



Second European Kinship Meeting in
The Hague, Netherlands
October 10–13, 2003

KINSHIP BOARD

President: Bob Bouchard
Vice President: Taylor Ruhl
Secretary: Bruce Harlow
Treasurer: Karen Lee
Connection Editor: Catherine Taylor
Marketing & PR/Webmaster: Robb Crouch/Dave Gilsdorf
Church Liaison: Leif Lind
Womyn's Coordinator: Yolanda Elliott
Kampmeeting 2004 Coordinator: Fred Casey

BOARD MEMBERS AT LARGE

IMRU: Eric Gilleo
KinNet Coordinator: Floyd Poenitz
Office Manager/Member Services: Fred Casey
Fund-raising: Mark Driskill
Finance: Karen Wetherell
International Coordinator: Obed Vazquez-Ortiz

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Bob Bouchard, Taylor Ruhl, Bruce Harlow, Catherine Taylor, Sheri Babcock, Samuel Pang

CONNECTION STAFF

Circulation: Fred Casey
European Editor: Ruud Kieboom
Photography: Bruce Harlow, Wendy Rickwalt, Denise Proulz

REGIONAL COORDINATORS - USA

Region 1 (PA, NJ, NY, CT, RI, MA, VT, NH, ME) Eric Gilleo
617-524-8210
ericgilleo@earthlink.net
Region 2 (WV, VA, NC, DE, MD, DC) Yolanda Elliot 410-531-5382
yselliott@aol.com
Region 3 (TN, AL, MS, GA, SC, FL) Fred Casey 866-732-5677
office@sdakinship.org
Region 4 (MN, IA, MO, WI, IL, MI, IN, KY, OH) Fred Casey
866-732-5677
office@sdakinship.org
Region 5 (TX, OK, KS, AR, LA) Floyd Poenitz 972-416-1358
floyd@attbi.com
Region 6 (ND, SD, CO, NE, WY, UT, NM) Robb Crouch 402-466-9476
rcdg@foundation.nebraska.edu
Region 7 (AK, WA, OR ID, MT) Fred Casey 866-732-5677
office@sdakinship.org
Region 8 (No. CA, NV HI) Harry Wilmoth 510-523-3461
hwilmoth@earthlink.net
Region 9 (So. CA, AZ) Bruce Boyd 818-708-7448 cinobruce@aol.com
Michelle Cornwell 760-320-1853 mrcandsb@aol.com

AFFILIATED INTERNATIONAL REGION COORDINATORS

Australia Noel Thorpe
sdakinhipaust@primus.com.au
Brazil Itamar Matos de Souza
matos.souza@pmdf.df.gov.br
Canada Brent Lehmann
rblehmann@telus.net
Europe Ruud Kieboom
kinshipeurope@yahoo.com
Germany Roy Ratzer info@had-ev.de
Central & South America
Alexander Gomez Pasco
alexpasco@yahoo.com



Who we are...

Seventh-day Adventist Kinship International, Inc. (Kinship) is a nonprofit support organization which ministers to the spiritual, emotional, social, intersex and physical well-being of Seventh-day Adventist lesbian, gay men, bisexual, and transgendered individuals and their families and friends. Kinship facilitates and promotes the understanding and affirmation of LGBT 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 501a(3) non-profit organization in the US. Kinship has a board of up to 15 officers and 13 regional coordinators. The current list of members and friends includes several thousand people in 20 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, which are often used to condemn homosexuals. Most of the anguish imposed upon God's children who grow up as LGBT has its roots in a misunderstanding of what the Bible says.

Support Kinship

Kinship operates solely on contributions from its members and friends. Help us reach out to more LGBT Adventists by making a tax-deductible donation to SDA Kinship International. Please send your check or money order to the address below.

SDA Kinship, P.O. Box 49357, Sarasota, FL 34230-6375 — 866-732-5677

Visit SDA Kinship's Web Site at: www.sdakinship.org

OTHER COORDINATORS

Intersexed Coordinator: Carolyn Parsons 425-917-0842
cparsons@microsoft.com
Transgendered/Transexual Coordinator: Sandra Hoffercker
sandrahoff@aol.com

Production: Gerry Fox,
Karen Wetherell

INFORMATION

The Connection is published by Seventh-day Adventist Kinship International, Inc. Principal office: P.O. Box 49357, Sarasota, FL 34230-6375; 866-732-5677.

Submissions of letters, articles, pictures, art work, and graphics are welcome. Include your name as you want it published, address and telephone number. If an item is to be acknowledged or returned, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Some connection contributors have chosen to remain anonymous. Pseudonyms, if used, appear at the bottom of this page.

The connection reserves the right to edit manuscripts for length, syntax, grammar, and clarity. Address all submissions to the Connection, P.O. Box 49357, Sarasota, FL 34230-6375. Inquiries and article submissions may also be e-mailed to office@sdakinship.org.

The mention or appearance of any names, organizations or photographs in this publication is not meant to imply a fact or statement about their sexual orientation or activity.

Subscription requests or address changes may be sent to: Subscriptions, P.O. Box 49357, Sarasota, FL 34230-6375, or call 866-732-5677. The Kinship mailing list is confidential and used only by Kinship officers. The mailing list is not sold, rented, or exchanged for any purpose.

© 2003 Connection. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without permission is prohibited. OPINIONS EXPRESSED HEREIN ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF SDA KINSHIP INTERNATIONAL. Member of the Gay and Lesbian Press Association.

Second European Kinship Meeting in The Hague, Netherlands October 10–13, 2003

Near the North Sea, just behind the dunes, almost 1,800 years ago, Romans built their settlement in Kijkduin. Now, adjacent to The Hague, a new, beautiful bungalow park has been built: Kijkduinpark. I picked this spot to host our Second European Kinship Meeting. We were lodged in four star bungalows equipped with kitchens, sleeping for eight and our own saunas. I had to hire a third bungalow when twenty-two participants from eight European countries and the United States enrolled. This was quite an increase from the nine who gathered in Sweden last year! We came together to talk, to encourage, to support each other, and to build friendships. We looked at the future. We discussed ways to change the often negative point of view of the church in general towards sexual orientations other than straight.

My favourite part of our meeting was the friendly atmosphere among the participants. It began the moment everyone arrived and we divided the food and drinks among the three bungalows. All hands worked together and cooperation became the norm for our time together. Every group created its own home for the coming days. We had 28 participants (including some guests on Sabbath and Sunday) and in every bungalow there was diversity in nationality and gender. This mix of persons and personalities was enriching for all. By the time the program started on Friday night most of us had already met and knew each other by name.



We were full of positive expectations for what was ahead.

Gerard, our speaker for the weekend, welcomed the Sabbath and explained the theme of our meetings. The Language of Power or the way the church speaks about certain issues puts its employees and members in a dilemma. They have to choose between loyalty to the organized church and loyalty to the individual member; between the institution and the homosexual person; the impersonal versus the personal. By its use of language the church influences the mind of the individual and their attitude towards a variety of issues or "questions", including homosexuality. Gerhard said our journey is to decide if we will follow the church in all the doctrines listed in the church manual or follow a path of Biblical freedom in our attitude towards our fellow member(s).

During the last part of Friday evening's meeting we all had a chance to begin to tell our stories. We heard many bad experiences with the institution of the church. We heard about much pain and unhappiness. Because of this, some have left the church; some were just

thrown out. We in the local Dutch church seemed to have had a very different experience. Our pastor has been supportive. One of us has even been interviewed in front of the congregation during Sabbath afternoon services so they could have an opportunity to better understand homosexuality and the way we live our life.

During the community singing on Sabbath morning we realized that because we came from so many countries, the only song all of us knew together was "Amazing Grace". Even so, everyone tried to learn the tunes. We used Ed Viera's composition as our theme. It was a nice experience. Mike played the synthesizer and led our voices.

Gerard's morning theme was The Language of Power. We studied the text in 1 Samuel 16-24 where the conflict between Saul and David rises and comes to a climax. Saul fears that his power is threatened by David and tries to take this threat away. Saul's God given task, as a king, to protect righteousness, is defeated by his desire to keep his power. In the church we often recognize the same pattern. Individuals or groups are condemned or marginalized because they are different. Instead of offering protection and a safe haven, the organized church becomes focused on protecting a status quo. It is unable to include those who "ask questions" that might stretch its limits. We've seen this pattern in the 1800's when Jones and Waggoner introduced

Continued overleaf

Kinship Meeting...

righteousness by faith, in the 1900's when women and people of colour wanted to be included in pastoral and leadership roles with equal pay, and now, in this century with those of us who are homosexual.

The attitude of the church (no love) is contradicting its preaching (love). Even worse: the language is often misused. Saul calls to David in the desert with the words: "David, my son!" at the very moment that he is about to kill him. The church (and now we are speaking about the church organization in general, not the local caring and supporting congregations) addresses the homosexual with 'love and compassion', but intends to take away his inner being, trying to 'kill' the homosexual or our relationships, because she demands a change of orientation. Differing views threaten the power of the institution. Everything must be according to its rules, even when individuals are at risk!

At last Saul sends David away. He realizes that David isn't trying to kill him. But he has to leave all the same. He has to leave the place because and only because he threatens Saul's power. This could be the very reason the General Conference broke most of its contacts with Kinship. Homosexuality and other orientations don't fit into the image it has always proclaimed; even when new scientific knowledge and deeper Bible study show that their opinion is false. Recognition of homosexuality as not sinful is recognition of being wrong before. And that might threaten the power and respect the organized church so desperately wants to protect.

The Restaurant at the Bungalow Park fed us the traditional mid day soup, bread, cheese and meats. The Americans are beginning to get used to what we don't even notice is different from their culture. They kept commenting on how much they loved our soups. After lunch we went on a beach walk where many kites were flown up and down

the beach as the wind whipped the sea. Horses and carriages drove along the waves. Dogs came and greeted us from all directions as their owners were out for afternoon strolls. We were beginning to talk together as if we had known each other for years.

Later in the afternoon we continued our discussions with The Language of Resistance and The Language of Reconciliation. Gerard talked about the three stages of spiritual development that occur as we grow from childhood to maturity; from learning to knowing to independent thinking. Many get stuck at the second stage: knowing. Those are the people who rigidly support the leadership by following its ideas. The institution derives its power from that group of believers. Those in the third stage may discover new insights that can help the church to develop. New ideas can be embraced by the church or rejected. When rejected, the church will often resist the idea and will try to silence the speaker. It will cost much energy to come to reconciliation, if at least the individual hasn't left the church already or been kicked out before.

Many gay and lesbian people within the Adventist Church have negative experiences with our denomination; the church in which they grew up and which they have learned to love. Against our will we are put aside, neglected, despite the dedication we have all shown for the church until the moment we came out of the closet. As long as the church doesn't accept us as we are, we cannot return. This causes pain and frustration. There is no caring church for people with this experience; it doesn't exist. It is even worse for people with relatives who live in the second stage of spiritual development. They do not find understanding; only rejection from a second crucial part of their life. They face two facets of their community and their world where there can be serious consequences, just for being!

After this somewhat "hard stuff", it was time to have some relaxation,

the preparing of dinner! Every bungalow received a recipe, in Dutch, for a wonderful curry dish. To make sure there was a chance of having the meal cooked correctly, native Dutch speakers were assigned to each kitchen to translate vital information. Other members of the household cooked, baked, boiled, prepared the table and whatever was necessary to have a pleasant dinner. We talked about all kinds of things. We shared our experiences, good and bad, and had fun, fun, fun! We continued to get to know each other better.

The evening program included Sabbath closure and personal stories. During this last part we could share our emotional experiences - good and bad - about coming out, our faith and the church, our relationship with its members and its functionaries. Some had a long story, others a short story to tell, but we all shared each other's story. It seems that especially in Germany and the US, gay and lesbian people suffer from the attitude of the church. Often they are not tolerated in the congregation or not heard by church leadership. Fortunately the situation in Holland is more relaxed though not all gays there can be open about their orientation.



On Sunday we visited The Hague. Our guide is normally a pilot on the canal but he loves his

city so much that he gives tours as a hobby! He led us around the old city centre. Even those who live in The Hague learned something new! After our two hour walk we had lunch in a grand café. Due to a misunderstanding in the kitchen, starving members of our group had to wait for their food almost 45 minutes. Those who were fed earlier snuck out in search of good ice cream or sun bathed on the plaza. We didn't have enough time to visit the Japanese Garden, which had been a favourite of the possibilities we had to choose from in the



program. I suggested a very good alternative (my own favourite!): the Museum Het Paleis, with its permanent exhibition of the portraits and extraordinary sketches of the Dutch graphic artist M.C. Escher (1898-1972). We caught our bus home, met up with the people who had opted to have a more leisurely day, walked through the dunes, and share a meal in a pancake restaurant by the sea. Pancakes in the Netherlands can come with either fruit, butter and sugar or cheese and vegetables. After pancakes and more conversation...and more pictures...we had a moonlight walk on the sand as we headed 'home' to the bungalows. We discussed our experiences of the weekend and talked about a next meeting until well past midnight.

Looking back we all agree that this weekend was just wonderful. New friendships were made and encouragement was experienced. The accommodations, the program and, not to forget, the weather during this time of the year (!) made it all very successful. The participants are looking forward to

Kampmeeting Voices:

"This makes our lives bigger and our world smaller."

Reino and Ingemar (Sweden and Finland)



R: This has been more than I expected. I did have good expectations but this is better. I like all these people who have

gathered here. Gerard has given us spirituality and intellectual stimulation. We don't always get this much from preaching.



I: For me, it's about expectations. Last night we had interesting and dramatic stories; unexpected stories. It will be good to get follow up. I

agree with Reino about the quality of our speaker and the thinking we have found here. We have found many similarities despite our national differences.

Roland (Germany)



I like meeting other Christians. I get new ideas for our work with HAD (the German GLBTI SDA organization). I like learning new points for my

spiritual life. I am getting new power for my work. It's a wonderful possibility to meet people I know but don't get to see very often. I love the Netherlands.

David and Werner (Spain and Germany)



D: After the beginning of HAD I have been coming to meetings. I like the company of

other people. I would like more Spanish people.

W: I like meeting people from other countries. We are enjoying keeping this group alive. The group and the individuals are important. With them our church cannot look aside.

D: Sometimes I come to the meetings and I find that I miss people. I don't want someone missing me.

W: This is historical because it is in Europe. This is important for Europe.

D: The problem with large groups is that it's not possible to meet in a house now. We are working harder to keep a family atmosphere. **W:** I think it's good to expand our horizons with other countries. **D:** It isn't always possible to go to church each Sabbath. Here I listen to good preachers. I can talk about both my homosexuality and my spirituality.

Joachim (Germany)



This is an interesting challenge. I like to hear what other people are talking about, how they feel, how they are together, how things are

Kinship Meeting...

another meeting, on the same spot, next year. It will probably be held in the second or third weekend of September. Those who want to be informed about our plans can write to kinship@xs4all.nl or check KinNet's website sometime in the next twelve months.

Ruud Kieboom, Kampmeeting Europe Coordinator

Continued overleaf

Voices...

different for them than what I know at home. It is important for me to know how and why people live this lifestyle. Wonderful. It has been wonderful to be here. I have enjoyed getting acquainted with different people, different cultures and different languages. Each person was quite nice. I love the colourful mixture. I appreciate the new ideas.

Nomi and Jorgen (Denmark)



N: It's not a challenge for me to know why we are here. I have been writing to Karen for two years and now I can meet her here. It's like being part of an extended

family. People from all nations have found themselves alone. Here we can speak to people who are gay and lesbian and Adventists. It is difficult because there are not that many.



J: It is important for me to know how to tell people not to be so prejudiced. In church I need to know how to talk about this.

N: It's powerful for me to hear people's personal stories.

J: Christian culture does not know much about gay and lesbian people.

N: To go with Jorgen as a couple is very special. I do not want to do this alone.

Annalise (The Netherlands)



I like the people here. Everyone is included in the group. People here are gentle, not likely to judge. It's very easy to feel at

home here.

Sandy (USA and France)



It's been refreshing to be with people who are like minded; very different from my blimp crew. The spiritual food has been good. I rarely get to hear

English spoken during sermons. Whoo, this is cool fellowship. This is a cool environment. There is something about the sea air and crashing waves that is wonderful. And how can you beat a place with a sauna!!

Floyd (USA and Germany)



It's good to come home. For me it's been a few years since I've been with HAD. I've missed them. I like the Kamp site. I am happy to see the mixture of Europeans and

Americans learning about each other. This makes our lives bigger and our world smaller. It's good to put a face on the text we have in Kinnet.

Gerard (The Netherlands)



We speak to each other. We do not destroy each other. Instead of the language of power, we have chosen the language of Christ.

Kees (The Netherlands)

I have liked this very much. It's been very sociable. There is a feeling of



community. I like to be here because I like to be with Ruud. It's very busy. I'm not used to being around so many people. Perhaps this is

why he likes it so much. I found Gerard's lectures very interesting. He's not just preaching. He gives us a foundation for how we think. We have to speak English or German all the time. It's good practice for my languages. This day of touring Den Haag was relaxing and a good way for us to get to know each other. It's easy to get the impression that we have always known each other and that this is what we have always done. I must confess that Ruud does the most work. I just give suggestions, shopping and moral support. I give indirect help.

Ruud (The Netherlands)

This is great, even for the organizer. I had less tension, in my

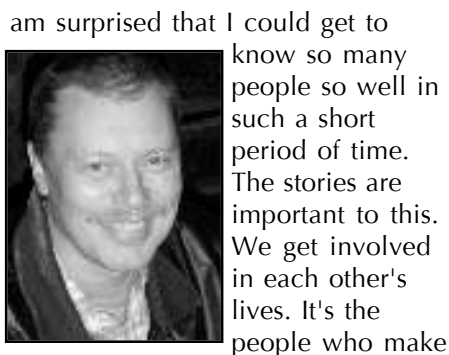


mind at least, than doing the first meeting. As soon as the shopping was done I could feel like we were mostly done. It's fun. From the beginning it's felt like we had good

chemistry. That has continued all weekend. The weather has been perfect. We had rain all last week but somehow this has been beautiful. The people here at the bungalow park have been so helpful and kind. They gave us the extra bungalow at no extra service charge. They gave us extra time in the meeting room at no charge. They thought carefully about the food. They were very nice about the way they approached me. When we began organizing I thought sixteen people would be good. We had 28 people over Sabbath! It's been nice to meet people that I've known only on the internet. People are very much the same as they are on the internet. I was nervous before everyone got here but it's been good. I don't know why I was nervous. I even had support from the Dutch church for this. They want me to write about our weekend for the church paper.

Willy (Norway)

Kampmeeting is always nice. I



am surprised that I could get to know so many people so well in such a short period of time. The stories are important to this. We get involved in each other's lives. It's the people who make this time so meaningful. Sandy is very special to me. It's was delightful to get to know someone who has made a transition from male to female so successfully. Her personality is delightful. The gay-straight couple is precious to me. They are searching; they have a strong desire to find an identity. I would like Kampmeeting to continue because even if we were accepted by the church, we would need each other's company. I think I would also like to have spiritual feeding that is not necessarily connected to our being gay. I like the presenters that lift us up spiritually. For me the strength of Kampmeeting Europe is the group of resourceful people who want to serve. I would like to have a time when we pray and worship and lift up our voices.

Mike (Scotland and England)

I don't want to be negative. I've been very busy over the last six weeks and I've been exhausted. All I've wanted to do is sit quietly and collapse as I go to bed early. Since I organize events, it's been odd to be just a participant. I didn't have an

easy time understanding the different languages. It's quite a different retreat than the MCC group I've been part of for the last eighteen months. Our atmosphere here was more restrained. In some ways this place feels straighter than my MCC church. I was also the only one from England. It was nice to see that there were no cliques. It was

nice to share food preparation and breakfast. I think the personal stories are important. We might be able to listen better if we split them into sessions that were half as long. I look forward to more devotional time; maybe we could plan for prayer and devotional groups that would be together throughout the weekend. It's nice to come to Holland where the church is so accepting. There is a good chance to make a political statement. I loved Stephan's moustache.

Karen (USA)

I think Gerard's talks were very pertinent to what I am going through these days. It was therapeutic to be here. I liked living together like a family. I liked cooking together. We became much closer than if we

were living at a hotel. I liked meeting near the beach and walking along the waves with our group all weekend. I like it that everyone here enjoyed walking. There was a good mix of eating in the bungalow and dining out. I would like more comfortable seating in the meeting room. The chairs were like New England church pews. I would also like time next year for us to talk about issues we have in our lives that are not only just about being GLBTI and SDA. That way we can get to know each other even better. I think it's wonderful to share both joys and concerns with this group. Maybe we could take prayer requests and focus on them over the weekend and the next year. I think it will be easier for me to talk next year now that I know people better. It was great to meet Nomi after writing to each other for 2 years. I absolutely loved hearing all the different languages.

Catherine (USA)

Arriving here with Floyd at the

gate of the airport was like arriving at a family reunion. Kees made us all great soup when we got to their apartment. For me the Kampmeeting flavour began the minute we came out of customs. I

loved being with a group that walked so much. I loved talking as we were on the beach. I appreciate the way everyone worked so hard to communicate with each other. David was amazingly patient with my pigeon Spanish so he could translate into German for folk who didn't speak English. And Floyd, Stefan, and Tania spent hours translating too. I loved the laughter. I loved the sauna! I will think about Gerard's discussion of language for a long time to come. Shibboleth will haunt like it never has before. I am so glad that Sandy came. I loved watching Karen and Nomi together acting like old school chums. I am impressed by Ruud's careful organization of this event and thoughtfulness mixed with great fun. The tour of Den Haag was great for both learning about the city and having time to play with our group. Each person and couple is unique, so special. For next year I need to improve my Spanish and learn some German. Like Floyd said, I think my heart got bigger and my world got smaller.



Letters to the Editor

We would like some. Since the Connection is dedicated to hearing your voice and your ideas, your letters are, in fact, quite vital. You can e-mail, snail mail, phone or Vulcan mind meld your criticisms, complements, comments or queries to us. We would love to hear from you.

Books of the Month

Homosexuality and Christian Faith: Questions of Conscience for the Churches, Walter Wink, ed., Fortress Press, 1999

Homosexuality, Science and the "Plain Sense" of Scripture. David Balch, ed., Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2000.



From Ren:

A bird doesn't sing because it has an answer, it sings because it has a song.

- Maya Angelou

Congratulations to...

Will Petrinko and Russell Haggerty on their wedding this month! If you would like more details on their ceremony you can assess the information at: www.whitehorsestar.com or at <http://north.cbc.ca/regional/servlet/V>

iew?filename=oct13samesexyukon13102003. Click on the little speaker beside "CBC Yukon's Trish Estabrooks' reports on the same-sex marriage issue" under "More On This Story" in the column on the right, and you will get the full news clip played on your Real Player.



Metropolitan Community Church, Troy Perry and many members of our extended community on the 35th anniversary of the founding of its international organization! UFMCC officials report that they perform more than 6,000 marriages annually. They have led the fight to legalize gay marriages in Canada. The church, which formed a year before the event widely credited with giving birth to the gay rights movement, the Stonewall riot in New York's Greenwich Village, now claims 44,000 members in 23 countries, including Australia, Mexico, Cuba, Denmark and Great Britain.

Thank you For Remembering to send any mailing address or email changes or new personal information about yourself to Fred at the SDA Kinship office. The best way is to complete the online membership update at www.sdakinship.org/update.htm.

Did You know that SDA Kinship International operates 100% by the donations of its members, friends and family? One offering is collected each year at the U.S. Kampmeeting. The rest comes in throughout the year. If you would like to support SDA Kinship, send your tax deductible gift to SDA Kinship International, PO Box 49375, Sarasota, FL, 34230-6375 USA.

Are You Using KinNet? SDA Kinship has an e-Chapter called KinNet where members correspond with one another via an electronic bulletin board. With nearly 800 members, KinNet provides a dynamic way to communicate with SDA Kinship members around the globe. Additionally, big plus to joining KinNet is also having access Kinship's member's only website with houses a great deal of Kinship information. If you would like to add KinNet to your daily routine, complete and submit the online application at www.sdakinship.org/ks_kinnet.htm.

Our next Edition...

We will focus on Kinship's Board and The October Board meeting in Vermont. We're planning to include a report of November's Advisory Meeting. We would also like to hear from you about some of your holiday traditions or dreams. We'd like poetry, recipes, stories, experiences or whatever form your voice will take. We'd like to hear what the different regions are doing. Our copy deadline is November 29, just in case Thanksgiving dinner inspires you. We will also continue to include interviews with couples of our community.

Dare to be naive.

--Buckminster Fuller

But can I Trust YOU?

Set-backs in our lives can lead us to lose trust in our leaders; we get frustrated and we feel betrayed. If we do not believe in them, how are we going to believe what they preach? We come into conflict between the message and the messenger.

I believe there are two classes of leaders. The first ones are elected officials, full time workers, part time employees or volunteers. I believe the second class is even more important: those who have no official function but who exhibit a leadership gift, the ability to shape opinions, and the personality to guide people to do what is necessary when things need to happen.

My family became Adventist when I was six years old. I remember that my first Sabbath school teacher was Eva Schubert. My parents stayed in church for two or three years before they quit attending. A short time after that, my father passed away. His tragic death ended a life of violence at home. The mass media turned the story into something even more tragic than it was. The church we at attended kept their distance. Neither the pastor nor the congregation sought us out. When I was ten years old I began to go to church again, without my mother but with a younger brother.

At that point in my life, loneliness, insecurities, fear, and inadequacy were my constant companions; the fruit of troubled schooling and complete ignorance about my own surging sexual orientation. When I was fifteen I again met my first Sabbath School teacher, Sister Schubert. She was now elderly. Her hair was completely white. She still had a loving smile and brilliant blue eyes that shone out and transmitted her love. "My dear pupil, I have constantly prayed for you during all these years" I will never forget that

encounter. She seemed like an angel. She knew what I had gone through at home. She had worried about me. She had been an advocate for me and she had loved me, all without my knowing. She was different from most people; she really cared about and prayed for me without knowing where I was. I felt it.

I learned a lot of things in the church. I took classes at the Seminary that marked my life and my experience with God. I learned many things. However, the lesson that Eva Schubert taught me was the greatest of all, to love. I don't remember any more of what she said, but I do remember the love that this woman with blue eyes and beautiful white hair felt for me without having done a thing to deserve it. I believe in my church, not because of the leaders of my church, but because of persons like Eva.

It is interesting to remember that patriarchs of our church had resistance to an organized church. They were afraid that we would have many of the problems that have become real to us today. I believe in the Message, and I think that God has a purpose for this church at the end of time. I think the church is not the organization, but as Ellen White (who never had a paid position) said, the invisible church of God. God has a plan for His people at this moment. God has a plan for me and I want to do whatever he wants for me and prepares for me to do.

We should not suspend belief in the message because some messengers have failed. At any give moment maybe I've failed as a leader. What worries me is that there are messengers that we never recognize. There are messengers preaching the message that reach the heart. And then many times there are people with good intentions who have taught things that were not true and, for a while, given me a distorted vision of God and his plan of salvation. Examples of misguided teachings include: "If you do not have any stars in your

crown, you can not go to heaven." "A true Christian is never sad" "Do not go to the movies because God is not there, his angels will be outside the door" "...we are the cousins of the other churches".... referring to Christians who do not keep the Sabbath.

"Watch what your hands do, Jesus is watching." "If you really are repentant, you will never do it again" "Homosexuals are similar to animals"

Happily in the same church, I've learned that: Salvation is a gift given unconditionally, that I have the right to feel, that God has given me the ability to feel and express, that only God is Omnipresent, that nobody knows the truth completely, that God is not spying on me just to find faults, that Salvation is a process.

The church also taught me that I am not an animal, a genetic error or an aberration because of my feelings for those of my own sex. Yes it was the SDA church that showed me this. Not the elected leaders but the natural leaders that make up the real church, the community of the saints. Because of this teaching I feel completely sure, understood, complete, and loved just as I am; loved unconditionally. I credit the church members that above all, love. There aren't many, but they make all the difference. They are not perfect, but they know how to love. I hope that some of you might have known some of them.

We have work to do. There are some who go to church that yearn to be loved. If we leave, there will be less sensitive and caring individuals, with the capacity to love. I believe in Eva Schubert. She knew how to love....

"What gays and lesbians have to teach the larger religious community is a profound understanding of the necessity of love, in all its infinite permutations and manifestations". *Wrestling With The Angel*, p256. Brian Bouldrey, Riverhead Books, New York, 1995.

—Pr. Paulo Martinez

Recipes from Europe

Two of the recipes brought to us by Kampmeeting Europe participants are renditions of our Battle Creek roots. Both use corn flakes. One came in continental measurements, one in ways that are more familiar. We hope you enjoy both of these variations.



Cottage Cheese Pie

500 grams of cottage cheese
4 eggs (free range, without hormones and, of course, vegetarian.)
2 onions cut in to pieces and put into a pan with a little oil.
50 grams of hazelnuts cut into pieces
250 grams of mushrooms, cut into pieces and put into that same pan with oil.
100 grams of Kellogs cornflakes.
1/5 litre of milk
1 teaspoon bouillon
2 teaspoons salt
A little bit of soy flour

Mix and put into the oven for 45-60 minutes at 200 degrees C (or their equivalent in Fahrenheit). Our family eats this with potatoes and gravy, salad or other vegetables.

–Thanks to Nomi

Corn Flake and Cottage Cheese Casserole

1 pound cottage cheese
2 Beaten Eggs, of the happy chicken variety.
2.5 Cups of corn flakes
1 small chopped onion.
1/4 cups chopped walnuts
1-2 Tablespoons of a Custom Seasoning Mix made from
1/2 oz Telma Kosher Bouillon
1 dash McCormick Chicken seasoning
1 dash McCormick 'Season All'
1 sprinkle of garlic powder.
1/4 cup melted butter, margarine or your favourite oil.

Pre heat oven to 325 degrees Fahrenheit. Combine all ingredients except corn flakes in mixing bowl and blend thoroughly. Add corn flakes all at once and stir in gently, scooping from underneath and lifting mixture while turning it over. Try not to break the flakes. Pour into well oiled 1.5 quart covered baking dish or 1 pound loaf pound. Bake for 45 minutes covered, then an additional 30 minutes uncovered. Enjoy.

–Thanks to Sandy



Vegetable Curry

2 Red Peppers
2 Onions
Large Can of Diced tomatoes
Small jar of curry paste
3 bunches of bok choy
2 Veggie Foods of the tofu or vegetable scallop variety
Cooked basmati rice.

Stir fry peppers and onions for three minutes. Add veggie food and cook for 2 more minutes. Add diced tomatoes and curry paste for 2 more minutes. Add chopped bok choy for two more minutes. Serve over rice.

*–Thanks to Ruud for the Recipe.
– Thanks to Karen for the translation.*



A Sunbeam

A person will worship something, have no doubt about that. That which dominates our imaginations and our thoughts will determine our lives, and our character. Therefore, it behooves us to be careful what we worship, for what we are worshipping we are becoming.

–Ralph Waldo Emerson

We wanted you to share our sense of what it's like to walk (or cook) between cultures...

Eierlikorkuchen

5 Eier (5 Eggs)

2x Vanillezacher (2x Vanilla)

1/4 litre Oel (1/4 litre Oil)

250 grams Puderzucker (250 grams powdered sugar)

1/4/ litre Eierlikor (egg liquor)

125 grams Mehl (125 grams flour)

125 grams Mondanin (152 grams starch flour or corn starch)

1x Backpulver (1x baking powder)

Cook at 175 degrees C for 60 minutes

–Thanks to Joachim for the recipe. Thanks to Katie and Floyd for research and translation efforts:



...Floyd sent along an alternative that looks something like this:

Egg Liquor Cake

5 Eggs

2 packages of Vanilla sugar

1/4 liter oil

250 grams of powder sugar

1/4 liter Eggliqueur

125 grams of flour

125 grams of Mondamin Corn Starch

1 package of baking powder

Now you will have fun translating the grams to ounces and the centigrade to Fahrenheit...<g>

You will see that instead of measurements, many of the German ingredients come in *packages*...so that makes it more difficult too.

Connections in Europe

