

connection.



Jeremiah 29:11

**For I know the plans I have for you,
declares the LORD,
plans to prosper you and not to harm you,
plans to give you hope and a future.**

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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



In the United States we have this odd holiday family tradition. Well, we have several odd ones. I imagine all of you reading from other countries have your own odd holiday family traditions—which I may request for the December 2012 issue. The quirk I happen to be mulling over at the moment of this typing is our predilection to spend a part of every holiday gathering looking at pictures of each other and the things we have done since we last met (or happened to have done that day). Digital photography has made it possible to have uncountable amounts of images almost instantly available to show to dutiful family members sitting in chairs of various comfort levels for lengths of time that have allowed us to begin to measure eternity. There are the 1,234 shots of us eating—at the table, under a tree, among the ants (or aunts), next to the ocean (or lake or river or creek), in restaurants, or next to the Eiffel Tower. There are the 957 carefully posed group shots—in the portico, on the front steps, under the same tree, in the shade, blinded by sun, and stiff as rods. There are the 2,327 action shots on (or almost under) the boat, skiing down the beginners' slope, trying to find snorkel gear, hang gliding, jumping off the barn roof (you survived?), or playing our most recent game of aging tennis. This list goes on, and you are mentally filling in all the categories I have forgotten. See, I know you. Welcome to the Kinship family. This issue will have lots of pictures: the people to whom we are introducing you and at least three events (Board Meeting, Book and the Beach, and Vermont Mini-Kampmeeting). Oh, yes, and there are the two weddings and one new baby! We just have to show you the beautiful and very new Matteo. Thank you for putting up with our traditional holiday quirks. We also have Luca's thoughtful talk, first shared with the people who attended European Kinship Meeting 2012 (where Matteo was still incubating). We hope you enjoy the thoughts and the photos. We hope you have gentle and enjoyable holidays. We mostly hope that you will take care of yourself for you are infinitely valuable.

Catherine

Congratulations!

We would like to express our congratulations to Roy Raetzer and Ben Chong on their marriage of November 19, 2011.



&

To Elodie and Nathalie on the birth of their son Matteo.



&

To Dave Coltheart on his marriage to his beloved John on 11/11/11 at 11 a.m.



&

To Bruce and Eddy who wrote:

...amidst all this we got married at City Hall in Manhattan. OK, because of security it is no longer done at the Hall but a few blocks away at a new designed Clerk's office. Very nice and the day was sunny and crisp. Two dear friends were our witnesses. We were in California the first day same-sex marriages became legal in NY, so decided to wait until our



51st anniversary (Nov. 18) and make a clean start of it!!! This way we only have one date to remember, which will be a blessing as our minds start to go. ▽

Where is the Ink?

Luca Marulli

I believe that rethinking our positions is a healthy process. We need to know each other as human beings, not just holders of particular theological stances. We need to experience each other's joy and pains, faith and hopes, families and bonds. We need to become reconciled to one another and to God. This article is about the reconciliation of the "body" to the "heart."

John Harvey Kellogg and William K. Kellogg of Battle Creek were men of keen intellect. The charisma and medical genius of Dr. John H. Kellogg lead to the organization of a health institute, the largest health-care centre of its kind in the world. People like Amelia Earhart, George Bernard Shaw, John D. Rockefeller, and Henry Ford became great admirers of Dr. Kellogg.

William K. Kellogg had an outstanding sense of business. When he was in his forties he became the "King of Corn Flakes," building a world-wide cereal industry and amassing one of the greatest fortunes of the 20th century. As a philanthropist, his William Kellogg Foundation appropriated \$50 million for 1500 projects.

A sad misunderstanding led to a separation between the brothers. For a large part of their lives they were not on speaking terms. On June 22, 1948, more than six months after the death of John, William Kellogg received a letter that had been written by John some time before his death.

Here are a few excerpts from John's letter.

It was the greatest possible misfortune that circumstances arose which led you and me in different channels and separated our interests. I am sure you were right, as regards the food business. Your better-balanced judgment had doubtless saved you from a vast number of mistakes of the sort I have made, and allowed you to achieve magnificent successes for which generations to come will owe you gratitude. I am making desperate efforts to get all my affairs into such shape as to preserve as much as possible what good they may represent and to mend as many as possible of the errors I have made. I earnestly desire to make amends for any wrong or injustice of any sort I have done to you and will be glad if you will give me a very definite and frank expression of anything I have said or done which you feel should be justly designated unbrotherly or otherwise open to criticism.



Had this magnanimous letter been delivered to William Kellogg at the time it was written, reconciliation could have taken place. Sadly, members of John Harvey's household, who were supposed to deliver the letter, thought it better not to do so. John Harvey never received a reply to his letter. He died thinking that his brother was unwilling to forgive. William Kellogg lived the rest of his life regretting the fact that he had not been able to write the reply his heart would have dictated.

All of this pain because someone did not deliver a letter of reconciliation.

In 2 Corinthians 3:3 the Apostle Paul makes a beautiful statement, "You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts."

Each one of us is a reconciliation letter from God. This letter has been written with no ordinary ink. The ink is actually the Spirit of the Living God.

So our question is, "Where is this ink?"

"In every period of this earth's history, God has had His men [and women] of opportunity, to whom He has said, 'Ye are My witnesses.' In every age there have been devout men...who spoke to the people the words of God.... These were [and are] ministers of righteousness. They were not infallible; they were weak, erring men; but the Lord wrought through them as they gave themselves to His service.

"Since His ascension, Christ...has carried forward His work in the world by chosen ambassadors, through whom He speaks to the children of men, and

ministers to their needs.... In Christ's stead they are to beseech men and women to be reconciled to God." —*Gospel Workers*, p. 14.

One of the greatest privileges we have, as Christians, is to live the opportunity to be reconciled with God and to help people to get reconciled to themselves and to God. The Gospel is the good news of reconciliation; it is the hope and possibility of change.

The possibility of transformation and of reconciliation is the essence of the Gospel.

I'm not talking about the transformation of sexual orientation or sexual identity. I'm talking about a transformed life that realizes or discovers or recovers the feeling that our life make sense; that we belong; that we are loved creatures of God with a goal, a purpose, and a future.

We all need to hear this message again, this good news. We all need to experience change and reconciliation in order to be co-workers with God, in order to minister to the needs of men and women with whom we share our everyday life.

Here are three steps that have helped me prepare for an encounter with God that opens me to change and reconciliation.

1. There should be earnest searching of heart
2. There should be united, persevering prayer, and through faith a claiming of the promises of God.
3. There should be a deep humiliation of soul. We should humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God.

Now, there is something very interesting about those three steps; they are the same that the apostle Paul requires from those who approach the Lord's table to celebrate the Lord's Supper, the supper of mutual forgiveness and reconciliation.

1. **1 Cor. 11: 28:** "A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup."
2. **1 Cor. 11: 17-18:** "In the following directives I have no praise for you, for your meetings do more harm than good. In the first place, I hear that when you come together as a church, there are divisions among you, and to some extent I believe it."
3. **1 Cor. 11: 32:** "When we are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world."

Examine yourself, not the other!

Research shows that 75% of interviewed men and women are not satisfied with their own image reflected by a large and tall mirror, a mirror able to show the entire body. We don't like how other people see us. We pay a lot of attention to how we are

groomed. We try to hide our age and to look good in the eyes of others. We usually don't like to be confronted with our own image reflected back by the mirror of God. We prefer to think that we can apply some makeup to our spiritual life. We want no one to see our fears.

Examine yourself. Take time to be confronted by that mirror, and let's see if, maybe, it will show that there is some idolatry, rudeness, envy, jealousy, violence, lack of forgiveness, or bitterness in us.

Take heart! We are not alone in our "earnest searching of heart." God stands beside us, not to judge us, but to provide forgiveness and a renewed heart.

Jesus has promised that the Holy Spirit will already start his work in us by helping us to examine ourselves: "I will send him to you. When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment" (John 16:7-8).

Every member of the body needs to overcome hypocrisy in the earnest searching of heart, and this work belongs to the Spirit of God.

A tourist was visiting Rome. Talking to his guide, he said, "I now understand why you are so proud of your city. I'm very impressed by the number and the beauty of the churches and cathedrals. People here must love God very much." The guide cynically replied: "They maybe love God, but for sure they hate each other."

Before we become united we need to kneel and pray. Do I still have a problem with someone? Do I still feel bitterness? How do I forgive? It is impossible to pray and work with people I have not forgiven. In this way, the "body" can't be reconciled.

1. *I need to accept my anger and my desire for revenge:* Eph. 4: 26-27 (The Message version): "Go ahead and be angry. You do well to be angry—but don't use your anger as fuel for revenge. And don't stay angry. Don't go to bed angry. Don't give the Devil that kind of foothold in your life."
2. *I have to decide that I will not take my revenge, because "God's righteousness doesn't grow from human anger."* (James 1:20, *The Message* version). Rom. 12:19, 21 (*New Life* version): "Christian brothers, never pay back someone for the bad he has done to you. Let the anger of God take care of the other person. The Holy Writings say, 'I will pay back to them what they should get,' says the Lord. Do not let sin have power over you. Let good have power over sin!"
3. *I need to stop pretending that I've already forgiven years ago.* A man was complaining with his wife: "Why do you always recall to me that specific fault? I thought you forgave and forgot years ago." "Oh, I forgave and forgot many

years ago," the wife replied, "but I want you to remember that I forgot and forgave."

4. *I need to believe that my pain can be transformed by God in an opportunity of personal growth.* Rom. 5:3-5: "We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they are good for us; they help us learn to endure. Endurance develops strength of character in us, and character strengthens our confident expectation of salvation. This expectation will not disappoint us. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love."

**Examine yourself,
be reconciled and promote unity.**

That's not all. We should humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God instead of making up God's agenda. We need to let Him work His plans, not ours.

"...All the people from the least to the greatest approached Jeremiah the prophet and said to him... 'Pray that the Lord your God will tell us where we should go and what we should do.'" Jer. 42:1-3. What a noble intent! "Whether it is favorable or unfavorable, we will obey the Lord our God." Jer. 42:6.

The truth is that those people already had a plan in their mind. They already had an answer to their prayer. They had already decided what God was supposed to do. As we continue our reading, we discover their true spiritual condition.

"When Jeremiah finished telling the people all the words of the LORD their God—everything the LORD had sent him to tell them—[the chiefs of the people] and all the arrogant men said to Jeremiah, 'You are lying! The LORD our God has not sent you to say [what you have said].'" Jer. 43:2.

I now ask myself, and you: Are we ready to claim God's promises and yet be ready to accept his will? Are we humble enough to realize that our will and plans might not be God's will and plans? Are we ready to follow Jesus and trust Him, or do we want to stay as we are, and then pray saying, "I hope that God will bless anyway"? What good is it to kneel before God if I am not ready to change my mind? How could I ask God for guidance if I am not ready to follow His will?

There is an old story about a huge ship plowing through the seas in the dark of night with its signal light blinking. The captain of the ship sees another light in the distance and he blinks out an emergency message that says, "Emergency! Collision inevitable! Change your course ten degrees to the south!" The light in the distance blinks back the answer, "Emergency! Collision inevitable! Change your course ten degrees to the north!" The captain gets a bit hot

under the collar and he sends back the same message, adding, "I am a captain!" To which the light in the distance replies, "Emergency! Collision inevitable! Change your course. I am a third-class seaman!" By now the captain is furious. He sends back what he believes will be the conclusive argument, "Change *your* course. I am a battleship." And the answer comes back from the blinking light in the distance, "Change *your* course, I am a lighthouse."



We have the right to complain and to be puzzled. However, we should never let allow our spiritual pride to tell the Lord what to do.

Again, I want to make sure that you know I'm not talking about sexual identity or orientation. I'm talking about our role and place in the church, amidst the people of God.

"The spirit of God will be poured out upon the church just as soon as the vessels are prepared to receive it." E. G. White, *That I May Know Him*, p. 330.

1. Earnest searching of heart.
2. Unity and united, persevering prayer.
3. Humbleness under the mighty hand of God.

"You show that you are a letter from Christ... written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God." 2 Cor. 3:3.

May the Lord bless you and give us all the awareness that we all are His words of reconciliation and that His Spirit is already in us. ▽

You can safely assume you've created
God in your own image when it turns out
he hates all the same people you do.

—Anne Lamott



Getting to Know Luca

I was born in Italy and baptized into the Catholic Church. My parents started taking me to the Seventh-day Adventist church when I was five years old. My parents, two siblings, and I are all still Adventists. I'm married to the beautiful Irene and we have the most gracious child, four-year-old Maya. We studied and worked in Quebec and the U.S.A. before returning to Europe. My wife works as a manager in the massage department of the Seventh-day Adventist Clinique "La Ligniere" (Switzerland). I teach New Testament and Biblical Interpretation at the Adventist University of France.

I enjoy reading, researching, soccer (football in Europe), and getting involved in discussions on how to improve our understanding and application of the Gospel and its ethical implications.

I like any good music, classical to pop rock. Maybe I'll pass on country music. My favorite movies are *Lord of the Rings* and *Invictus*. I like fantasy and people, like Mandela, who are actually able to love their enemies. Along with the Bible, there are way too many books I have loved. I usually only read them once. I like Italian food, pizza, and lasagna. I also like raw fish the way the Tahitians do!

I learned about Kinship from a fellow church member while we were in Canada. Meeting friends at a Kinship gathering has been great. The relational dimension helped me better understand the results of my reading and research on the subject of homosexuality. I have found many good friends and a new ministry in my church.

The most important thing for me on my spiritual journey is humility. Being a disciple sometimes requires me letting my Master show me I was wrong. Healing is also important to me. When Jesus heals painful memories, everything becomes simpler and I feel stronger, having more momentum to co-work with Him.

I look forward to seeing the Adventist church become totally homosexual-friendly. This was my first EKM [European Kinship Meeting]. I met beautiful brothers and sisters and had profound moments of spirituality and reflection. I also had good laughs and intensive discussions from which I learned a lot. What I realized is that I've been blind and passive for too long. I believe in a Seventh-day Adventist Church that can become more welcoming and friendly to everyone. So I feel I have some work to do in my local church—for starters. ▽

Some impressions from EKM Holiday, Paris



A walk in the Jardin de Luxembourg (city garden)



Dinner in a Paris restaurant



Dinner in the garden of the holiday house



Building a Relationship with the Adventist Church

*Terrence Rice, Kinship's
Director of Church Relations*

As Kinship becomes more of an international community, there is a greater need for more than one person to engage in issues with Adventist churches and ministries around the globe. This summer you elected me to my new Kinship position, Director of Church Relations. Dave Ferguson, who had this job before me, has been helpfully coaching me as I write letters and initiate dialogue with people. This is also true of John Wallace, Kinship's church relations director in Australia. He has been a good communicator of the events happening there.

Dave started a group for Adventist pastors to help pastors connect with each other in safe dialogue. John has met with the South Pacific Division Committee, formed at the request of the Southern Pacific Division president, to formulate a church response to the same-sex marriage debate in Australia. He writes, "I have met with the chairman a couple of times separately. The committee was very respectful and had lots of questions, wanting to understand things from a LGBTI person's perspective. I have made a list of pastors from more accepting churches in Sydney who are welcoming of LGBTI people. I am encouraging them to talk with their ministry team and ultimately to have a conversation with all the church officers about the church's response to the issue. I believe all pastors need to have this conversation with their church. Bruce Manners from Avondale College Church has done this, as have some pastors from other denominations. My aim is to be able to state that the Seventh-day Adventist churches involved are safe for LGBTI people."

I am working to increase the

number of opportunities for open dialogue and networking with pastors and evangelists. Over the last few months I've initiated discussion on gay issues with church leaders in the San Francisco Bay Area. At that point some Kinship members were looking for a new church home. That home has become Church 1.0. I was honored to witness the first Sabbath service led by Marcos Apolonio.

I have used my efforts to find potential Kampmeeting presenters to engage with nationally recognized Adventist speakers on gay issues. I am compiling a list of safe churches here in the States and internationally.

Dave has coached me in writing letters about Kinship-related issues, individuals, and organizations. I recently wrote to Securing Hope Ministry [Adventist] after they hosted an internet radio broadcast featuring five gay people who claimed to have changed orientation. I wrote to the pastor of a well-known Adventist ministry whose deacon has harassed individuals in Kinship with intimidating remarks. I continue writing similar letters.

I teamed up with a Kinship ally to build Walla Walla University's Gay/Straight Alliance. It had been a closed Facebook discussion group. We advertised via Facebook that we would be having a meeting on campus. We offered refreshments, a movie, and a list of resources. Twenty-three people attended!

We are working to build safe places for pastors who support LGBTI people. One idea is to offer



a pastor appreciation meal. With the consultation of a local United Church of Christ pastor, I am working to make this an idea that can be duplicated in other areas. We are working to build a network that allows pastors to call and share with other affirming pastors ideas and support for their spiritual care of LGBTI members in their congregation.

Our goal is to strengthen the bonds between LGBTI people and their pastors and to lessen prejudice in churches.

Our Church Relations team is keeping a close eye on the new General Conference Commission on Homosexuality which has arisen, partially, out of issues involved in Africa. We get sincere letters from Africa seeking support on matters they deal with. So pray for us as we continue to support their needs and other needs around the world.

Project One is a movement within the Adventist North American and European Divisions and is supported by collegiate chaplains and other progressive church leaders. The national meeting will be held in downtown Seattle next February 1 and 14. *Project One's* focus is to reclaim the supremacy of Jesus in the Seventh-day Adventist Church and thus foster more inclusion in the church. I've been invited to attend, and I see this venue as a way to foster better inclusion for Kinship members. ▽

Apparently there is nothing that
cannot happen today.

—Mark Twain

Impressions from Board Meeting in Nags Head (NC), Sep. 30—Nov. 2



*Bodie Island
Lighthouse,
Nags Head*



The cook's team



The meeting place & accommodation



Dinner is ready



The board meeting



Dinner
is served



The view



MARRIAGE IN QUEENSLAND

Dave Coltheart

I am almost speechless with delight this afternoon as I write this: It has just been announced that the Queensland state parliament is debating a law to legalize same-sex relationships and enshrine that right in a scheme of civil relationships, similar to what is already in place in many other countries. It doesn't legalize marriage for same-sex couples because marriage is governed by federal, not state, law. However, the civil relationships scheme will allow for a parallel form of legal ceremony and certainly will provide full state recognition, within Queensland. Homosexuality was only de-criminalized in 1990, almost the last state to do so (Tasmania was the last).

What is unbelievable about this whole thing is that

Queensland is considered one of the most conservative states in Australia, and historically has always been behind the other five states and two territories on issues of social reform. What is all the more amazing is that this bill (it isn't a law yet) has just popped up out of nowhere, without fanfare, and so quickly that no one much has had time to muster any opposition to it. Certainly the churches have been silent on the issue so far today, but that may change. And, more amazing still, it is considered extremely likely that the bill will pass into law before the end of this year! Just like that!

The state premier and the deputy premier are on the public record of supporting the measure, and most of the Labor Party (the party currently in power in Queensland) sup-

ports the concept also. Passage of the bill is almost certain, although a "conscience vote" is being allowed.

It may not be the full marriage equality, but it is pretty close. For the moment half a loaf of bread is better than none at all. It is as far as the state government is allowed to go, a fact acknowledged by the deputy premier who introduced the bill. It will certainly put pressure on other states to follow suit, and eventually on the federal government in Canberra. The national Labor Party is set to debate the issue at its national conference in December 2011.

Wow, I feel like celebrating already. The vote will come too late to affect our commitment ceremony in two and a half weeks; but, hey, who cares? ▽

Latest development: On 30 November 2011, the Civil Partnerships Bill brought on by Deputy Premier Andrew Fraser passed through the Legislative Assembly, with 47 MPs voting yes and 40 no. The Civil Partnerships Act will allow same-sex and heterosexual couples to formally register their relationships with the Queensland Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages. The legislation aligns Queensland with Tasmania, Victoria, the ACT and NSW, which have already made similar reforms.

(Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LGBT_rights_in_Queensland)

Member Services



Numbers Numbers Numbers

Kinship defines several orientation identifications.

We mention them below with a division in groups, indicated by the members on their registration form.

2038 total active records

158 members identified themselves as bisexual:

Female	51
Male	100
Intersex	1
Trans female-to-male	2
Trans male-to-female	4

1129 members identified themselves as gay:

Male	1123
Trans female-to-male	3
Trans male-to-female	3

143 members identified themselves as heterosexual:

Female	69
Male	64
Trans female-to-male	3
Trans male-to-female	6
Straight parent couple	1

966 members identified themselves as

Female	483
Lesbian	472
Intersex	3
Trans female-to-male	2
Trans male-to-female	6

25 members identified themselves as "other" and are not classified in the above categories:

Female	7
Male	15
Intersex	1
Trans male-to-female	2

7 members identified themselves as queer:

Female	3
Male	4

55 members identified themselves as "questioning," indicating they are not sure in which category they belong to or want to belong to:

Female	20
Male	32
Trans male-to-female	3

Members by age:

65+	120
IMRU? = 30 and under	316

Totals

Transgender	32
Intersex	5
Family and Friends	91
Clergy	55
Contact only	7

Connection only members	13
SDA Colleges that get <i>Connection</i>	5
Postal Connections sent out	365



Hope is like a road in the country;
there wasn't ever a road,
but when many people walk on it,
the road comes into existence.

—Lin Yutang

We would like to introduce you to...



Stefan Pietruska

I was born and raised in Bremen, Germany. I still live there. I work as an administrator for IBM mainframes. I like computers, music, meteorology, geology, and astronomy. I also

like the color black, *Lord of the Rings*, Asian food, and the book *Disc World* (a series of forty books). I heard about Kinship from friends. This community has given me a better understanding of myself and my faith. I have been with my partner for twelve and a half years. I have one brother and one sister and friends all over the world. My Adventist congregation in Bremen is the most important part of my spiritual journey.



Stan Harris

I was born into a Seventh-day Adventist family in Columbus, Ohio, graduated from Columbus Eastwood Junior Academy, and was valedictorian at Mt. Vernon Academy in 1970. I attended Andrews University on a

music scholarship and graduated with honors in 1974. I completed my medical education on an Army scholarship in 1978 and finished training in military psychiatry at San Francisco's Letterman Army Medical Center in 1982. Today I work as a university psychiatrist and clinical professor at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles.

I like classical music, pipe organ, mountain hiking, health and fitness, and swimming. I like the color red for energy and the pipe organ for inspiration. My favorite foods are vegetarian ones.

I have been with Kinship since the 1980s. I live with my Siberian husky, Bodhi, and enjoy my friends. I would like to have a spouse someday. The most important thing for me about my spiritual journey is love and happiness.

James Johnson (Keon)

I am originally from Louisville, Kentucky, but currently live in Atlanta, Georgia. I attended the Magazine Street Seventh-day Adventist Temple Church, the oldest continuous African-American congregation in our denomination. I also attended E. L. Minnis,



one of the oldest schools in the denomination. It has been around for more than ninety years! My family was originally Baptist. They converted two or three years before I was born. I'm the first child in my family born in the Adventist church. The family faith is a mixture of Baptist and Adventist. Most of us are not vegetarian. Sab-

bath observance for the younger members of our clan is not strict; it's more the way Baptists keep Sunday.

I enjoy stimulating conversation, great food, working out, going to the movies, watching TV, surfing the net, and biking. My favorite color varies with my mood. I've revived my childhood love of green. My mother and sister thought I was weird because of that. When I explained that green is the color of the grass and trees I laid under as a child, my mother was okay. Now I understand it to be the color of life, peace, and prosperity. My favorite styles of music are gospel and rhythm-and-blues. They are the music of my heritage, secular and spiritual. I like other music, too.

When I go to the movies I tend to like comedy, sci-fi/fantasy, drama, and historical films. My favorite books are history and sociology. My favorite foods include Mexican, Italian, Thai, Chinese, soul, and Caribbean. I love food and am very adventurous if my wallet allows. I just refrain from unclean meats.

I found Kinship when I was learning to accept my sexuality and seeking to make it compatible, or learn if it was compatible, with my Adventism. It has helped me to see that there are many other gay Adventists and that homosexuality is *not* necessarily exclusive from or non-compatible with Adventism. At first the only information I could find was from other Christians who were not Adventists.

I am a lone wolf and have no partner. However, I wouldn't mind a good, strong, very attractive, masculine, intelligent, kind, gainfully employed, black Adventist man (just in case one is reading). <smile>

The most important part of my spiritual journey is to live and behave in truth and spirit. My views are so unorthodox I sometimes question why I still consider myself an Adventist. But, while I don't know

everything, I do know what I know; and my Adventist faith helps to keep me grounded and not rootless.



Elias Rowlandson

I was born in New South Wales, Australia, a regional centre of about 40,000 people. I have just started working in a fast food establishment as a kitchen hand. I like movies, books, music, travel, and friends. My favorite color is red. I like INXS music. My favorite movie is *Elmer Gantry*. My favorite book is *The Story of Danny Dunn* by Bryce Courtenay. My favorite food is cheesecake.

I heard about Kinship from a friend of mine at college. I had also read articles in *Adventist Today*, *Spectrum* magazine, and *GLOW [God's Love – Our Witness]*. All these sources were helpful and insightful for me. I might not have agreed with *GLOW's* ideology for LGBTIs, but I was young and knew nothing about myself. Kinship has helped me formulate a spiritual existence not reliant on the Adventist church or other authority.

I don't have any romantic interests at the moment. Most of my family is in Australia, but my mum and brother are overseas.

The most important thing for me about my spiritual journey is coming to an experience that isn't reliant on a church group for affirmation or acceptance (although it normally means having minimal or no involvement with them).

I have had a great time in Kinship. I have developed a capacity for self-preservation, and I hope other people that participate here will have as good an experience.



Erik Macville

I was born in the former Dutch colony now named Indonesia. My father's family emigrated from Scotland to the Dutch East Indies when Napoleon conquered the Netherlands. They became Dutch in the first half of the 19th century but did not mix with locals.

My mother is Dutch, French, Austrian, and Javanese. A German Adventist evangelist baptized her and my grandmother in 1929. I consider myself a third-generation Adventist.

In 1955 after the Indonesian independence, Dutch citizens were kicked out of the country, unless they wanted to become Indonesians. My parents decided to repatriate to Holland. At 16 years of age I entered pedagogic college to become a teacher. I graduated in 1961, married, and had two sons. My wife left us in 1973. I worked full-time for 38 years as a junior high school teacher. I taught Dutch language and biology. I raised my sons partly with the help of my partner. I retired in 2003, but am still active as a masseur/reflexologist with a small practice at home.

My favorite colors are brown and beige, colors of soil; they match my skin. I like various kinds of music, from opera to rhythm-and-blues. My favorite movie is *Gone With the Wind*. My favorite book is *Zafron: Shadow of the Mind*. I enjoy eating Italian, French, Greek, and Indonesian foods, particularly fruit and vegetables.

I met Kinship because a member of my church promotes Kinship in Holland and asked for my support. Each of my two sons has a daughter and a son. One of my sons is a widower. My other son has been married for 15 years. Both are baptized Adventists. I met my partner on a holiday to the U.S. We have lived together for 33 years now. I am active in church as a deacon, I clean the church once a month, and I teach Sabbath school classes. Because of my age, I minimize my activities at church.

The most important thing about my spirituality is having good contact with neighbors, giving them as much support as I can.



Jeremiah Kegara

I have been part of Kinship since 2002. I was baptized as a Seventh-day Adventist in 1976. My wife and I have four children. I am a veterinary researcher that specializes in herbs. I enjoy taking care of my five cows who help me support my family financially. I live in the Kisii County of Kenya. ▽

You wake up in the morning, and your purse is magically filled with twenty-four hours of unmanufactured tissue of the universe of your life! It is yours. It is the most precious of possessions. No one can take it from you. And no one receives either more or less than you receive.

- Dr. Thomas Arnold Bennett

Happy Days in Holland

What makes people happy? Does it have to do with the amount of activity in which people engage? Does it have to do with relaxation? Does it all depend on the type of personality someone has? In this study, 438 retired adults, ages 55-88, living in The Netherlands reviewed their daily activities for two years, jotting down in a diary what they did each day, and how happy they felt. Previous research has shown that certain activities are closely related to good feelings about life, for example, social activities, physical activities such as bicycling, and learning activities, including solving puzzles. Activities that do not typically increase one's happiness include housework, grocery shopping, doing the bills, and laundry.

In this study, these previous findings were examined, using the happiness recall recorded on a daily basis. In addition these researchers were interested in examining the relationship of restful activities - such as watching TV, napping, and rocking on the porch - to more demanding engagements. Previous research showed that activity is generally related to happiness: in general, the "doer" is happier than the couch potato. However, as they reasoned, the constant need for activity causes problems; periodic laziness may be helpful. Does some combination increase feelings of happiness? Another factor that has been shown to be important in studies of happiness is the trait of extraversion. People who have a higher score on this personality measure are more likely to feel happy. This is often explained as the outcome of extraverted people enjoying social activities more than introverted people. For them, engaging in social activities is related to feeling happy about life.

The men (276) and women (162) in the study gave reports on their activities and their feelings of happiness. In addition, the researchers eliminated the effects of anxiety, health, gender, and age, so that these variables would not figure in the results. Once the analysis was completed, the researchers found much support for earlier findings. Spending more time on social, physical, and cognitive activities related positively to happiness, and household activities did not. Interestingly, the combination of restful activity after more active engagement was highly correlated with happiness. True to other findings, extraverts enjoyed more social activities than introverts, and evaluated their world more positively.



From: *Finding the Key to Happy Aging: A Day Reconstruction Study of Happiness* by W. G. M. Odrlemans, A. B. Bakker, & R. Veenhoven. *The Journal of Gerontology*, Series B, 66, 665-674. ▽

Health Tip of the Month



Okay, it's no news flash that blueberries are nutritious. They've been high on our suggested shopping list for years now, and they're easy to love. They make high blood pressure take a nosedive. Eating blueberries daily for just 8 weeks can drop your blood pressure by 4% to 6%. That's a lot. Even more impressive, it works on obese adults with metabolic syndrome, a scary group of risk factors that invites heart disease and diabetes. The "dose": about 2 cups of fresh or frozen blueberries. Just put a bunch on your cereal and use the rest on a variety of dishes throughout the day. (By the way, blueberries aren't the only blood-pressure-friendly fruit. Cranberries, strawberries, and raspberries help, too.) Blueberry researchers —yep, there are people who do nothing else— believe the berries activate certain genes in your liver cells that help flush out bad cholesterol by 44%. This happens in just 3 weeks in the lab. There's also evidence that eating blueberries every day helps keep your colon healthy and shields your brain against Alzheimer's and premature aging.

Poor diet is a leading culprit when it comes to unhealthy cholesterol values. Eating a diet high in saturated fat and trans fats increases LDL and reduces HDL. Meats, eggs, and dairy products are particularly high in saturated fat, and any foods made with hydrogenated vegetable oils contain trans fats, so diets high in these items can lead to unhealthy cholesterol values. Too much dietary cholesterol can also affect blood cholesterol levels, although each person absorbs a different amount from his or her food, depending on his or her genetic makeup. Dietary cholesterol is found almost exclusively in foods of animal origin, such as eggs, meats, and dairy. Inactivity and other lifestyle choices, such as smoking habits, contribute to unhealthy cholesterol values as well. Several conditions and diseases can also elevate cholesterol levels. These conditions and diseases include diabetes mellitus, hypothyroidism, hypercholesterolemia, kidney disease, obstructive liver disease, and familial disorders such as familial hyperlipidemia. However, only a small portion of high cholesterol cases are a result of these medical conditions. Medical conditions that don't cause high cholesterol, such as high blood pressure, can interact with unhealthy cholesterol levels in such a way that they increase your risk of developing cardiovascular heart disease (CHD) even more. So it is important to reduce all heart disease risk factors by treating all conditions that contribute to heart disease. ▽

Creamy dill potato salad



A recipe by Nancy Bartling

¾ cup Hellman's mayonnaise
 (Please *do not* use Miracle Whip or I will haunt your every dream.)
 ¾ cup dill pickle relish
 2 tablespoons yellow mustard
 1 tablespoon dry dill weed
 1 teaspoon onion powder
 1 teaspoon garlic powder
 6 medium to large potatoes, cooked and cut into small ¼" chunks (7-8 cups)

- Boil potatoes, with skins on, for 20 minutes. Cool under cold running water until cool enough to handle. The potatoes need to be warm when mixed with the dressing. This helps infuse the flavors into the potatoes. Peel and dice the potatoes into ¼" pieces. Set potatoes aside.
- Combine first six ingredients before adding warm potatoes. Then add warm potatoes and stir gently. Add more mayonnaise if salad is too dry for your liking. Cover and chill.
- No added salt is necessary. Eggs are omitted because of my allergies. Nobody seems to miss them. Sometimes I add black or Spanish olives to the salad and reduce the amount of pickle relish. A sprinkle of sweet paprika dresses up the top of the dish.

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The Newsletter of Seventh-day Adventist
 Kinship International, Inc.

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 Printing : Doolittle's PrintServe

The *Connection* is published by Seventh-day Adventist Kinship International, Inc. PO Box 69, Tillamook, OR 97141 USA. Submissions are welcome and may be directed to the editor at connectioneditor@sdakinship.org or mailed to the principal office address above. Include your name as you want it published along with your address and telephone number(s).

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What you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments, but what is woven into the lives of others.

—Pericles, 495 – 429 BC

Impressions from Vermont Mini-Kampmeeting



◀ From left to right: Vern Davis, David Thaxton, Sandy Regal, Betty O'Leary, William Mitchell, Steve Marlow, Catherine Taylor, Jan Casteel, Larry Geraty, Marsha Brummel, Keith Ropka, Ron Gainy, Jana Marlow, Ken Brummel



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