

connection.

The Newsletter of Seventh-day Adventist Kinship International, Inc. Vol. 34 No. 7 – September 2010



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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.)



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or visit Kinship's website at: www.sdakinship.org.



From the Editor

Welcome to autumn. I am writing to you from European Kinship Meeting's holiday component in Belgium—about our Kampmeeting in Atlanta. Any of us who were there will tell you how special it was. Emory Conference Center was remarkably comfortable. The Women's Walkabout went two adventuresome days longer than normal. Bruce and Eddie's 50th anniversary booklet and cake were a delight to put together—and we managed to surprise them! The early morning walks engendered thoughtful conversations. The Atlanta Midtown Brass Quintet was a Sabbath pleasure. Our communion touched and healed our hearts. The movies—oh my!—the movie about Bayard Rustin, the remarkable gay man who provided such support to Martin Luther King, Jr., was inspiring and humbling. 8: *The Mormon Proposition*, the movie about how the Mormons affected the vote on Proposition 8 in California, was chilling. The speakers were remarkable. I wish we could share all that they said, but we have only material and space to give you a taste of what they gave us. As Buffy Halvorsen walked out the door to catch her plane, she handed me the text of her Sabbath morning sermon. We have included it here almost verbatim. We are also sharing some thoughts about homophobic bullying in churches. You'll get to meet a few more Kinship members. And, for this issue, Ruud will include many, many photos so you have a chance to get a feel for our time together. We hope this will inspire you to join us next year in California. But mostly, we hope that you will take good care of yourself for you are infinitely valuable.

Catherine



Grace Babcock



Atlanta Midtown Brass Quintet

Sacred's Seduction

Buffy Halvorsen

Psychology tells us that the two great motivators are pain and pleasure. Richard Rohr said, "The path of prayer and love and the path of suffering seem to be the two great paths of transformation. Pain drives us to God. Pleasure, we find in His company through prayer." I know this is true. If there is one thing I have learned about God it is that He constantly calls us deeper. Every life experience, every encounter with Him is an invitation to know Him more fully.

I want to help you understand what happens in our lives as we walk with God. I want you to see what a relationship with the Almighty God looks like. I want you to understand what is happening when God no longer fits into some box of our own construction. I want you to understand the hard times. There are several theories for the stages of faith. For this article, I am primarily using *The Critical Journey* by Hagberg and Guelich. You may also want to read James Fowler's book *The Stages of Faith*.

Because our relationship with God is fluid and dynamic, our experience is continual and expanding. Our journey is not instant or easy; it involves process, action, movement, change, experiences, stops, starts, variety, humdrum, and surprises.

It is important to realize



that no stage is any more saved than other stages. We often move back and forth between stages, though we do so at deeper levels as we mature spiritually. We can intellectually grasp the stage immediately ahead of us but not comprehend that one that is two stages further along from where we are now. Those at later stages will often be misunderstood by those at earlier stages. Those at later stages will tend to look down at those who are in earlier stages.

In the last few weeks I have come face to face with the realization that the Seventh-day Adventist world church, as a whole, is growing rapidly. Because of that growth, most of its members are young Christians. These young Christians do not understand later stages in the development of a faith journey; when young Christians see other believers or parts of the church in these stages, they think it is a sign of unfaithfulness. Just think what the Jews of Jesus day thought of Jesus when he walked through the fields eating grain. It appeared that He was breaking the Sabbath, the law of Moses; yet He spoke like no other and was obviously filled with the Spirit of God.

The first stages of faith are primarily external and are prescribed

by external standards. In the beginning of our journey we discover and recognize that there is a God. In innocence we are swept away by this awesome relationship. We do not see anything difficult. We move into holy obedience. We vow to follow the Father's faintest whisper. In utter devotion and total simplicity, we vow to follow His voice. Nothing satisfies us but God. We emerge from such soul-shaking, love-invaded times forever changed. We live in quiet wonder and adoration and praise.

From this beginning we move into a time of learning and belonging. A belief system is formed that feels safe and protected. Boundaries are defined and often defended. We are learners and others instruct us in our walk, often giving a clear outline for belief and behavior. People who stay in this stage may become rigid in righteousness. They often exclude others and become unaccepting of anyone who believes differently. They don't see this as demonstrating a lack of acceptance because they are so sure they are right and strong. Obedience, instead of worship, becomes the choice at this stage. It is easier to look around and tell others what they should do than to grow deeper. Obedience becomes brittle. When



Brian & Mike



Terre & Marshall



Mervin



Nikki

faced with the opportunity to grow, people tend to switch churches at this stage. They don't want to go through the dis-ease that comes with movement from one stage to the next, so they move around but not forward. God, however, calls us deeper and closer to Him. God longs for us to more fully experience His kingdom.

From learning and structure, we move into the productive life of service. The truths we learned at earlier stages find outlet in this service. Unfortunately *most* models of Christian growth stop here. Churches primarily minister to those in the early stages. We can arrive at this stage and still be *self-serving, legalistic, immature, defensive, and inwardly unhealed*. Staying here we could become self-centered and self-worshiping. God calls us deeper.

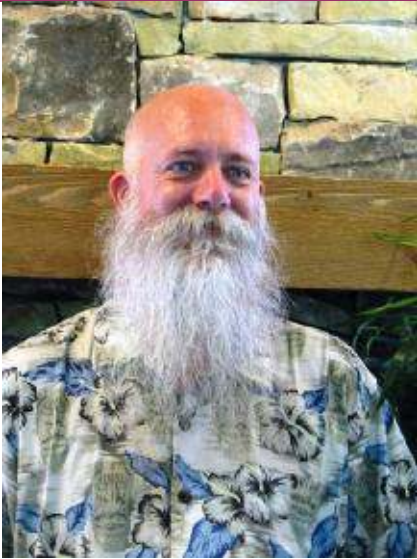
The next stage is very painful and doesn't even look like part of the spiritual journey. It is usually precipitated by a crisis or loss and is a severe mercy. Our former views of God are radically challenged. We realize life does not have one set of answers. It is a dangerous time. Our spiritual disruption can be so great we often feel like we are losing our faith or betraying loyalties. It is a time of questioning and exploring, falling apart, doubting, dancing around the real issues. The certainty of our earlier life dissolves into uncertainty and questioning. This is the place where obedience turns to surrender of everything. We feel remote, immobilized, unsuccessful, and hurt. Neither our faith nor our God seems to provide us with what we think we need to soothe us and solve our problems. This painful stage has been the part of the lives of Job, Joseph, Abraham, David, Habakkuk, Daniel, Paul—and the list goes on. At this stage some people leave religion altogether; some jump to another denomination where the distraction helps them avoid "the wall." Some of us on the journey retreat back to earlier stages because of fear.

We enter this stage with fear and trepidation but become less afraid because God is leading. We recognize that we are on holy ground. We are being drawn to surrender, but surrender looks very different from what we thought. We have spent all of *our own* energy. We are ready to learn about freedom: the liberty of living without grasping. As we surrender to God, we begin to heal spiritually and psychologically. The healing is profound for it is also our soul that is healed. It is the deep healing at this stage that makes the later stages safe.

The earlier stages look at life after this middle stage and don't understand the mindset of those who have gone on. It is well for them to be concerned because, if they lived like those who have gone on, it would not be safe for them. It is the fire and long times of pain and prayer that transform, heal, and remove the ego from life.

As they interact with people in this stage of spiritual growth, people in the first stages of spiritual growth think these middle stages don't even look like part of the journey. They set about to define and draw lines more firmly and clearly. They become very vocal. Right and wrong actions are defended as they preach what they understand. They are not ready to change from obedience to surrender. Obedience is clearly defined.

Surrender asks hard things. Abraham was not in the early stages of faith when God called him to sacrifice his son. The certainty of the command, "Thou shalt not kill," would have been a welcome place to hide. But Abraham heard God's voice and it called his heart to places where he didn't want to go but from which he could not turn away. This is the stage that the church as a whole does not speak to; only those who have gone through it need to recognize it and come alongside individuals to support them through this time. *It is not a time to fear. God grows us through life.*



Denali



Charmaine



Rick

It is now that we realize we have put God in a box, and God does not fit in the box anymore. We fight against change in our image of God. Our inner hunger increases. At the same time we begin to doubt the core of our belief in *self-actualization*. The God-shaped vacuum of which Pascal spoke is now recognized, but there is confusion about how to fill it. At previous stages we learned about obedience, innocence, and belonging. Now we are seeking a direction that is vague, unclear, and frightening. The haunting doubts cause additional alienation from others and lead us to feel at times as though we are the ones in the wrong, the bad persons, with weak faith. Our family and friends seem so sure and we are so very unsure. Our pain may well extend to the mental and emotional as well as spiritual anguish.

Growing deeper means giving up well-worn defenses and becoming extremely vulnerable. We learn to be content with a God who is much more personally available to us. We learn to surrender, to become humble enough to not be in charge of our lives. As we are being transformed, turned inside out, we need long sessions of prayer. We grow into a full awareness of the presence and control of God through the Holy Spirit.

Wholeness looks a lot like weakness. Wholeness does not make us stronger; it allows God to work through our weaknesses. Wholeness means being very aware of our faults because God can use us most in our brokenness. Paul understood this when he said, "When I am weak, then I am strong." We experience a new, much deeper yielding to the will of God. We relinquish our ego and move into healing and wholeness. We are now face to face with the God we have rediscovered.

As we grow and lose ourselves we find ourselves. We have little ambition for being well-known, rich, successful, noteworthy, goal-oriented. We are Spirit-filled but in a quiet, unassuming way. We reach

far beyond our own capacity and love our fellow human beings with deep compassion. We become aware that the more of God we have, the less of everything else we need. We are hid in God. Our egos become nonexistent. We have nothing to lose. Obedience at this point looks a lot more like surrender. Surrender to love. We are able to dis-identify with our own emotional noise and no longer let it pull us here or there, up or down.

Richard Rohr describes this in *The Naked Now* like this: I quote, "You are not doing it; it is being done to you." We can then begin to enjoy all things in themselves, not in terms of their usefulness or importance or threat to us. There is not much room for compulsivity, fanaticism, trumped-up excitement, or even depression. Jesus called it the peace that passes understanding. We no longer use events or titles, roles or opinions, clothing or money, affiliations or contacts, churches or temples to define us. We make good use of them, but we can also let go of them. We can love them, but we don't believe they are the final substantial reality.

We are no longer jerked around by things that do not matter. (If we are personally identified with our private viewing platform, every event has the power to snag and control us.) If we cannot detach from any person or event when it is needed or appropriate, then it is certain we are over-identified, overly attached, or even enmeshed. Our identity comes from God within. We will want to love and serve others, but we don't use them or need them to identify ourselves either positively or negatively.

The Talmud tells of a rabbi who threw a great party in his home to which he invited all of his friends, family, and followers. A friend came to his house wondering, "Why is there a celebration here? No one has been born or married. Why are you all singing and dancing?"

The rabbi answered, "Yesterday, I was going about my business with



Sharlett



Jill & Sherri



Heidi

the elders of the village when a woman approached and asked me to come to her home because her daughter was ill. I could not interrupt my appointment with the village elders, so I told her to go home and wait. When I got to her home that evening, to my great dismay, the girl had died. I went home, and during the night, I woke up and prayed. I said to God, 'Please let me resurrect the girl tomorrow! If she lives, may my name be taken out of the book.' And God accepted my offer. This morning, I went to the girl's house and resurrected her. And now I am celebrating with all my students and all of my family and friends."

"What are you celebrating?" his friend asked.

His face beaming, the rabbi answered, "I am celebrating my freedom. For the first time in my life, I can serve God not for the sake of any rewards but for the sake of my love for God."

Jesus offered a single incentive to follow Him; it was woven into all He said and did. Here is a summary of His selling point: "Follow Me, and you might be happy—or you might not. Follow Me, and you might be empowered—or you might not. Follow Me, and you might have more friends—or you might not. Follow Me and you might have the answers—or you might not. Follow Me, and you might be better off—or you might not. If you follow Me you might be worse off in every way you use to measure life. Follow Me, nevertheless. Because I have an offer that is worth giving up everything you have: you will learn to love well."

You will *learn to love well*. This is a deceptively simple string of words. Paul captured it in 1 Cor. 13. *Love is patient. Love is kind. It does not envy; it does not boast. It is not proud. It is not rude. It is not self-seeking. It is not easily angered. It keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices in the truth. Love always protects. Love always hopes. Love always perseveres. Love never fails.* (NIV)

I know he got it because of how he lived his life.

Listen to these verses.

¹¹God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, ¹²so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them. ¹³Some Jews who went around driving out evil spirits tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed. They would say, "In the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out." ¹⁴Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. ¹⁵(One day) the evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?"

¹⁶Then the man who had the evil spirit jumped on them and overpowered them all. He gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding. (Here we have the first recorded incident of streaking.) Did you hear what that evil spirit said? Jesus I know and Paul I know—but who are you. Paul was known in hell. But hell had never even heard of the seven sons of the high priest. Paul was so filled with the Holy Spirit that hell trembled.

Paul was centered in the Spirit.

There were no side issues. He spent no time defending the edges of his life. It really didn't matter. One thing mattered; that was all.

He had no ambitions for himself, only Christ's cause, so he had nothing to be jealous of.

He had no reputation, so he didn't have to fight for himself.

He had no possessions, so there were no things to worry about.

He had no rights, so he could suffer no wrong.

He was already broken, so no one could break him.

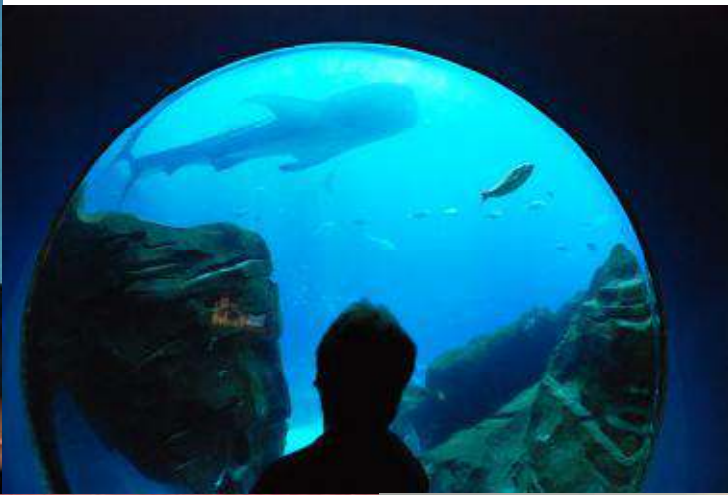
He had already died, so no one could kill him.

He was less than the least, so who could embarrass him?

To be continued on page 10



The Women's Walkabout







Steve & Al



Mary



Ruben



Fulton

➤ He has suffered the loss of all things;

who could rob him?

He was totally Christ's, so no one could take him.

It's no wonder heaven loved him and hell feared him.

And when we live like Paul, hell will tremble and we will not be focused on ourselves, but on our God.

³¹What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³²He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? ³³Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies.

³⁴Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. ³⁵Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." ³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future,

nor any powers, ³⁹neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:31-39).

I want to leave you with this thought from the book *It's Really All About God*. Samir Selmanovic enlarges on thoughts from Peter Rollins. "God is so different from us that we can never grasp God, and so close to us that we cannot avoid God. That which we cannot speak of is the one thing about whom and to whom we must never stop speaking. What if God, instead of being absent, is in reality hyper-present, overwhelming both our experience and our language? What if God is a mystery to us precisely because God's presence is actually blinding us? What if mystery is built into the revelation of God, and the more revelation we have, the more mystery we experience? What if instead of being limited by God's absence, we are short-circuited by the excess of God's presence?"

The greater the truth, the more time one's eyes need to adjust to be able to see it. There is much more to this, but it is important that we realize that our church must allow for those who move beyond the early stages.

I am so thankful that God calls us to an ever deeper walk with Him. ▼



Homophobic Bullying in Christian Churches

Following are some excerpts from a paper presented at Kampmeeting.

Dimitri Ljubov

As the discussions of tolerance and civil rights for homosexuals has become more sound and frequent, the Christian churches have responded by adding anti-homosexual statements to their official policies and promoting intolerance, abruptness, and homophobia. There are a number of murders inspired by hatred. One of the examples is the murder of Matthew Shepard, a 21-year-old Episcopal college student at the University of Wyoming. According to a U. S. Department of Health and Human Services report, "gay adolescents were two to three times more likely than peers to attempt suicide, accounting for as many as 30% of the completed suicides each year.... 26% of gay youth are forced to leave home each year because of their sexual identities." (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1989 in Garnets and Kimmel, 1993, 487).

The Gay and Lesbian Medical Association offered the following explanation of homophobia on its website: *Homophobia operates on two levels: internally and externally. Internal homophobia represents prejudices that all individuals learn (internalize) from their families, friends, teachers, religious institutions, government, and media. External homophobia is the overt expression of those biases, ranging from social avoidance to legal and religious proscription, to violence...*

Some causes of internal homophobia appear to be: fear of people who are different, low self-esteem leading to a need to hate other groups, the thought that same-sex activity appears to be unnatural and repulsive, inability or unwillingness to change information received during childhood, latent homosexual desires of which people may not be aware, and a connection between homophobia and religiousness.

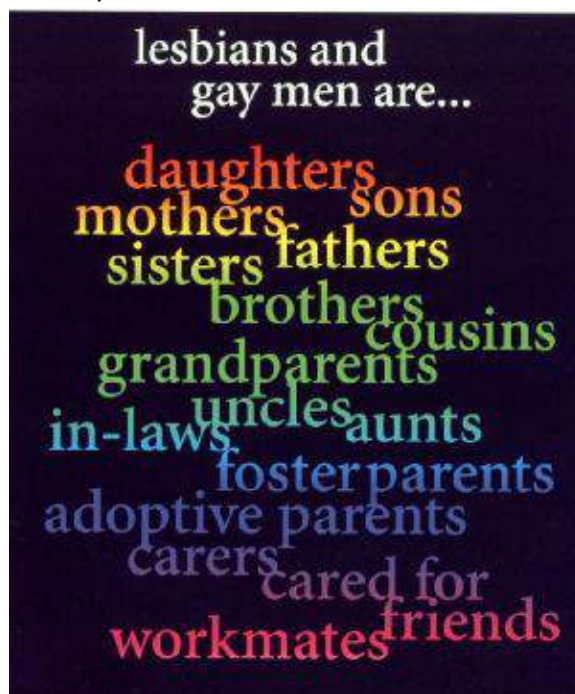
The relationship between homophobia and Christian religiosity has been a growing concern for many researchers. Several factors come into play when

discussion between homophobia and religiosity: the belief that being gay is a choice. Wade Rowatt's study at Baylor University indicates religiosity is the strongest predictor of homophobic bullying; other studies indicate that more religious people were more likely to be poorer, authoritarian, conservative, and Protestant—all other predictors of homophobia. Women were more inclined to be religious but less inclined than men to be homophobic.

Some of the manifestations of homophobia in churches include: portraying individuals as beyond God's grace, categorizing homosexuality as being worse or different from any other sin, portraying homosexuals as enemies of the family, insisting that

homosexuals recruit young people, asserting that homosexuals *want* to be homosexual and make meaningful choices about their sexuality, stating that homosexuals per se are wicked or depraved, insisting that homosexuals should seek therapeutic treatment to reverse their orientation, and removing homosexuals from church membership or any church office or professional appointment.

It is important to address homophobia because it bears serious consequences for the health and well being of homosexuals and because help is less accessible to victims of homophobic bullying.



...and from Ljubov's paper on The Homosexual and the Church

Those of us who walk the Christian path should reject the modern-day heresy of "love the sinner; hate the sin," especially when it comes to LGBT people. Instead we should focus on the two great commandments: (1) love God with all our hearts, souls, and minds; and (2) love our neighbor as ourselves. Nothing more, nothing less. We should spend less time worrying about how to make others repent and far more time worrying about our own repentance. If we truly believe in a gospel of grace as opposed to a cult of works-righteousness, then we should believe that God—and not humans—will take care of the rest. ▽

We would like to introduce you to:



Ron Gainey was born in Maryland, spent some of his life in North Carolina, and attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The thing Ron says he most likes about being a pharmacist is making a difference by helping others. Ron describes his family as "Southern Baptistcostal." His spouse William is a third-generation Adventist and "recruited me. He deserves the toast-er!" Ron likes to have fun, be with people, and travel. He says, "Our trip to Carnivale in Rio De Janeiro (which was also the week of Valentine's Day and our 12th anniversary) is the most exciting part of this year so far." Ron and William found Kinship through the *Blade*. Sharing, love, and "quantum entanglements" are the things he most likes about this community. When we asked him the most important thing about his spirituality, he replied, "Knowing that I know." When we asked him what else he might want to add, Ron replied: "Live, love, laugh!"



George Phillips was born in Pittsburgh, PA, and sent to "a whole lot of boring and normal schools." These days he says he loves working at the Office of Tech Services for the University of Baltimore. You can also find him behind the counter at Starbucks. George says he comes from a small family whose love "keeps me walking and loving." He says, "I cannot live without my boyfriend (aka husband). He's my baby." His interests are "video games, food, gym, video games, dancing, video games, acting, and video games." Creating his very first Flash game in college is one of the high points of this year. George heard about Kinship through "my husband" (thank God he did) and says he likes "everything" about our community. George told us the most important thing about his spiritual journey is learning. "There are a lot of things in this life that confuse me." When I asked him what else he might like to add to this interview, George replied, "Did I forget to mention that I love video games?"

Chris Morris was born in Delaware and works as a retail manager. Her support network is her partner and close friends. Chris says she likes movies and literature and will try anything new "as long as it is not dangerous." Region 2 will be glad to hear that the Rehoboth Beach mini-kampmeeting was one of Chris' most exciting parts of the year. She found

Kinship through a Google search. She appreciates that our community is "very warm, accepting. Everyone seems knowledgeable and educated." Chris said that the most important thing for her spiritual journey is "being in a community that welcomes discussion and questions rather than insisting on a 'this is the way it is' philosophy... Thanks for existing. Lots of people need that feeling of acceptance."



Travis Roe was born in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada, and grew up in Portland, Oregon, USA. He went to school at Portland Adventist Academy and Andrews University. He works as a Quality Assurance Analyst for *Manhunt*, a dating site for gay men. He says his role is to "test existing and new functionality to make sure it works properly." Travis is single. His mother and sister live in Portland, Oregon; and his grandfather lives in Tacoma, Washington. Travis says, "I love to garden, cook, go out with friends, be a Karaoke superstar, or just sit at home in my PJs (pajamas) and watch reruns of *Murder She Wrote*. I enjoyed going on a cruise for my 33rd birthday." Travis learned about Kinship by chatting online with Floyd "back in the dark days before chat clients.... I love that Kinship provided a safe place for me when I came out. Even though I don't participate as much as I used to, I love knowing that I have a community offering support when I need it. I've recently come to define my outlook as Christian agnosticism. I am open to experiencing God without putting expectations or limitations on Him/Her/Them. I am okay not knowing everything."

Stephanie Lou is a native of Maryland, attending Blandsburg Elementary, Deerfield Elementary, and Dwight D. Eisenhower Middle and Laurel High School. She works as a purchasing agent for an appliance company that owns four stores in three states. Stephanie helps with accounts payable, receivable, receiving, and "anything someone needs help with." She says her family is "wonderful, sweet, loving, kind, helpful, and the list goes on. I love spending time with them." When not working, Stephanie likes watching football. She found Kinship through a friend and appreciates "the love that everyone shares and displays with each other." Right now the most important part of her spiritual journey is "just getting to know God more." ▽

Sex & Sexuality

As you may remember, we are beginning our series on this topic. Here are a couple of questions and topic suggestions we have received so far. Floyd and Catherine will be answering each of these over the next few months. If any of you have comments, thoughts, suggestions, or more questions, please feel free to send them to: Connection@sdakinship.org.



I wonder if there are any stats on how many heterosexual Seventh-day Adventist couples engage in oral sex? If more of them did engage in oral sex, would they have such a hard time bending their minds around what one of the "hows" of sex might be for same sex couples?

—Henrietta



The topic of open relationships in gay men would be helpful in the Connection. That ties in with how we view human sexuality. Another is the impact of casual sex with anonymous partners on the spiritual and emotional health.

—Mark



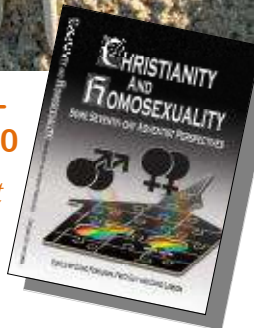
The Book and The Beach



**September 30 -
October 3, 2010**

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I read and walked for miles at night along the beach, writing bad blank verse and searching endlessly for someone wonderful who would step out of the darkness and change my life. It never crossed my mind that that person could be me.

—Anna Quindlen



My question is: Where do we get our modern notion that moral sex can only happen within the confines of marriage? There is a letter posted by an older straight Baptist minister on his website, godmademegay.com. This letter was very influential in my personal journey towards being completely out with my family and colleges. In section 8 of this letter he quotes a theologian, James B. Nelson, who writes:

Even on such a major issue as sexual intercourse between unmarried consenting adults there is no explicit prohibition in either Hebrew Scripture or the New Testament (which John Calvin discovered to his consternation). Indeed, the Song of Solomon celebrates one such relationship. I believe that our best biblical scholarship reaches Walter Wink's conclusion: "There is no biblical sex ethic. The Bible knows only a love ethic, which is constantly being brought to bear on whatever sexual mores are dominant in any given country, or culture, or period." 8-2 This section of the letter has freed me from the idea that moral sex can only happen within

marriage and is therefore basically off limits to me as a gay man. I like the idea that love is what makes sex a moral act. Love is a harder thing to define than marriage, but this is why Christ looks at our hearts. I think Christ created us with a sexuality and a need for love. Furthermore, I think for most human beings, a sexual partnership is needed for a healthy existence. If it is true that the Bible doesn't restrict sexuality to the confines of marriage, then my mind is put at ease as I try each day to follow Christ and enjoy the sexuality He created me with.

—Sam



My question is what is the feeling about pornography? Obviously, the safest sex is no sex. The next best thing, if no sex doesn't work for you, is "self sex." While the argument can easily be made that porn is degrading and exploitation, it can also be the stimulus needed to fill a need when a sexual partner is not desired or available. Any thoughts?

—Michael



SDA Kinship International Board Meeting

25 July 2010

- Ruud Kieboom and Sharlett Reinke will stay on as members-at-large.
- Yolanda Elliott talked about fundraising and mentioned that Keisha knows people who work on fundraising for non-profit organizations. Yolanda then read a description of the services offered by said company. It was mentioned that we'll need a point person. Yolanda will do some research and get back to the Board.
- Bob Bouchard was asked to develop a form letter for bequests and trust donations.
- Fred Casey said that our pamphlets were out of date and should be updated. It was mentioned that Michael Steingas could help with this, as well as the Communication Committee. Jacquie Hegarty moved that Ronoldo Appleton should be the project lead to revisit the graphic design and rewording of the main Kinship brochure, "Nothing is Quite Like Growing Up Adventist and Then...." Dave Ferguson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
- Fred Casey asked about revisiting the strategic planning process and looking at the mission statement. He suggested that we see how we can further use WebEx.
- Marcos Apolonio mentioned we could possibly use the Second Wind space for the fall board meeting if Naveen Jonathan's place does not work out. Date was recommended for the weekend of November 19. ▽



An Indispensable Gay Man

His 1963 March on Washington
"Woke Up America"

By Nat Hentoff Tuesday, Jan 14 2003

[Bayard Rustin] was his own man. Wherever he was, he stood at a rakish angle to it. —Midge Decter

The truth that one truly believes is in action.... We will not tolerate the beating of black people any longer. We will stay in the damn streets until every Negro in this country can vote. —Bayard Rustin

A wiretap was instituted on Bayard Rustin, 340 West 28th St., New York City. Rustin is a prominent adviser to Martin Luther King, Jr. and a known sexual pervert. —FBI field report, November 15, 1963

On Monday, January 20 (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day), the Public Broadcasting Service (Channel 13 in New York) will air *Brother Outsider: The Life of Bayard Rustin*. This long-overdue tribute vividly brings back to life a man who deeply and brilliantly influenced the course of the civil rights and peace movements.

Because Bayard never hid that he was gay, he was abandoned, for a time, by leaders of both movements in this country. He died in 1987; and, late last year, hundreds of residents of West Chester, Pennsylvania, where Rustin was born, signed petitions protesting the decision of the school board to name a new high school after him.

As the Associated Press reported on December 16, these indignant citizens "said Rustin shouldn't be honored because he was briefly a member of a Communist youth group in the 1930s, and because he was openly gay." (Next week: the result of that protest.)

Brother Outsider, produced and directed by Nancy Kates and Bennett Singer, among others, for



the always uncategorizable P.O.V. series, is a thoroughly honest portrait of Bayard and his tumultuous times. I knew him for most of those years, reporting for the *Voice* and others on his prodigious skills as an organizer. He was also a mentor for me, except when we disagreed about his silence on the Vietnam War. It was only later that I fully realized his reasons for that silence—which contrasted with the outspokenness of Martin Luther King, Jr., who was severely criticized by a number of black civil rights leaders for coming out strongly against the war instead of continuing to focus only on the black agenda here.

As Igal Roodenko of the War Resisters League, where Rustin was once a key organizer, said soon after Bayard died, Rustin had come to realize, as the anti-war demonstrations mounted, that "to be free to go into any restaurant regardless of your skin color is not going to do any good if you don't have any money.... He worked with A. Philip Randolph, vice-president of the American Federation of Labor and head of the Sleeping Car Porters Union, to open the unions to black workers and set up apprentice training programs."

Bayard became head of the A. Philip Randolph Institute in 1964, training black workers to move into decent union jobs. He was convinced that organized labor

could be made to join a nonviolent coalition to engage in whatever was necessary to move "from protest to politics," encompassing blacks and others who had been powerless. But, in the meantime, the AFL-CIO was for the Vietnam War, and so Bayard held his peace in more ways than one.

Much of *Brother Outsider* focuses on Bayard's courageous range as a leader in nonviolent direct action. Very direct action. In 1947, he organized the first of the "freedom rides" to defy Southern segregation laws, winding up with a 22-day sentence on a black chain gang in North Carolina. His white associates were jammed into a white chain gang.

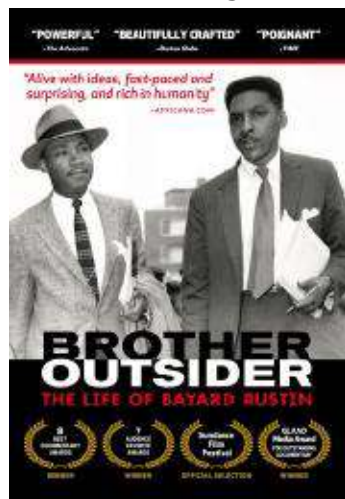
Rustin learned a great deal from A.J. Muste, the American master of nonviolent direct action, while in the peace movement's Fellowship of Reconciliation. In 1956, Bayard went to Montgomery, Alabama, soon after the Rosa Parks bus boycott began. Since the 26-year-old Martin Luther King, Jr. had little experience in Gandhian "soul force," Bayard became a key strategist in the bus boycott and in King's further actions until Congressman Adam Clayton Powell threatened to expose Bayard as a homosexual.

In 1953, Bayard had been convicted and imprisoned in Pasadena, California, on a morals charge (homosexual behavior). When Senator Lyndon Johnson, learning that Rustin, emerging as a public figure of consequence, was planning a massive demonstration at the 1960 Democratic convention to pressure the party leadership and delegates to act on civil rights, Johnson—as reported in the documentary—ordered House leader Sam Rayburn "to stop this guy Rustin."

Rayburn went to Adam Clayton Powell, who told the press there were "immoral elements" in the civil rights movement. Powell knew of Rustin's 1953 arrest, and Rustin says in *Brother Outsider* that Powell warned King that "if he did not withdraw his support from the Rustin-led demonstration in Los Angeles, [Powell] would go to the press and say that there was a sexual affair going on between me and King. Martin was so terrified...he decided he would get rid of me."

Years before, even A.J. Muste had fired Rustin from the Fellowship of Reconciliation because of the 1953 arrest.

Bayard resurged in 1963 when A. Philip Randolph asked him to organize the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom that became the largest civil rights demonstration in history. As Eleanor Holmes Norton says in *Brother Outsider*, "nobody assumed it could be done. They didn't know what I knew.... The best organizer on the planet was planning this one." There were 250,000 insistently present at the march, and Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech was heard around the world. ▽



connection ▽

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Impression of Rehoboth weekend

