

connection

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EKM6

Live your life out loud, without apologies.

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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, transgendered, and intersex individuals, 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) 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 43 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. (You can also donate, using your Visa or Master Card, by contacting Karen Wetherell at treasurer@sdakinship.org. She will phone you so that you can give your credit card information in a safe manner.)

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

Arrival Stories

Reino and Ingemar left home at 8:30, hopped a flight from Stockholm to Paris and took the train into the city. They got to Gard du Nord train station just in time to see a multitude of people racing for the next train. Reino took off at a dead run with Ingemar fifty meters behind him. As the train doors were closing Ingemar leapt into the moving compartment. They looked out the windows and began to wonder if they had catapulted onto the correct train. Five stops later they realized they had been part of a travel miracle. Grand!! They did not know how they would get from the train station to the conference center but they are intrepid adventurers. As they got off the train they noticed a bus sitting at the tracks. They popped onto the bus and found, sure enough, it was traveling near to the center. At dinner we wondered if maybe it had been an angel bus.

Brad arrived a day early. He got to the arrival point listed in the itinerary and was told there was no bus to get to the center. He went to the last stop and still did not know how to get to the center. He asked around and could not quite get the directions. He asked a young woman. She did not know. But she ran into her house, got her mother and they drove Brad directly to the center. More angels.

Ivan and Melanie got to a place in Antwerp where they drove 800 meters in ninety minutes. We saved dinner for them.



Catherine arrived in Amsterdam Thursday morning. She and **Kees** negotiated Den Haag to find a rental car. **Ruud** drove them all, complete with materials and picnic lunches out of the The Haag. The car oil light came on. They stopped in Rotterdam, got lost and came across an unexpected car dealership for their Astra who filled the car and charged Hertz, not them. Catherine and Kees had an animated discussion about whether or not this was a coincidence. After two coffee stops they all arrived in good spirits at the conference center in time for dinner.

Mike and Absolom drove 800 miles from Scotland over two days.

Floyd and Jeff arrived in Paris on Tuesday. They carefully researched eating places. They hopped a train. They called Ruud. They got a ride.

Joachim and Stefan drove nine hours from Germany. They were one of the first Kinshippers to arrive at the Center. Stefan says the most interesting part is that there was no glitch at all. They expected many problems because neither one of them speaks French. They had some fears about missing the right exit and becoming faced with the need to get directions. They never missed a turn. ▼



Living Behind the Mask

Facilitated by
Lex van Dijk

Lex prepared a series of discussions and artwork based on the various masks we encounter in our lives. He said some of our masks are for protection. Some of our masks are for keeping people from knowing us. Some of our masks are for other reasons. His goal for our time was to explore the masks we encounter in our lives. Some of the discussions and activities took place in our meeting room. Some took place under the apple trees or on the sunlit verandas.

Our Ideal Mask

On Friday evening we made picture masks of what we would like to become. You will see some of the pictures here.

The Church Mask

List your ideas of what the Seventh Day Adventist Church Manual based group of Christians expect of us?

- Seriousness
- No pleasures
- Conservative – in the political sense
- Morally upright – as based by the church manual.
- Honest – no matter what the situation or the harm that honesty might cause.
- Being Helpful – Only think of others, not of yourself.
- Don't enjoy your own pleasures on the Sabbath.
- Be Holy- Be different than what you are on workdays. Be without blame.
- Be afraid of God's wrath.
- When you stick to the rules, God can give you a sense of protection.
- We must be flawless. We must be spotless in all aspects of our lives.
- Live apart. Don't love Babylon. Hate "the world". Be apart from Babylon. Stand apart from community and society. Be different.
- Empathy. We must always be understanding of what other people are going through. We must walk in the shoes of others.
- Conformity.

- No Homosexuality.
- Giving. We must always give to the church.
- We should we should we should...be hospitable, forgiving, righteous, we should be like Jesus. We should be like beacons that guide the lost on their way through the sea.
- We should already be there as we are on our journey.

We need to remember that people who call themselves Christians are not always Biblical.

The Biblical Mask

Which Biblical figures are examples of wearing a mask? Which Biblical figures are examples of not wearing a mask?

Group One

We picked Paul. He had a lot of masks. He was a Pharisee. He was a Greek, a Jew, a Roman, he was a servant, a tent maker. Are these roles or masks? When Paul met Jesus he developed the ability to look like a Roman to Romans, a Greek to Greeks, a Jew to Jews in order to show Jesus to others in their own environment. His motive was to show Heaven to others.

Group Two

God doesn't look at the outside. He looks at the inside. He looks through the masks that we are wearing. We chose Annanias and Saphira. They were wearing a very thick mask of honesty when they were dishonest. They died because of their harmful masks.

Group Three

We came to believe that the masks are what separate us from God. Wearing a mask loses our innocence. We had an animated discussion of Judas. Catherine thought that Judas wore a mask of loyalty when in reality he was a thief, power monger and betrayer. Floyd and Kees thought of Judas as a best friend who used his relationship to facilitate the

crucifixion. We also talked about David who had no mask when he was younger, got a mask of power as king and then was unmasked and chose to keep the mask off when Nathan confronted him with the harm he had done to Uriah and Uriah's family.

Lex talked about Jesus meeting the Samaritan woman. She came to the well wearing a mask. In a lovely way he showed her how she was suffering from her mask. He did not condemn. He helped her to look at herself for how she was. He helped to free her from the things that weighed on her. In that freedom from her concern about others, she went into the village to share and to show the love of Jesus. He also talked about Daniel. We often use Daniel as the perfect example. We are taught that in every occasion we should testify of our faith. Right from the start he did not have a mask. He was willing to risk his life. Esther, on the other hand, was in almost in the same situation as Daniel but her uncle told her to wear a mask. "Don't mention that you are Jewish". That mask helped save the life of her people. There are songs about Daniel. But there are almost no songs about Esther. She is rarely mentioned as an example for Christians. But with her as an example, we should not think that living without a mask is the only true way. Sometimes masks are necessary. We just need to be able to choose when and where we use our masks.

Blind Bartimaeus came to Jesus as he was. In his need. Vulnerable. Without a mask of self sufficiency Bartimaeus could be healed. There should be moments when we throw away our cloak and everything that is hiding us from our selves, our partners, our fellow mortals and be ourselves. That is a very appealing freedom that the Bible offers us.

The Psychological Mask – a story from Lex

A few years ago two parents came to me to tell me about their seven year old son who was afraid of everything: football, sleeping, going upstairs alone, especially afraid of running into a monster. My children have been afraid of foxes, snakes and pigs. These kinds of fears can affect a social life. The boy came in to see me and I said to him "I hear you are afraid of monsters". He looked at me and said "Monsters don't exist". I said "That is right but where in your house are monsters?" He replied "In the attic, the kitchen and in the basement". So he had the information he had heard

from adults in one part of his head but not another. I asked him if he would like to get rid of those monsters. He said yes. I told him we could go to a shop and get a mask. We would go to his house, ask his parents and siblings to sit in the living room and we would go upstairs and scare away the monster. He agreed. He picked the mask of a bear. We went to his house. His family agreed to stay in the living room. I thought he might go into the room but he was afraid to do so without me. We agreed that he would put on the mask, that we together would stand behind the door, leap into the room screaming, I would run and open the window and let the monster out. We screamed, we stamped. I opened the window and said with confidence "There, he is gone now." We did the same thing in the kitchen. I told him he could do it himself in the basement. I heard from his family that he had done so. The monster did not come back.

We are not always facing monsters like this little boy but we do not use our masks to protect ourselves. Our faces are what we use to address the world. The Bible says our eyes are our windows to this soul. The face is very important to our social interactions. Our facial mask protects this entry to the world. Uniforms can be the "mask" for the whole body: military, police, medical.

I have a love/hate relationship with my mask. Sometimes it is useful. Sometimes I really hate my mask. I would like to see myself as an open minded friendly outgoing person. But I cover my face with a beard. Most masks begin to develop when we are young. We discover what other people like. We discover what we are good at. If we are friendly and friendliness is rewarded, we use friendliness to get what we would like. In that way we are shaped; we are made who we are. In that way we grow up with a mask. We often don't think about if we want to keep our masks. It is my opinion that our masks always include our most positive qualities. I think we should not get rid of our masks because we would lose a part of ourselves that is positive. Our masks protect; they give us the opportunity to do something that otherwise would not be possible. We should just thoughtfully choose how we will use them.

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Behind your Chosen Mask

Live your life out loud, without apologies. If you feel you must apologize, then change your life.

Go out and discuss this invitation...

Group One

This quote lead us to many different thoughts. At first I thought it was almost impossible. Many times in my life I felt like I had to apologize; for even being born. This was not just about being gay. And this quote was not about saying we are sorry if we cause harm. Before the coming out moment we often have a lot of fear. We are denying everything we knew before.

Group Two

Does this mean "I'm sorry I stepped on your toes" or is it an apology for being the real us? If we have to apologize for being ourselves, we are cutting our lives and our health short. We talked about what it means to live our life out loud. I think this means being proud of who we are. It is not just living our life, it is proclaiming. For some people it takes a lifetime to get to this place. For others it is not such a long journey. For everyone we talked to, coming out, lifted a heavy burden from our shoulders. Sometimes we have to figure out what "living our life out loud" really means. I

think before coming out, people are actors. There comes a day when we are clear. The day when we realize we are a bad actor, is the day to "close down" that show. But there are societies where it is dangerous to be open about being gay or other parts of our lives. It is difficult to live out loud in some societies because it is dangerous.

Group Three

We talked about the difference between apologizing for an action and apologizing for living a full life and having an identity as a whole person. If we keep apologizing for being a whole person, that is what we must stop. There were two people who originally disagreed with this statement because of a different understanding of its meaning. We also talked about letting some things happen in God's time and not always according to our agenda. I think part of our journey we need to understand when we are wanting to push things faster than God might have wanted.

Communion

As a surprise Lex brought all the materials we needed to have communion. It is the way we ended our day.



What we Learned on our Field Trip to Paris

One of the traditions of European Kinship Meetings is a Sunday tour of local places of interest. This year there were four different groups that went to Paris. The group of sixteen had several revelations about their travels that day.

1. Just because someone tells you there is a big parking lot near the train station does not mean you can find it.
2. You cannot buy train tickets on the train in France. You need to buy them at the station.
3. Should you forget to buy your tickets where you board at St. Prix, you can hop off the train, en masse, and buy your tickets at the next station. This saves some money.
4. One of the really nice things about cell phones is that when you realize you've left half your group in St. Prix, because they had the forethought to get their tickets at the right place, you can call them and arrange to get on the same train they boarded.
5. When you get to Gard du Nord it is indeed possible to hang around like a litter of puppies for twenty seven minutes while Ruud, Jeff and Floyd find metro tickets and excursion suggestions.

6. You cannot use your train tickets to get through the metro stiles, no matter how many times you try.
7. It is indeed possible to get to the Louvre, realize you are three hours behind the schedule on your walking tour guide and gracefully grin, wait for several men to go to the toilette, miss the art, and head out for the next adventure.
8. Vegetarians can generally eat in Paris as long as they stick to sandwich stands, Italian restaurants, and crêperies.
9. The Tuilleries are a lovely place to eat our sandwiches.
10. There seems to be no surprise in running into the art museum group as we stroll along the Seine or into Reims as we wander out of the Saint Chapel. After all Paris only has ten million residents.
11. No one will feel spied upon when Annelies views them from the top of a very tall and scary ferris wheel.
12. It is indeed possible to have a group of sixteen people stop thirteen times on the Champs Elysées for such things as crêperie breaks, research into the cleanliness of the free toilettes, avoidance of McDonalds, photography opportunities in the middle of the boulevard and getting lost.

13. It is possible to get to the Arc de Triomphe without getting run over.
14. It is possible to go to the Eiffel Tower with a large group of people and be perfectly content to go nowhere vertical.
15. It is also possible to miss the last train from Paris that will drop you off at St. Prix near your conference center.
16. It is possible to walk from the station where you are dropped off and, with the help of a slightly inebriated fellow train traveler find your way into town.
17. It is possible for Ruud to walk the entire way to the next town and realize as he gets to the car park, that he left his keys with Kees where the rest of the group was waiting.
18. It is possible to loiter near the St. Prix station for forty minutes without being arrested at midnight.
19. It is possible for this entire disheveled and tired group to get back to the conference center at about the same time.
20. It is possible to still like each other at the end of the day.



Kinship Europe Business Meeting

Should we continue to include as many heterosexual people in our EKM meetings?

1. Yes because many LGBTI people need to know that heterosexual Seventh-day Adventists accept and indeed love them and want to be part of our community.
2. Yes, because this is a way that straight Seventh-day Adventists can get to know Kinship members.
3. Yes, because this is a place where church leaders and Kinship members can have the kind of conversations together that we could not have otherwise.
4. Yes, because we like to be a sanctuary for a variety of people.

EKM7 2008 in Bremen, Germany

We are planning to have our meeting in the first week of September. We will have three venues so that people can choose their price range: sleeping bags on the floor of the church, very comfortable youth hostel, hotel. All activities will be very nearby in the city. The local congregation is excited about having us join them and has invited us to attend the church services in German with translation. We are planning on renting a holiday house together for the time afterwards. We gave Catherine several CDs that show pictures of our area so she can show them to Kinship Board members.

EKM8 2009

We decided not to go to Turkey because of the safety factors in increasingly conservative and Muslim Turkey. Mike Lewis has offered to coordinate our meeting for that year. He will be looking for locations either in Scotland or near London. There were several requests to have Newbold College be our venue. Mike will be looking into that option. He will also be investigating a site near Oxford and several lovely places for the holiday afterwards.

Pamphlet on Christianity and Homosexuality

Floyd and Carrol Grady have developed this offering. It is now being translated into Spanish, Portuguese, German and Swedish. Plans are to make it available in PDF form so that it can be mailed out to anyone with an e-mail address. When it is available Floyd will let Kinship know in both the Connection and on the Internet.

May 3 Meeting 2008

Kinship Europe is planning a leadership support session. The agenda for this meeting will be: 1) A time for each attendee to talk about how they are doing personally with their church community and with their spiritual journey 2) A time to share the work they are doing in their various regions or countries 3) Updates on EKM 7 in Bremen, Germany and plans for future European Kinship Meetings 4) Planning ways to use the Homosexuality pamphlet designed by Floyd and Carrol 5) Discussing ways to use the book Homosexuality and Christianity: a Seventh-day Adventist Perspective. One specific plan for the near future is to invite Seventh-day Adventist pastors from various regions in Europe to have a meeting to discuss their reactions to the book and how this will affect their work with GLBTI people with whom they may come in contact. ▼



We Would Like to Introduce you to...

Absolom is a thirty seven year old native of Kenya. In 2002 he headed north to Glasgow, Scotland



where he is now in his final year of nursing school. He would like to specialize in issues of the skin and work

in nursing homes and other places where people might be confined to bed. He regularly attends church in Glasgow. He was recently granted citizenship of the United Kingdom. He speaks five African languages as well as English. Reports are that he is an interesting travel companion. He attended the Dunblane European Kinship Meeting in 2005.

Bradley is a native of Australia who has traveled through much of the world. He is now living in Edinburgh, Scotland where he



attends the SDA church when his traveling allows. He is a member of the potluck lunch team. When not at church,

weekends find him traveling to a wide variety of European cities. This year he has focused on being part of Pride Days in as many venues as he could fit into his frenetic schedule. He works at whatever jobs will help fund his passion for traveling. He plans to return to Australia this November, at least for a while. This was his first European Kinship Meeting.

Joachim was born in Sassnitz in Eastern Germany. It is on the largest island in Germany. When



The Wall came down he was able to move to another part of the country. He is forty-six years old. He is trained

to work in medical institutions as an office manager in the finance department. He met his husband Stefan at a HAD meeting in Germany nine years ago. They have lived together for six years. He loves photography, history and touring church cemeteries. He enjoys life. He and Stefan have a great love for their church and are very active in their local congregation. He loves to cook. He appreciates Kinship because there is a place where we can be both gay and Adventist; where we can learn more about LGBTI people, their thoughts, experiences. He is grateful to be part of building a community for people like us.

Kees has lived his life in Leiden and other parts of The Haag. He



attended Leiden University where he studied History and Semetic

Languages. He works as a translator of Hebrew Literature and is a Board Member of the Society for the Promotion of Knowledge of the Hebrew Language. He is known for his great soups. His

hobbies are reading and jogging. Kees has been married to Ruud for thirteen years. He is a delightful dinner conversationalist and someone who can keep a group in gales of laughter. Kees speaks Dutch, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, German, English and some French.

Melanie was born in Zeist in the Netherlands of Indonesian, German and Dutch heritage. She studied art history and psychology



in College and has a graduate degree in psychology. She works in a nursing home and care center for the elderly where she provides

therapy, consultation and research services. Her patients include people with Korsakov's Syndrome, dementia, and psychiatric patients who do not get regular treatment but still need residential supports. She is fascinated by logic puzzles. She has carved soap stone, enjoys sleeping, is a holiday hiker and has a remarkable ability to organize and clean environments. For many years she has toured with the Advent Youth Choir of The Haag. She speaks Dutch, English, German and some French, Papiamento and Indonesian words. She likes cats. She is known for her consideration of others and her care for those in her life. She is very easy to be around. She is a fan of feta cheese, olives, and poffertjes. She makes a mean omelet. ▼

Kinship Europe on Holiday

Another tradition of Kinship Europe is the opportunity to share a vacation together. This year Ruud and Mike rented a house on the very edge of the Bay of Biscay in Bretagne, Brittany. The travel group left at noon after the business meeting on Monday.

Monday – It is six hundred kilometers from Paris to Argenton. Catherine figured it would take about 7 hours. The rest of the group looked at her askance and calculated tea time, dinner and rest areas. Ten to twelve they said. They were correct. We arrived by dark of night and the sound of the waves against shoreline rocks. The house had been correctly deemed charming. This means an incredible view, a kitchen smaller than a walk-in closet, three bathrooms where you can bathe. Some toilets appeared in nooks and crannies. Bedrooms were filled with old furniture and duvets. There was the requisite arrival tea, unpacking bustle and everyone fell into bed promptly at 1 AM.

Tuesday – Almost everyone was up and active by 10 AM. Mike had walked into Porspoder to the boulangerie to purchase fresh bread. We put together breakfast out of his gathering as well as the picnic items everyone had stashed into their cars: one kiwi, one apple, crackers, some jam, peanut butter, yoghurt, milk and juice.

Mike had researched a shore path within walking distance of the house. We found a dolphin rescue center. We peeked into the pens but could not find any rescues. We investigated all the little islands and peninsulas in the area and headed back three hours later for postcards and tea. Then of course there was the requisite rest time, more tea and shopping. Mike shared some potent feelings about shopping with groups so Melanie, Kees and Catherine were amazed that he did more than just drive them to the store. He toured around, contributed to the shopping cart, found great items, suggested delicious ideas and came out speaking to every one. The entire group could have fed a conference for a week but was sure more trips would be needed. Dinner preparation began at seven and dinner included watching the sun go down. Mike had prepared a week's worth of evening worships. For those of you who have never had the chance to experience them, we recommend them. They are entertaining, thought provoking and heart filling.

Wednesday – Melanie sets a remarkable dinner and breakfast table. The group was up promptly by nine this morning. Breakfast was a brisk ninety minutes and three courses long. Mike suggested a short but beautiful two hour walk. We were in the cars by noon. The town where we would

leave them while we headed back to Argenton had a café waiting so after touring the harbor there was the requisite coffee...and Perrier for Catherine. Four hours later the first hikers arrived at the house. On the way Mike tried rock climbing, Ruud suggested that Catherine call Karen so she could share a little of the beauty of the day, Ivan took 175 photographs, Melanie got a sunburn despite dressing like Lawrence of Arabia, Annelies inspired everyone to get a walking stick and Kees found navigatable passages through low tide ocean streams. Mike and Catherine were sure there were web cafes in the area despite all indicators to the contrary in Paris and in the guide books. Mike shopped while Ruud translated the search through five towns, one supermarket, two bars and various people on the street. Nothing. Someone said you can find an internet sight in the farthest corners of India but not on the coast of France. They gave up, went home, cooked dinner, ate by the candlelight of the worship candles purchased at St. Samson's Chapel and ended the day with Mike's rather remarkable worship of the Mount of Transfiguration. You will have to...well, don't ask him for details. They will take away the surprise. Ask him to do it at one of your gatherings.

Thursday – The guide book says that anything interesting in Brest was destroyed in WW II. For Mike

and Catherine that was not quite true. They had run out of other options for internet cafes. Mike got out his map and headed to the east. Before leaving he put the avocados out to sunbathe in hopes they might ripen while still on holiday. Mike and Catherine arrived in Brest, headed for the city center and asked directions in some barely intelligible combination of French and English. After seven stops the clerk in a travel agency personally walked them down the road and escorted them into a cyber café. Voila. It was like finding the Holy Grail...unless of course you are not used to using French key boards. Catherine never did find the period with which to end sentences. All communiqués from her looked like something from an agitated telegram. Mike finished his work and wandered off for an hour. He ate lunch. He shopped for the house. He came back and Catherine was down to 130 e-mails and some peeping and muttering about not being able to find the “m”, the “a” or any number. He took her postcards to the post office did some more sight seeing. Catherine signed out two and half hours later leaving 50 unanswered e-mails. Mike reported that the tour book had an accurate assessment of the architecture of the town. It was however filled with quiet streets, very kind people and the much desired internet access. To recover from our attempts to be constructive Mike toured us through St. Mathieu Abby and Lighthouse center. Like all places on this coast it had an

extraordinary view. The Dutch were so excited to have the house to themselves that they got out the vacuum, the mop, the cleaning cloths and performed their annual sanitation ritual. People who let their holiday houses out to tourists should pay this group to come and stay. They did say they made time for a walk across low tide, some jogging to St. Samson’s Chapel and of course tea in the garden overlooking the harbored boats.

Friday – If you think you may stop at a French rest area, you should probably bring a roll of toilet paper. Other facts that might be helpful to know are that the people of this area consider themselves Breton more than French. Breton is taught in the schools. The Breton flag is flown on the boats. The Breton people consider themselves connected as much to the Irish, Welsh, Scots and Cornish as any other nationality. This countryside looks very much like Cornwall and the west coasts of Ireland, Scotland and Wales. We think there may be more flowers and slightly warmer weather. Mike created another day of adventures. He warned us that we should plan on arriving home much after dark and dinner. We grab gear for three days in several climates, six cameras and bags of snacks. Mike climbed into his car with the hope that the rest of the crew will appear in a somewhat precipitous fashion. After a brief thirty minute flurry everyone is packed into two cars and headed off for St. Marie and the Hom-Menez. This hill is the highest point in Bretagne and indeed,

even through the mist we can view the sea. On the way up the hill we noticed a church that we just had to visit. On the way back down we popped in. Sometime in this next year from our 2000 photos you will probably see pictures in the Connection. Next, Mike tours us off to Morgat, where we find a creperie on the edge of the low tide sand. Everyone insists they are not hungry and proceed to eat a two course meal. To work that off, we buy tickets for a boat tour of the local grottos which are absolutely amazing. I don’t think the photos will do them justice. One last surprise. Mike guides us up to Pointe de Pen-Hir with extraordinary cliffs, an emerald green sea, a memorial to French mariners and a pre-historic stone circle. We watched the sun almost sink into the water but were off to dinner before it disappeared. We did drag in around 11:30 PM. I don’t remember crawling into bed.

Sabbath – Melanie and Ivan woke up quite early, in a war with a mosquito. Melanie proclaimed them victors, with some injuries. As I wander downstairs at the crack of 9:20 Mike has set the table and is making fruit salad. Ruud has finished drying yesterday’s laundry. Kees has kept track of community funds. Annelies is already planning for dinner. Mike has found us an afternoon walk with a chapel. He is preparing a worship service. Melanie begins the day by cleaning the dirt and bugs off car windows so we can see when we catapult down the coastal roads. As always there is music floating

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Holiday...

through the house. The rains have finally come but we see blue sky in the distance. The hills are beautiful. The scenery wonderful. Annelies has made sure we have food for the day. Requests are for a Kees soup. He really does make some of the best we have ever eaten. This is a slower day than we had planned for. We read. We look at the sea. We don't do everything for which we have planned. We eat dinner to an extraordinary sunset. We begin to clean. We scrub the kitchen, we water the plants, we sanitize the bathrooms,

we pack our stuff to leave. And that is only what we do in preparation for cleaning.

Sunday – More sanitizing, floor scrubbing, dusting. Ruud says now that the bathrooms are clean we should not use them. He does not quite get his way as the travels will be long between rest areas. We hug Mike good-bye. He is heading south to Karnak. (Not as far south as you may think. This is in France.) We gather for the last time as a group and pray for the journeys. We know we are

heading for a variety of them, geographic and personal. The lowlands group heads north past Mount St. Michele and the Bayou Tapestry. We never do meet up due to some Laurel and Hardy miscommunications but we have a grand time.

We invite you to join us next year.



Resources You Might Find Helpful

Kinship Australia's News Letter is out on the web. http://www.sdakinshipaustralia.org/pdf/KinshipNewsletter_Oct07.pdf. This is a great way to hear about what Kinship is doing down under!!

Carrol Grady passed this along to us. The US Public Broadcasting System (PBS) is airing a documentary called "Anyone and Everyone" by Susan Polis Schutz and a film production company called Iron Zeal. Susan is a poet, has written books and has her own line of greeting cards called Blue Mountain. Her film shares the stories of gay and lesbian people with their families. There are various economic and cultural groups. Religions represented include: Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints (Mormon), Catholic, Hindu, Jewish, Baptist, and Presbyterian. The film costs 13.95 with no shipping charges and can be ordered by calling 1 800 525-0642

For Kinship Older Adults, Ren Reynolds writes to tell us to "Admit You're a Senior -- Flaunt it!!!" Joan Rattner Heilman, , author of Unbelievably Good Deals and Great Adventures That You Absolutely Can't Get Unless You're Over 50, says "No one likes to admit

that they're over the hill; that they're a senior citizen. Get over it." Senior discounts kick in when you're as young as 50 -- and can add up to significant savings. Modell's and Banana Republic both offer discounts of 10%, Marriott reduces its room rates by 15%. If you're self-conscious about announcing your senior status to the entire store, consider signing up for AARP, suggests Heilman. The annual membership quickly pays for itself. Plus, presenting your ID card at the register is a quick (and silent) way of inquiring about discounts. A roundtrip adult ticket on Southwest Airlines from Washington D.C. to Seattle on Sept. 13-16 costs \$698. A senior ticket, for fliers ages 65 and older, is just \$328. You'll save 47%. Most businesses give you a least 5% off.

New Online Exhibition Portrays History of LGBT Synagogue

A new online exhibition has been unveiled that provides an in-depth portrayal of the history of Congregation Beth Simchat Torah, the world's largest synagogue for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) persons and their families and friends. The exhibition currently includes more than 70 artifacts, including organizational documents, newsletters,

Kinship Transitions

Wedding – We would like to offer our congratulations to Canadian Kinship Members Bev and Sue!!



Davis-Stenhouse Birth – Tuesday October 30 at 4:48pm, Erin Davis-Stenhouse gave birth to our newest daughter. Her name is Tegan Skye and she weighed in at 7 lb 4 oz, is 19 1/4 inch long, perfectly healthy, and cute as a button. Mom and baby are doing great (Erin



was a total rock star!). Chloe met her new baby sister the next day. Needless to say, we are thrilled beyond belief with our new addition! -Elena Davis-Stenhouse

Brown – Laurel "Laurie" Jeanne Donesky, mother of Jeremy Brown, passed away on October 9, 2007 after a 3 year fight with cancer. With the help of Carol Grady's group and her own personal searching, Laurie became very supportive of the SDA LGBT community. She graciously hosted IM RU? events and attended various Kinship events. Laurie will be missed by family & friends. Laurie is survived by her husband Garry Donesky, sons Jeremy & Eric Brown, sister Cherie Morgan & parents Phyllis & Warren Wright. We would like to extend our love and our condolences to Jeremy Brown on the death of his mother. ▼



media articles, liturgical materials and photos, in digital form. The exhibition is presented online as one might see it in a museum; organized thematically into rooms with display cases containing artifacts and narrative descriptions. The exhibition is a collaboration between Congregation Beth Simchat Torah and the LGBT Religious Archives Network. This online exhibition of the history of CBST can be viewed at: www.lgbtran.org/exhibits/cbst. The two rooms currently available for viewing are: Early History and Liturgy & Ritual. More rooms with additional artifacts will be opened soon. Congregation Beth Simchat Torah was founded in 1973 and has been under the leadership of Rabbi Sharon Kleinbaum since 1992. CBST is an important voice in

Judaism, in the world-wide discourse on the nature of religious community, and in the movement to secure basic civil rights for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people in the United States and throughout the world. The LGBT Religious Archives Network (LGBT-RAN) was launched five years ago, in conjunction with Chicago Theological Seminary, to spearhead the preservation of LGBT Religious History. In addition to encouraging and advising groups and leaders on preserving their records and papers, LGBT-RAN is an electronic information clearinghouse on the history of LGBT religious movements: www.lgbtran.org.

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Resources...

Fred Casey, our Office Manager let us know that Families Joined by Love has announced the launch of their new political action blog for LGBT (lesbian/gay/bisexual/transsexual) families and their allies as part of their commitment to support this community. This blog will address issues as varied as second parent adoption, health care proxies, child custody laws, and civil union vs. marriage. Founder and President Laurie Wallmark has launched this blog to "foster in-depth discussions about public policy. Whether it's advocacy for LGBT-friendly legislation, debates about upcoming elections, analyses of news reports, or calls to action, you'll read about it on our blog." Vice-President Xan Nowakowski,

a political science major out of Columbia University and a public policy professional, will be the primary blogger. In addition, there will be guest bloggers sharing their knowledge and their passion. "We see the blog as a way to bring LGBT families and allies together for discussion of current affairs impacting the LGBT community," said Xan. To learn more about this blog for LGBT families, visit them online at: www.familiesjoinedbylove.com/blog.shtml For information about Families Joined by Love, visit them at www.familiesjoinedbylove.com



European Kinship at Gay Pride Day in Cologne

"Kölle Aloha!"

Ruud Keiboom

Every first weekend of July Köln (Cologne in English) Germany celebrates Christopher Street Day. It is one week after the same event, called Pink Saturday "Roze Zaterdag", in my home country of The Netherlands but much more extravagant. Up to one million visitors attend each year! Cologne has the highest gay population in Germany with many gay and lesbian choirs. It has a large number of organizations for "Baren" who are mostly hairy men with bigger bellies, leather clothing and motorcycles.

We arrived early Saturday afternoon. The cool and rainy summer we had until then turned into a weekend where sun shone brilliantly. We joined Kees's uncle Peter with his partner Joep. As we left the Bahnhof (railway station)

we saw many rainbow flags waving in the wind to welcome us from hotels, apartment buildings and even some churches (there were two services that weekend.) The personnel in the hotel were very friendly. Gay and lesbian customers are valued but Köln generally seems to be very accepting of the GLBTI people who are a substantial part of the city's economy.

After we checked in at our hotel we made our first walk through the three squares and connecting streets that I call "the pink area." On each square there was a stage that featured live performances until late in the evening each day. We missed having the Kinship booth that HAD Germany had staffed for so many years but there were many commercial, social, political and religious booths. After a great

tasting, inexpensive meal we began to attend the programs. I especially appreciated Marianne Rosenberg singing Ich bin wie Du (I Am Like You). Angelika Milster sang Candlelights Against Forgetting at a memorial service for AIDS/HIV as we all stood, holding candles.

Sunday's feature was Europe's biggest Pride Parade. Thousands of participants marched in extraordinary and colourful outfits. I am amazed at the talent in the gay and lesbian world. It took more than two hours for the whole parade of people and vehicles to pass. We sat at a sidewalk café on the corner of the Breitestrasse (Broadway) and the Du Mont Strasse, which was a perfect place to take pictures. There were many non-gay people who enjoyed the parade as much as the GLTBI-audience. Even the police officers

were not afraid to have their picture taken with GLBTI people. (Some of the officers were really cute.)

After the parade, the biggest party of gay Europe was over. Soon the streets were thoroughly cleaned. Locals and visitors left for home. The next day would be another day of work. Fortunately we had a cozy

evening ahead; dinner at an Italian restaurant and a visit to one of Köln's most beautiful saunas, Badehaus. We were steamed to sparkling cleanliness after an eventful and wonderful weekend of lovely people in an atmosphere of acceptance. I'm already planning for next year.



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connection

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