude list. We can simply say *all good comes from God*; albeit completely true, it oversimplifies the blessings poured out, heaped up, and overflowing, that have been bestowed upon me by God.

I was homeless and now have a home. I was hungry and now am overfed. I was empty in my soul and now I bubble up with spirit. I once felt unloved and now feel loved by many; *but*, most importantly, I know how much God loves me. He first loved me, the one damned by his own mother. God showed me a love so great I now know how that same mother was trying her hardest to show me how much she loved me. Just as God forgave all my dirty sad

past, it's the least that I can do to forgive my mother's misdirected intentions.

We *all* in Kinship have a huge commonality of blessings. Just the things we take for granted every day, when listed individually, are overwhelming. As I write this I am undergoing another trial with my good eye. It seems that my uveal sac is detaching from another part of my retina. This is common and is usually benign in most people; but when there is an adherence to the retina, and it has already been determined you have unusually thin retinas, the threat of another retinal detachment in my lone eye with vision is real and dangerously possible.

But I am blessed with such excellent health care through the Veteran's Administration that they see me relatively immediately and encourage me to come back *any* time I feel the situation changes the slightest. How can I have fear when I know I am being so cared for? It is the *opposite* of God that brings this fear. So how could I possibly feel sorry for myself when I already know that, even in darkness, the God that loves me and has delivered me from my own weakness is there in the dark waiting to comfort me?

It is a good thing I am composing this on my computer, because the tears of joy from knowing how much God loves me would obliterate ink on paper. The tears themselves have a soothing effect on my bad eye that has developed calcium deposits. So tell me, how could I feel sorry for myself? Anyone out there facing *any* adversity, please know that God loves you. In that love is a healing that surpasses anything physical. I remember pain so severe that I asked God to take me. Knowing that there are things worse than death alleviates my fear of even that.

The sad part of my life was just 12 years ago, and the blessings and gifts I have now should prove

to anyone that it does get better. There has been a recent online movement of letting bullied gay youths know that "it does get better," in the hope that suicides and suicide attempts will lessen when these messages are viewed, and when hope and a feeling of not being alone is restored. That also applies to adults and their loss of hope and love. Anyone who identifies with any of these fears or worries or desperation that have been a part of my life, please know it *does* get better.

And now I want to name my partner William. There are no words to express what he has done for me. His love has wrapped me and comforted me even when my lips and tongue betrayed my true feelings. I am definitely one of those who can lash out at the ones that love me (and this, too, brings understanding of how my mother acted in her weakness) when I am undergoing pressure and pain. But he is still here with me, sharing good, bad, and *joyous*. It does get better.

To the publishers (that's you, Catherine), feel free to release my e-mail, my snail mail, and my phone numbers to anyone that would care to talk to me. Please, don't be alone in pain. That is exactly what the great controversy is all about—being separated from God. And we are the feet, hands, arms, ears, and even the heart of God. We have to reach out and connect with each other and bring the message of God's love to each other. I have no idea what God has done, is doing, or will do for you. But I can tell you what He has done and is doing for me. And, if nothing else, what He will always do for me is love me.

—Ron Gainey

I am thankful for my loving wife, a new home, our furkids (cats); and, that after almost two years of looking, Joy has a temp job! I am also thankful for the Ellis/Spencer clan near and far. I am thankful for the ability to share

with people who have been where I have been or where I am going. I am thankful for laughter and good times with friends all over the world. I am thankful for an awesome five-thousand kilometer trip this past summer as my wife and I discovered more of God's nature and saw old friends. On that trip we got to see Grammie Ellis after 7 years. I am thankful for forgiveness and mending fences because, after all, life is way too short.

—Stephanie Spencer



I have so much for which to be thankful, but I think I'd have to put first on the list our precious 12th grandchild, Samuel, who celebrated his first birthday in September and lives not far away.

—Carrol

Last August I was in Eureka, California, for my son's graduation on Friday and his wedding on Sunday. I am thankful for a beautiful and charming new daughter-in-law. A couple days later, as I was getting ready to leave, I received word that my mother was very ill and that the next 24 hours would be crucial. At the airport I learned all flights had been cancelled, due to fog, until the next day. Fortunately, a couple of planes made it in and I was able to get a flight change to Denver (one of many prayers answered).

I made it to mom's bedside ➤

Giving Thanks

that evening to spend some time with her and was able to be with her the next day when she died. I am so thankful to have been with her and to be able to say goodbye and express my love and appreciation. Another prayer answered.

From Colorado we went to Nebraska for the funeral/celebration of her life, and I was able to share some of her life's stories as well as make the casket floral spray. This was a sad but very special time.

From Nebraska I had to get back to Maryland, which meant dealing with the airlines again. There were a lot of hassles and frustrations because I was told I

would have to pay almost \$300 to make the flight change. As I was talking with the airline representative, I got an email from a travel company announcing specials; so I checked it out and found I could get a flight for \$171, which I told the airline representative. He put me on hold then came back and announced they had made a mistake and they actually owed me money, *and* they could get me on a flight at no extra cost. Another prayer answered.

I am very thankful for the way God answered many prayers, for the way He worked out details to make things happen. Another time I could tell you about the three different raccoons who got into

my house. I am thankful they did not do any damage. —REB

I'm thankful for acorns hitting the porch roof, the internet, baby bellies, DMSO, yarn, tears from laughing hard, friends whose lives woven through mine keep mine all in one piece, the smell of food being cooked, umbrellas and boots, planes flying overhead with their red and green Christmas lights on—all year round, iPods, dreaming-snoring dogs with tails pounding happily, fabulous sweat-ers from Goodwill for less than 5 dollars, multi-grain bread, finding the other sock to my favorite pair, Sunday morning traffic, and Rachel Maddow —Rom ▽

A String Too Short to Save

Rom Wilder

It's almost automatic, saying *thank you*. Whether we learned it from our parents or Captain Kangaroo, we know it is polite and expected. We almost notice the phrase more when it's missing.

A couple of weeks ago Akasha, now four and a half, asked me to knit a dress for Taffy, a little stuffed dog. Taffy is about seven inches tall, so I figured I could whip something out in a few hours.

When it was finished, I sat Taffy next to me in her new dress and called Akasha.

She walked in, saw Taffy, and gasped. Her face lit up and she said breathlessly, "She looks like a ballerina!" She hugged the little dog to her chest and rushed to find Lynn to show her.

We've tried to teach her, by example and reminder, to say *thank you* and *please* and *you're welcome* and a dozen other little phrases that bring a certain civility to life. She says all of them and at the right times. It's quite sweet.

Actions speak louder than words.
People can say thank you with their words,

but you get the feeling they really wanted a blue one, not the green one you gave them.

Sometimes a child's face can be so full of gratitude it doesn't matter what words come out. You know they translate to "thank you."

She came back in a few minutes and said the words, and the words were sincere. But I'd already seen and felt her huge thank you. I hope my face matched my words. *You are so welcome!*





As PFLAG National mourns the tragic deaths of Caleb Nolt, Felix Sacco, Raymond Chase, Harrison Chase Brown, Asher Brown, Tyler Clementi, Seth Walsh, Cody J. Parker, Billy Lucas, and Justin Aaberg, along with the countless number of other young people who have suffered from relentless anti-LGBT bullying, harassment, and discrimination, we find ourselves searching for more ways to end this trend. We know all too well that, before taking their lives, these young people endured years of anti-LGBT bullying, harassment, and discrimination that went unchecked by school officials.

In response to these recent tragedies, and in honor of National Safe Schools Day (October 5), we urge you to

take action at your school to prevent youth suicide by stopping anti-LGBT bullying.

We call on you to work in coalition with students, teachers, and other school officials to put an end to anti-LGBT bullying, harassment, and discrimination. Below are 10 simple actions you can take to help build safer schools for all students.

Stop the Bullying

Top 10 Ways to Make Schools Safer

Claim Your Rights

It's critical that school community members know their federal civil rights, especially when they live in states and school districts that lack explicit LGBT anti-bullying protections. Be sure to check out PFLAG's Claim Your Rights Resource Center, to learn about ways you can report unchecked bullying, harassment, and discrimination.

Call Congress

Call your congress members and ask them to co-sponsor the federal Student Non-Discrimination Act and the Safe Schools Improvement Act. Go online to PFLAG's website to find your Members of Congress and make the call today!

Plan a PFLAG Meeting

Organize a PFLAG meeting to discuss what your members can do to prevent bullying and suicide at your school. If you need some ideas on what to include in your program, please contact our Safe Schools Coordinator for ideas.

Organize a Candlelight Vigil

Work with your chapter members, along with other community organizations, to honor students like Asher Brown, Tyler Clementi, Seth Walsh, Billy Lucas, Justin Aaberg, and other young people who have died because of unchecked anti-LGBT bullying.

Plan School-wide Activities

There are simple and important ways to educate the school community about why respect for everyone must be the rule, and not the exception, to address bullying in your school communities. Please contact our Safe Schools Coordinator for specific ideas.

Train and Educate Everyone

Ask for school faculty to be trained to respond to bullying in the most effective, helpful way. To learn more about PFLAG's Cultivating Respect Training Program, go online to PFLAG's website.

Set the Policy

Work with school officials to strengthen your school's policies on bullying, harassment, and discrimination. Please review PFLAG's model policy.

Make a Video

Similar to Dan Savage's "It Gets Better Campaign," consider making a video to tell the world what you're doing to make your school safer. Upload your video to YouTube and send the link to our Safe Schools Coordinator so that we can publicize it!

Write an Op-Ed

Consider writing an op-ed to your local newspaper to educate your community about the impact of anti-LGBT bullying and the remedies to help build safer schools for all students. For ideas on what to include in your op-ed, please visit our advocacy and issues web page.

Know the Resources

Make sure school community members know that they can call 1-800-4U-TREVOR, a suicide prevention hotline; and be sure to share other community resources for young people who are looking for additional help, support, and information.

Please be sure to share your op-eds, along with your pictures and videos from your actions, with rperry@pflag.org so that we can feature them on our national blog.

Thank you for moving equality forward! ▽

Cameroon:**Same-Sex Relations Bring Attacks, Arrests*****Government Should Decriminalize Consensual Activity, Protect LGBT Rights****Yaoundé, November 4, 2010—*

Cameroonians are attacked by police, politicians, the media, and even their own communities if they are suspected of having sexual relations with a person of the same sex, four human rights organizations said in a joint report released today. The government should take urgent action to decriminalize such consensual conduct and to ensure the full human rights of all Cameroonians, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, said Alternatives-Cameroun, l'Association pour la défense des droits des homosexuels, Human Rights Watch, and the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission.

The 62-page report, "Criminalizing Identities: Rights Abuses in Cameroon Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity," details how the government uses article 347 of the Penal Code to deny basic rights to people perceived to be gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT). The report describes arrests, beatings by the police, abuses in prison, and a homophobic atmosphere that encourages shunning and abuse in the community. The consequence is that people are not punished for a specific outlawed practice, but for a homosexual identity, the groups said. "The poor and the young, who often have no way to get legal assistance, suffer the most from Cameroon's abusive atmosphere," said Steave Nemande, president of Alternatives-Cameroun. "Even after they get out of jail, families and friends often reject them. They are denied education, jobs, even a place to live. Their lives are ruined." The report, based on 45 interviews with victims, documents abuse by police, including beatings on the victims' bodies

and even the soles of their feet. Prison guards ignore abuses by other prisoners, including beatings, rapes, and urinating and defecating on the victims' possessions.

Those arrested under article 347 are routinely held without charge in excess of the minimum time allowed by Cameroonian law, the groups found. Judges may sentence them to prison time without credible evidence that they engaged in a homosexual act. Even when judges have dismissed charges, prosecutors have sometimes charged the accused again before they could be freed. Prejudice and discrimination against the gay and lesbian population of Cameroon is pervasive. Women who do not dress or act in "typically feminine" ways are often singled out for persecution. Like men, they can be ostracized by their families or suffer physical abuse at the hands of family members, which is especially difficult in a society where women are expected to remain dependent and in the family fold.

Women suspected of having sex with women can be specifically targeted for rape and sexual attacks in their communities and risk losing custody of their children. They have little recourse to the law because of their fear of arrest and jail.

The media in Cameroon compound the repressive climate, the groups said. Newspapers have published the names of those purported to be gay and invented the term "homocracy" to promote fear and hatred of people who engage in same-sex relations, depicting them as power-hungry, corrupt, rich, and intent on controlling the country.

"Lesbian, gays, and bisexuals in Cameroon are considered lower

than dogs," said Sébastien Mandeng of l'Association pour la défense des droits des homosexuels. "They face great injustice because of homophobia."

The criminalization of same-sex activities has serious health consequences, the groups said. Cameroon does not have HIV/AIDS programs designed to meet the special needs of LGBT people, despite evidence that this population is vulnerable to the virus. The government does not track HIV prevalence and conducts no surveys of behavior in these communities related to transmission of the virus. Furthermore, the government prohibits the distribution of condoms in prisons, although HIV prevalence in prisons is high, male prisoners engage in homosexual sex, and rape is common.

"People living in secrecy are vulnerable to blackmail and abuse," said Boris Dittrich, advocacy director of the LGBT Rights Program at Human Rights Watch. "Arrests may be relatively rare, but the physical violence and mental cruelty against this population are devastating."

Condemnation by international bodies has not been enough to end the persecution of people under article 347 *bis*. In December 2008, during the Universal Periodic Review of Cameroon's human rights practices, the UN



Health Tips of the Month

Human Rights Council recommended decriminalizing homosexual conduct. In July 2010, the UN Human Rights Committee called on the government to stem social prejudice and stigmatization against LGBT people, including in public health programs, to "ensure universal access to HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support." The government of Cameroon refused both recommendations.

Alternatives-Cameroun submitted a petition with more than 1,500 signatures to the National Assembly in November 2009 seeking decriminalization of same-sex relations. However, the National Assembly has not even considered introducing the topic into official discussion.

"The criminalization of same-sex conduct has consequences beyond the obvious unacceptable arrests," said Monica Mbaru, African coordinator of the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission. "It drives inequality within the justice system itself and promotes violence within people's homes, families, and communities. The government of Cameroon needs to accept responsibility to ensure all Cameroonians live free of discrimination, whatever their orientation or identity." ▽

The mission of The International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC) is advancing human rights for everyone, everywhere, to end discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. A non-profit, non-governmental organization, IGLHRC is based in New York, with offices in Cape Town and Buenos Aires. Visit <http://www.iglhrc.org> for more information.

Contact:

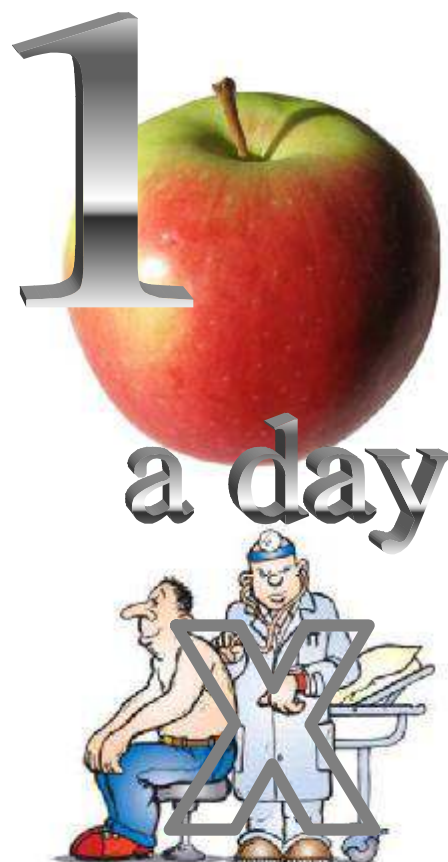
In Cape Town: Monica Mbaru,
International Gay and Lesbian Human
Rights Commission (English, Swahili):
+27-469-3704; or
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Get Skinny with This Whole Grain.

Even though there's a wide world of whole grains out there, it's easy to get into a same-old-same-old rut (steel-cut oatmeal? air-popped popcorn?). Bust out! It's like when you're visiting a new city. You spend day one checking your map at every corner, right? But by day three or four, you know exactly how to get to the metro or your favorite coffee bar. Same is true for trying new grains. Once you've made quinoa, buckwheat, and whole-grain bulgur a few times, they become as easy to whip up as our favorite guacamole (just smash avocado and salsa together—great stuff). Where to start? How about nutty-tasting barley? Here's why: barley is teeming with beta-glucan, a soluble fiber that mops up lousy LDL cholesterol. The soluble and insoluble fiber in barley urges blood pressure down to the ideal: 115/75. Barley's fiber bonanza expands in your stomach and—a slim-down bonus—makes you feel full for hours. Barley (like many whole grains) steadies blood sugar and fights diabetes. There are lots of ways to serve it: straight up as a hot cereal; cooked and tossed into soups, curries, and salads; baked in puddings. Plus, barley mixes brilliantly with parsley, mint, tomatoes, garlic, and olive oil to make the classic Middle Eastern salad dish, tabbouleh. Feeling adventurous? Try buckwheat groats (kasha) or amaranth, a high-protein grain. Want a super-easy comfort food? Try homey whole-wheat couscous. It cooks up almost as quickly as Stephen Strasburg's fastball will fly when he heals!

Immune-System Makeover.

A brilliant prescription for revving up your immunity? Yep, it's just like the old saying: an apple a day. Studies have revealed that pectin, a special kind of fiber found in apples, may help boost levels of immune-supportive proteins. So crunching one a day could very well help keep the doctor away this cold season. Apples aren't the only source of pectin. You'll find it in pears, citrus, and other fruit, too. And in a recent animal study, this soluble fiber helped increase levels of interleukin-4, a compound that stimulates production of infection-fighting mast cells. And, as a result, munching on pectin weakened illness severity and duration in the test subjects. ▽



We would like to introduce you to...



Aafje Bruinsma...

was born in The Hague, The Netherlands, and went to schools in the same area. After twenty-five years working as a translator, she retired and now enjoys reading, drawing, and painting. We know she is also involved in several adventures that raise funds for church-based projects. Aafje could not come up with a favorite color. She says she likes them all. She does have some favorite types of music: modern classical and French chansons, along with lots of other genres. She is married and co-parented one son and one daughter. She is enjoying her granddaughter and one "bonus" granddaughter, the child of her son's partner. When asked to share the most important part of her spiritual journey, Aafje replied, "To find fulfillment and become a better person. Because of that, Jesus is the center of my life." She ran into Kinship through the Dutch Seventh-day Adventist Church and says to us, "Thanks for having me as a guest!"

Tanja Svinskas...

was born in the northern part of Germany and went to schools in her home country. She is a team leader in an import/export company. When she is not working, Tanja enjoys sewing, reading, gardening, and being with friends. Her favorite color is blue and her favorite music is medieval and



medieval-style compositions. Tanja says, "My family has always been there for me, helping me with any kind of problem. They stand by my side. I found out in hard times that I have more friends than I thought. I found out about Kinship from the son of a pastor who supported HAD. When I told him I loved a woman he told me about Kinship. Kinship helps me not feel alone as a lesbian of faith and church. It is helpful to discuss and see faith in a new way. I am finding out that God is bigger than I thought and yet will take care of the little things for me."

Itamar Olimpio Ahsman...

was born in Brazil. He got his undergraduate degree in Brazil, learned English in Ireland, and is getting his master's degree in The Netherlands. Ita works part time as marketing consultant and Portuguese teacher. In his spare time he likes to hang out with his friends, go to the cinema, read, and "be a couch potato with my partner." It was easy for Ita to say blue is his favorite color. When asked about favorite music he responded, "This is a difficult choice but I think it is 'No Matter What' by Andrew Lloyd Webber and the beautiful lyrics by Jim Steinman." Ita has a caring "but very conservative family. It is a delicate, sometimes uneasy relationship but my love for them



is bigger than our differences. I have a very handsome, smart, and loving partner. I feel blessed with him. My friends are my big family, a group of international people with diverse backgrounds and cultures. From this big family I found my 'adopted gay parents,' Ruud and Kees, whom I love very much. I found Kinship by searching online and through Roy, a friend of mine from Germany. After that I met Ruud and Kees who embraced me with love and caring. Kinship has helped me understand myself as a whole person with feelings and sexuality and taught me how to combine that with my religion. At the moment, peace is the most important thing about my spiritual journey. I feel blessed for the opportunity to have met Kinship. I hope the church will one day love us as much as God loves us. With all my heart, I hope!"

Reino Korhonen...

was born in Nurmes, Finland, and went to schools in Tocvonlinna and the University of Turku, Finland. Reino taught biology for many years in Stockholm, Sweden. Now that he is retired, Reino enjoys bird watching, gardening, and reading. He didn't say this but some of us know that Reino is a remarkable gardener who grows world-class roses. We also know his understanding of birds and those he has seen put



Ingrid Schmid...

was born in Altenhundem, Westfalen, Germany. She went to school in Nürnberg and works as a nurse in a doctor's office. When not working she loves being with her grandchildren and grown children, doing beautiful needle work, giving nutrition lectures, singing, and gardening. Any shade of blue and cherry red are her favorite colors, and she "enjoys any style of good music." Ingrid and her husband Frieder have been married for 39 years. (Those of us who know how youthful they are assume they were married as young teens.) One of her priorities is the work it takes to make and keep a close family. She met HAD/Kinship several years ago though a gay friend and says, "Meeting HAD/Kinship friends is an ongoing enrichment to my life; love is above everything. I am glad to know the Kinship community as part of our church. At any time I would stand for you!" The most important part of her spiritual journey is "to understand that God is too great to comprehend and too great to press into a religion."

Frieder Schmid...

was born in Reutlingen, Germany, and went to school in Germany,



the U.S., and England. He is a retired Seventh-day Adventist pastor and administrator (that's a humble description) who has been married to Ingrid for 40 years, which is slightly longer than she has been married to him. He met Kinship through his friendships with gay/lesbian youth, church members, and acquaintances. When we asked Frieder what is the most important thing for him on his spiritual journey, he replied, "It's hard to say. I'll let you know when I reach my destination." ▽

the rest of us in the very amateur category of that hobby. Reino enjoys classical music. His favorite color is green. He has lived with Ingemar for thirty-seven years. Years ago, Reino saw an ad for Kinship in an American paper. He and Ingemar hosted the first European Kinship Meeting in their home. He appreciates the encouragement he gets from other gay Adventists. The most important thing for Reino in his spiritual journey is his trust in God, his Savior.

EKM2010 day trip to Maastricht, Netherlands



Cancer in the United States

The Connection welcomes a variety of opinions on important topics and is glad Algeria is willing to share her thoughts and experience.

Algeria Meszaros

Cancer kills more than five hundred thousand people every year and is the leading cause of death in the United States. According to Dr. James W. Anderson, who wrote Dr. Anderson's *Antioxidant, Antiaging Health Program*, "We are slowly losing ground to cancer. There is no evidence that thirty-five years of intensive research and agonizing treatment procedures have decreased the pain, suffering, and death related to cancer."

Since 1950 cancer has increased in general 44 percent, breast and colon cancer 60 percent, and lung cancer 262 percent (despite cigarette smoking decreasing from 50 to 25 percent). *The New York Times* wrote, "Adjusting for the size and age of the population, cancer death rates dropped only five percent from 1950 to 2005. In comparison, death rate from heart disease dropped 64 percent, and flu and pneumonia dropped 58 percent. We are not winning the war against cancer."

Is cancer truly an incurable disease? A paradigm is a belief system. In the late 1800s Dr. William Halsted performed the first mastectomy because the paradigm at the time was to "purge the body of cancer cells." A century later the paradigm is equally wrong. Chemotherapy and radiation are attempts to purge cancer from the body but damaging to healthy cells.

Dr. Stanislaw Burzynski MD is an internationally recognized physician and scientist. When interviewed for the book *Knockout* by Suzanne Somers, he said, "We in the medical world know, without a doubt, that chemotherapy absolutely, positively does nothing, nothing whatsoever and is ineffective for pancreatic cancer." Dr. Nicholas Gonzalez said, "There are only three kinds of cancer that respond to chemotherapy, if they do, in fact, respond: testicular cancer, some lymphomas, and childhood leukemia." Dr. Ralph Moss PhD has written many books on cancer, including *Questioning Chemotherapy*, *Cancer Therapy*, and *Complementary Oncology*. He probes scientific and statistical evidence to reveal the truth that chemotherapy is ineffective, inappropriate, and, in fact, dangerous for most people who receive it—up to six hundred thousand Americans every year. Once cancer has metastasized, conventional treatment won't do anything. So if we are losing the war to cancer,

and the current approach to cancer is an absolute failure, and we realize the ineffectiveness of cancer treatment in this country, then why not change a failing system? Because cancer is big business—up to \$200 billion dollars a year.

Yet, there is light at the end of the tunnel: alternative medicine. Alternative medicine works by assisting the body to heal itself. All cancer cells engage in rapid cell division. All you need to do is stop the cells from dividing and the cancer will disappear. The National Academy of Science said, "Thirty-five percent of all cancer is related to diet." Therefore most cancers are preventable.

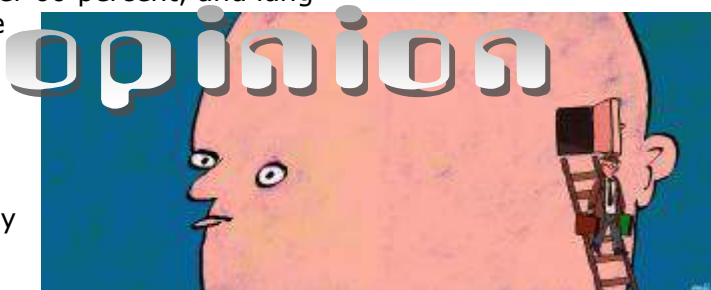
There are different alternative methods to consider, but all are effective. Just to name a few: Dr. Russell Blaylock, an oncologist, brain surgeon, and neuroscientist said, "There is a vital role nutrition plays in controlling and even eliminating cancer. With good

nutrition, a tumor will become very benign in its behavior." Dr. Blaylock has written *Natural Strategies for Cancer Patients*. He has chosen to devote his full attention to nutritional studies and research in order to give his cancer patients the latest in nutri-

tional methods to boost the immune system and fight cancer. Dr. Nicholas Gonzalez MD, graduate from Cornell Medical College, has great success in treating advanced cancer with pancreatic enzymes and nutritional therapy. Then there's Dr. Stanislaw Burzynski at the Burzynski Clinic, who effectively treats more than 50 types of cancer with biologically active peptides called antineoplastons. The list could go on and on.

According to Burton Goldberg, a layperson who has devoted his life to research cancer and has published *Alternative Medicine: The Definite Guide*, has said, "There are two systems of health care that exist in the United States today, conventional western medicine and alternative medicine. Conventional medicine is superb in dealing with acute medical conditions and traumatic injury. But there is no question that alternative medicine works better for just about everything else, especially for chronic degenerative disease such as cancer."

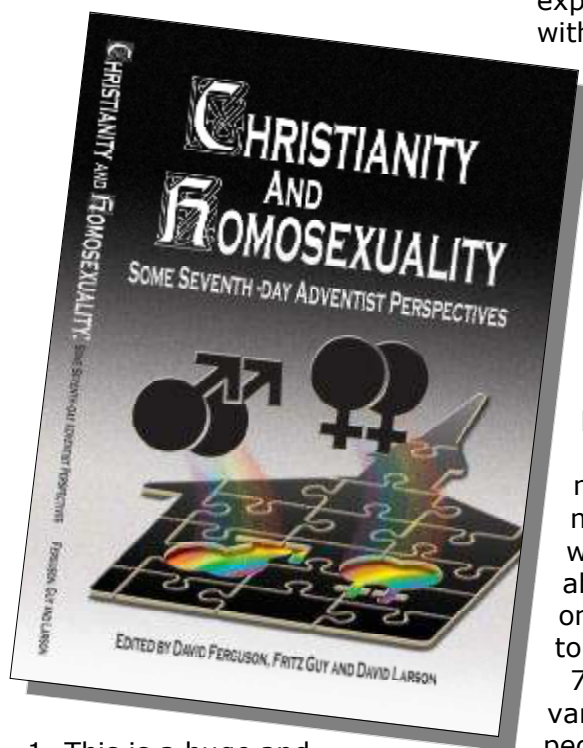
As an alternative health consultant, I studied at Global College of Natural Medicine, and afterward continued my studies in homeopathy and other alternative methods. I've had the opportunity to help "terminal cancer patients" recover from such an awful disease. If you or someone you know has cancer and is taking chemotherapy or radiation treatments, I encourage you to investigate and consider alternative medicine. It could save your life. ▽



What a Book!

David Coltheart

What a book! It has taken me five months to read, reading just a few chapters each week. Some of it is very heavy going, especially the philosophical and much of the theological content. Here are my reflections.



1. This is a huge and monumental effort on the part of the dedicated members of Kinship and their allies for their perseverance, fortitude, insight, and dedication. The book is a labour of love that will stand forever as a testament to their commitment to a just cause. A huge amen to you all! Again and again I found myself echoing the sentiments, either by saying, "That's my story" or "That's what I have always thought/felt." I hope the book is widely read and

distributed to the people who need it most.

2. I was moved, as we all are, by the biographical accounts written by Sherri, Leif, and Carrol. And, I mean, moved to tears. Their stories are our stories and they deserve to be told.

3. I was less than convinced by the theological explanations of the clobber texts. They were not that clear or persuasive; maybe they were too "theological." I am not sure I could lend the book to someone who was looking for an exposition of the six or so texts that are the crux of the debate in Adventism. I preferred the much simpler explanations on the Someone-to-talk-to website (which I have shared with selected family members, friends, and members of my church).

Thank you, Carrol.

4. Having read Pastor Mitchell Henson's contribution, I now know why many of you speak so highly of the man. I never knew him personally, of course (I am in Australia); but I can appreciate the huge contribution he made and the amazing impact that Glendale Church continues to have. God bless Glendale!

5. I appreciated very much the Biomedical Perspectives section, even though some of this material was very technical. I have always had purely amateur interest in scientific matters and found affirmation in reading that I am, after all, "normal" (laugh out loud)!

6. I enjoyed reading Ben's historical survey. It answered many of my questions that have been stored away, pending further information. I heard Colin Cook present a mid-week chapel talk when I was a student at Newbold College. I can't remember what he talked about, but I assume it was homosexuality. He made little impression on me at the time; it was only later that his name had any meaning to me.

7. Much of the public policy issues debate in part 5 I found irrelevant in my situation and reinforced a slowly evolving view that LGBTI people in the U.S.A. have a harder time living their lives than we do in Australia. True, there is still entrenched homophobia and discrimination in various forms in my country; but I get the distinct impression from the book and other sources that we are very well off here by comparison. We don't have the big "church-state" debates that you do in the USA. Nor do we have the First and 14th Amendment legal battles that are alluded to in the book.

In Australia, we have equality and freedom from discrimination in virtually every area of our lives now, thanks to reforms made by the Labor Government over the last 3-4 years. There are only three key areas of which I am aware where there is discrimination in areas that affect me. One is that we cannot pass our superannuation (compulsory in Australia) to our *de facto* partner without being taxed. This is the same for both straight and gay couples. Married couples can pass their super without taxation. We cannot buy health insurance at the ➤

Christianity & Homosexuality

"family" rate while married couples can. But that is a minor issue, really; only about 30% of Australians bother with health insurance. We get free public hospital care and heavily subsidised visits to a doctor under the government Medicare scheme that we all pay for in our taxes. The only other discriminatory law is the Marriage Act (although that is being discussed in Parliament at the moment in a Private Members Bill, but it will probably be defeated). Of course, there is discrimination from the church against Adventist LGBTIs, but that is a different issue.

These cultural differences noted, I want to reiterate my appreciation for the team who put together and is distributing *Christianity and Homosexuality: Some Seventh-day Adventist Perspectives*. ▽

Christianity and Homosexuality: Some Seventh-day Adventist Perspectives
can be ordered online at
www.sdagayperspectives.com

Eden's Gift
You can order this free leaflet
from Katgurian@aol.com



Open Heart, Open Hand
contains stories of three supportive Seventh-day Adventist parents of gay and lesbian children. This DVD can be ordered online at www.sdagayperspectives.com

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



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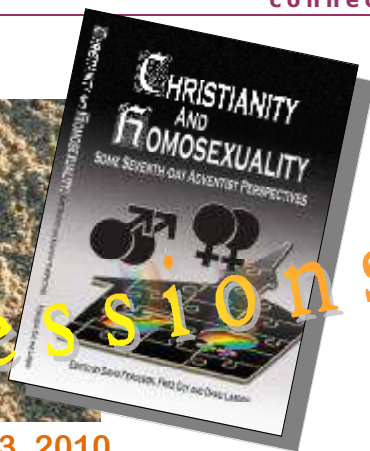
Public Relations Cards

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

The Book and The Beach

impressions

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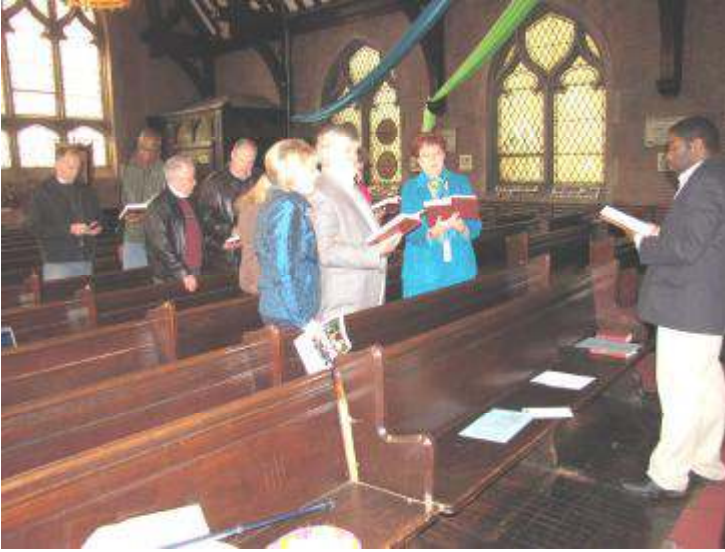
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