

We are not called  
**connection**

The Newsletter of Seventh-day Adventist Kinship International, Inc. Vol. 34 No. 4 – May 2010



We are not called  
to do  
by God

extraordinary  
to do

extraordinary  
things,

but to do  
things,

but to do

ordinary things  
ordinary things

~~Jean Vanier~~

h  
with extraordinary love

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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 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) 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. 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 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

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 SDA Kinship International. Please send your check or money order to the address below or donate securely online at [sdakinship.org](http://sdakinship.org). (You can also donate using your Visa or MasterCard by contacting [treasurer@sdakinship.org](mailto:treasurer@sdakinship.org). You will be phoned so that you can give your credit card information in a safe manner.)

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SDA Kinship, PO Box 69, Tillamook, OR 97141, USA

or visit SDA Kinship's  
website at:  
[www.sdakinship.org](http://www.sdakinship.org).





## From the Editor

**David's front door haunts me. On first glance, it is a perfectly respectable front door. The wood is cared for. The screen locks. The house we enter through it is welcoming, homey, hospitable. There are no sirens. In fact the sign isn't even carved with fire. It's simple: black marker on white paper. Humidity has dimpled the surface. Edges blow gently if a breeze swoops in. Perhaps that is why I continue to be so startled. Nothing in the presentation is designed to give a warning that my life will change each time I reach my hand to enter. However, even as I type this, if I close my eyes and picture David's home, I see:**

**All that is necessary for evil to triumph  
is that good men do nothing.**

Edmund Burke

**This means me. This means that when I whine about the congregation I attend and their respect for Samuel Koranteng-Pipim, I have no excuse to walk away until God opens the door for me to leave. This means that when I don't like what the Adventist Review prints, I have no excuse not to respond. This means that when I hear about a pastor in Uganda who advocates, however respectfully, the mistreatment of lesbian and gay people, I had better find out what his e-mail address is and let him know another view. It does not matter if "they are too conservative and won't listen to me anyway" or if there are more of them than there are of me. It doesn't even matter that I get exhausted with the members of the gay community who jeer, even gently, at my Christianity. I have the responsibility to live an authentic life. I have the responsibility to use my gifts to work for places where respect is the ground rule of the context. I have the responsibility to take good enough care of myself that I can respond to those who would denigrate. There are no excuses. We are put here, with our own personalities, frailties, strengths, gifts, and energy, to affect those around us. I wish for you many things in this transition season. I wish for you gentle blessings. I wish for you health as you are able. I wish for you people who love you. I wish for you adventures and sunny skies. I wish for you to take care of yourself for you are infinitely valuable. And I wish for you to be haunted by David's door.**

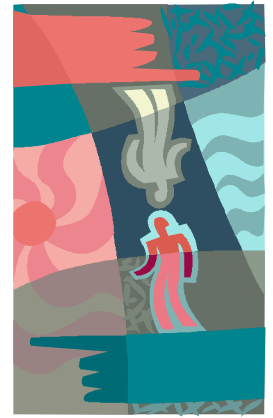
*Catherine*



## 👉 Hear Ye!

## 👉 Hear Ye!

The Nominating Committee is soliciting expressions of interest from members who have a passion to serve or minister to others within Kinship. The following leadership positions will be open for election by the membership in 2010:



- **Secretary**
- **Treasurer**
- **Director of Communications**
- **Director of Diversity**
- **Director of Youth Interests (elected by members under 30 years old)**

Potential candidates must meet the Bylaws' criteria for the position as posted in the **Members Only | Board Documents** portion of the Kinship website. Expressions of interest should be submitted to the Nominating Committee Chairperson at [nominations@sdakinship.org](mailto:nominations@sdakinship.org).

Thank you for considering a deeper level of commitment to Kinship! ▽

**If we all did the things we are capable of doing we would literally astound ourselves.**

—Thomas Edison

## ✉ Letter to the Editor

*Just read the recent Connection and wanted to say how much I enjoyed it, especially the real pearls of wisdom from each couple. I often scan each edition; however, this time I read all the personal stories—it was very refreshing hearing the common themes and seeing just how long-term some couples are.*

*Sending words of encouragement from Oz.*

*Cheers, Scott ▽*



Illustration: David dances for the ark by Mark.Chagall

## I Chose You

*In God's presence I will dance all I want for God chose me.*  
 —1 Samuel 6:22

Marcos Apolonio

There are six behaviors that need to be unlearned in order to move to greater self-acceptance.

- Unlearn moralistic self-judgment. Evaluate your behavior from the perspective of being *productive* or *unproductive*.
- Unlearn over-generalizing. (*I don't do well, therefore I am. This is due to a lack of spirituality.*)
- Unlearn impossibly high standards (The mile-long to-do list. Insisting on perfection.)
- Unlearn that your abilities have no limits. It is okay to fail. Focus on your strengths.
- Unlearn the comparison trap. You do not have to be better than someone else in order to be good.
- Unlearn passivity. Make a plan and follow it.

A blessing is not something that one person gives to another. A blessing is a moment of meeting, a certain kind of relationship in which both people involved remember and acknowledge their true worth and strengthen what is whole

in one another. We enable people to remember who they are. (Rachel Remen, *My Grandfather's Blessing*) ▽

## Kinship has a Chaplain!

At the board meeting in March, Kinship made a formal decision to have a chaplain as part of our leadership team. Marcos Apolonio is the first person to hold this position. The Kinship chaplain will work with Kinship members to provide loving, caring, non-judgmental, unconditional spiritual and emotional support. Our chaplain will promote healing and spiritual reconciliation for LGBTIQ Kinship members, many of whom have been harmed by organized religion. Marcos is planning on:

1. Offering individual counseling via Skype and telephone.
2. Working with the Kinship webmaster to provide a variety of relevant spiritual and



Marcos can be contacted at:  
[chaplain@sdakinship.org](mailto:chaplain@sdakinship.org).

- emotional articles for the website.
3. Promoting community support through intercessory prayer.
4. Representing SDA Kinship during times of crisis for its members.
5. Preparing devotionals and spiritual messages and make them available on the website and in the *Connection*.
6. Working with the Director of Church Relations to coordinate worship services and communion during Kampmeeting.
7. Providing spiritual and emotional support to Kampmeeting attendees.
8. Supporting the organization and celebration of same-sex religious unions.



## Activity Report

*Dave Ferguson, Director of Church Relations*

• I attended the Andrews University (AU) Conference on "Marriage, Homosexuality and the Church." This was a very challenging conference to sit through. The organizers did admit that the conference was organized as a response to the book, *Christianity and Homosexuality: Some Seventh-day Adventist Perspectives*. One of the organizers also encouraged attendees to read the book. It is obvious that the book is having an impact on the church; it is creating discussion, and I believe we will see some progress in getting more discussions started with the church in the next couple of years. We need to remember that this is a gradual process. As with most church organizations, the conservative elements are seeking to use this opportunity to advance their agenda. But, as a direct result of this conference, I was contacted by a local pastor who is preparing for ordination. The conference told all the candidates that at the next meeting they would discuss the AU Conference, so they were to buy the CDs and listen

to them. We are in discussions with the conference on this since they are requiring the candidates to listen to the CDs but not requiring that they read the book, claiming that the AU Conference presented a "balanced view."



• Because National Prayer Breakfast organizers supported the draconian legislation in Uganda, the American Prayer Hour was organized to be held in cities across the country in spiritual support of LGBTI issues. Six days prior to the event I noticed nothing was being done in Los Angeles and made contact with the organizer. The Glendale City Church was designated as the host church for the American Prayer Hour in LA. This created substantial publicity for Glendale City Church and for Kinship. Several local churches mentioned our service, and we were included in an article in The New York Times. One local pastor said he had to attend because, if it were not for Kinship, he would not be a pastor today. He attended Kinship meetings in Dallas and in Long Beach when he was struggling to come out.

I have had the opportunity in the last six months to visit with several people who are in the process of coming out in their churches and wanted some guidance. These are the conversations that make everything I do worth it.

- We have been working with some of our allies regarding the legislation in Uganda. In January we created enough of a stir over the Seventh-day Adventist Ugandan Union Mission president's support of the bill that the General Conference felt pressured to release a statement distancing the church from the legislation. We could have wished for a stronger statement, but it was a first to have them provide a real statement about this.
- Glendale City Church is discussing how to begin advertising to the LGBTI community. Hopefully, this can become a model for other progressive churches to follow. ▽



*Picture taken at Kinship Board Meeting*



## Spring Cleaning

Keisha McKenzie

When I was small, it was common for people to talk about spring cleaning and mean it literally. We threw open the windows, aired our homes, gave away old clothes, and started walking off any “winter baggage.” I still feel extra fresh during spring, especially when I see the sun hanging in the sky a little longer and the first few buds breaking out on the branches outside.

I prefer to start my new year in March, rather than in January. By March the mainstream “New Year’s resolution” fever has worn off, and I no longer have to hear what TV breakfast show hosts think I should change about myself. The popular spotlight has moved to some other issue, and I can enjoy the month without a million contradictory voices clamoring for my allegiance. I can be still and watch the trees.

When the trees outside begin to blossom, they’re not blossoming because someone voted to permit it. The trees follow a pattern that God laid down in their cell biology, a pattern that unfolds via wind, sun, rain, soil, and time. Every spring, after the dead quiet of winter, that pattern pushes out new twigs, leaves, and petals. Soon buds open, and fruits

appear. Whether humans cultivate the land or leave it to rest, this is a reliable order.

Writer Oriah Mountain Dreamer once presented a graduation speech to her former high school, and she described how uncertain she was about what to say. (Graduation speeches are notoriously difficult to write: everyone remembers if a speech is bad, but whether it is good or bad, no one remembers what was said.)

Speaking to graduates who were ready to leave their most awkward years behind, she said:

“Your parents and teachers and others who care about you, in an effort to prepare you for life, have told you a story about who you are and what you can and should do. Now, it’s your job to sift through all of what you have been given and decide what is useful to you and what is not. Because... a lot of what you have been taught has *nothing* to do with you.”

“There was a short stunned silence followed by a smattering of polite applause.”<sup>[1]</sup>

I wonder how many parents left that ceremony pleased with the speech! Not even friends like to be told that their opinions aren’t helpful, and all of us grow by being willing to learn. Yet when every passing soul has an opinion

about your unfolding, how do you filter the voices?

I think Job’s story is marvelous, not only because he didn’t curse God, but also because he didn’t curse his friends. His friends explained his upturned life as just punishment, but God judged that they didn’t have a clue about Job or his circumstances. No doubt they intended well, but their good intentions only gave their words more power to undermine Job’s confidence in the one Authority that held him steady. Instead of cursing his friends, though, Job offered sacrifices for them; he acted in favor of those who believed him wicked and out of step with his Redeemer. He trusted God to balance the scales and held onto God’s pattern in him.

When I look outside each spring, I see all of creation following its pattern; and I remember this very simple prayer: “Blessed are You, Lord our God, king of the universe, who has made me as He wanted me.”<sup>[2]</sup> What do you see in spring? ▽

[1] “Graduating into Your Own Life.” *The Green Bough*. Retrieved March 12, 2010, from <http://oriahsinvitation.blogspot.com/2010/02/graduating-into-your-own-life.html>

[2] Blue, Lionel, & Magonet, Jonathan. (1988). *The Blue Guide to the Here & Hereafter*. London: Collins, p. 126.

# We would like to introduce you to:



## **Ornette Clennon**

In 2009 Kinship received news of a new chapter in Manchester, England, led by Ornette Clennon. With the help of Mike Lewis, Kinship coordinator of Great Britain

and Eire, Ornette invited people from the area to meet on a regular basis. He is a go-getter and wants to create a place where Kinship folk can meet and talk with each other and exchange experiences.

Ornette was born in London of a Jamaican family and raised in Manchester, England. He completed his undergraduate and doctoral work in music while living in The Netherlands and Edinburgh, Scotland.

"I am a musician, community worker, and university lecturer in creative learning. I am academically based at Oxford Brookes University but work in the community as a researcher all around the country. My family is Seventh-day Adventist and I was brought up in the Manchester Adventist Church.

"My coming out process was in two stages. The first stage was relatively easy: telling my closest family members when I was in my early twenties. Initially they were shocked but quickly became very accepting of me.

"Stage two began in my thirties when I came out to extended family members with whom I was staying at the time. These born-again Christians asked me to leave their home. My two pastors baptized me at age 35, with full knowledge of my sexuality. I was leader of one of our church's cell groups who worked with local charities in the city centre. When the larger part of the congregation began to hear that I might have a partner, the board voted to disfellowship me. My family and I had been part of this congregation for more than four decades. I had thought they loved me in Christ for who I was. I have since found an accepting and loving Adventist church with whom to worship. The pastor has offered the church's support for any ministry group I might lead that addresses LGBTI issues.

"This experience did not diminish my faith but it did teach me the importance of fellowshiping with people who practice the love of Christ. Living in an intolerant environment is like having the seeds of the gospel sown on rocky ground. Being where I am now is like the seed sown in fertile soil.

"I began to investigate Kinship when my first pastors heard about the organization during the court case when the church tried to stop SDA Kinship from using 'Seventh-day Adventist' in its full name. Mike Lewis encouraged me to start the group in

Manchester. His support came at a time when my original cell group was failing through lack of church support and I was praying for a way to make my ministry begin to flourish again. Mike had the initial contacts and has given me much-needed support ever since.

"We are currently trying to establish an email prayer circle for the network of people associated with the group. We are also planning regular meetings in Manchester."



## **Ron Gainey**

was born in North Carolina and went to the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. The part of being a pharmacist that Ron most enjoys is helping people who appreciate the services they receive. When Ron is not working, he enjoys music, playing spades, and being with people. One of the most exciting events for Ron this year was when his husband, son, and daughter-in-law got to be with him in Detroit

when the University of North Carolina won the basketball championship.

When asked what he liked about Kinship, Ron replied, "Variety is the spice of life!" Ron reports that his family is "dysfunctional" and that might be part of the reason why the most important thing about his spiritual journey is "realizing that God loves me, regardless."



## **Arlene Lois Arthur**

was born on the West Indian island of Trinidad. She attended High Point High School in Beltsville, Maryland and Howard University in the neighboring District of Columbia. Arlene works primarily with children in her role as

a speech and language pathologist. She says, "The kids are my favorite part of the job." She enjoys nature walks and photography. When she was asked what has been exciting for her this year, Arlene replied, "I came out more to co-workers. I have begun to be more myself. I have learned to pray again."

She found Kinship in 1997 in the Washington gay paper, *The Blade*. When asked what she liked ➤

about Kinship, Arlene listed: "the fellowship, meeting new people, LGBTI friends, Kampmeeting, pool parties (thanks Yolanda!), and the Rehoboth Beach mini-Kampmeeting." She said she would like to be able to communicate with Kinship members several times a year. A year ago Arlene began a new relationship with "Rhonda." The most important part of her spiritual journey is getting closer to God. One of the difficult things is feeling alone when she goes to church.



**Denise Samen**

is a retired native New Yorker, complete with sense of humor and great hats. She edits the newsletter and bulletin for her church and has done some writing for Kinship Women's *Lavender Letter*. She enjoys traveling and is excited about the possibility of relocating out of New

York City.

She found Kinship online and joined us for the first time at a New York City Region One gathering. Then she made it to Kampmeeting. This spring she journeyed to the Rehoboth Beach mini-Kampmeeting. Denise says she enjoys worshiping with Kinship and meeting new people. Being with people she enjoys has been the most important part of her spiritual journey. Denise's partner is a former Baptist who is willing to study the Bible with her.



**Terry Lee Hume**

was born in Washington Adventist Hospital and went to Adventist schools her entire educational life. She was trained as a respiratory therapist but now "orchestrates the total reconstruction and restoration of a 1906 Victorian Keystone house." She also gardens, races kayaks and

canoes, and enjoys bird watching. Terry says she is excited about her plans to build a green roof on her house and install a hot tub.

Terry met Kinship in 1980 at a potluck in Yucaipa, California. The things she has most enjoyed about our community are the Rehoboth Beach and Vermont mini-Kampmeetings. When asked about relationships and her family, Terry replied that she is single and "looking for a femme." She is the second of five children, her parents have been married for 50 years, and her grandfather lived to be 100!



**Sequoia El-Amin**

was born in Albany, New York, and attended Atlantic Union College in Massachusetts. In her work as a receptionist she enjoys conversing with different people. Outside of work, Sequoia is interested in music, sign language, biking, and theater. Last year she started work on a

master's degree in interpretation, began a new relationship, and has "restarted life."

Sequoia found Kinship through a friend several years ago. "I was searching for an answer for being homosexual and still feeling God near. My friend told me to look at the [Kinship] website. The rest is history. When I am with Kinship, I like being myself, allowing my inner support system to know a spiritual support system, knowing the good people, and having a diversity of people who share a similar story." When asked about what was important to her about her spiritual journey Sequoia replied, "I want to remain close to God. I want to be a witness without pounding the Bible. I want to bring God to every aspect of my relationship with friends." When asked about her relationships and family she said, "Currently my girlfriend has been the biggest support in my life. God knows, I needed it. I have participated in more Kinship events because of her willingness to interpret when needed. She helps me never forget where I am coming from! My family is slowly accepting my life as I choose to live it. My grandmother, who had disowned me, is now talking to me and rebuilding our relationship."



**Stephanie Tom**

(right in picture) was born and went to school in New York City. She works as a technical operations analyst and enjoys being a disc jockey, working on cars and motorcycles, driving, and riding. She is excited about her plans to have a baby. Stephanie found Kinship through Brian and other friends. She enjoys the "friendly atmosphere and open arms."



**Latonia "Toni" Staten**

graduated from Pine Forge Academy, Columbia Union College, and the University of Maryland. She is a substance abuse counselor who enjoys educating her patients about the effects of drugs and what it means to be in recovery. Outside of work Toni is interested in classical, gospel, and rhythm and blues music, reading, going to plays, writing and reading poetry as well as short stories, watching football, and playing video games. This year she is excited about getting into graduate school and about "celebrating 22 years with Candare! Yea!"



Toni learned about Kinship through a friend and then read an article in the *Washington Blade* about a young man who was struggling with his sexuality. She says, "I contacted Yolanda and the rest is history." She has enjoyed the Rehoboth Beach mini-Kampmeeting and "feeling a kindred oneness with others who are like me." She would like to see Kinship reach out to more women. The most important part of her spiritual journey is developing a relationship with God. When asked if she wanted to share a little about her partner, Toni said, "She is wonderful! She and I met in high school and became sweethearts in college when we went to Columbia Union College and were forced to be roommates. Of course we have our struggles, but we keep God first in the relationship. Candare is the quiet one. I talk. But, when she speaks, it is like getting a dam to close. I know; it's like Ripley's *Believe It or Not*."

**Candare Goodman**

is another soul who spent her educational life in the Adventist school system. She was born in Bridgeport, Connecticut, and graduated from Pine Forge Academy and Columbia Union College. She works as an environmental protection specialist and oversees both people and projects. Outside of work she enjoys reading, computers, photography, and watching football ("Go Cowboys!").

This year she is excited about beginning her own business. She found out about Kinship from the *Washington Blade* and has enjoyed getting to know different people. Candare would like to see Kinship make a greater effort to reach out to people of color. She says the most important part of her spiritual journey is "connecting with God." Candare describes her partner as "a beautiful, intelligent, spiritual woman whom I have been with for 22 years. She is in the process of pursuing a master's degree in community counseling and a certification in addictions. I could not be more proud to build a family with and spend the rest of my life with this woman."



**Nathaniel Brian Durham**

was born in Woodbury, New Jersey, and went to Delaware Valley Jr. Academy, Eastern Shore Academy, Blue Mountain Academy, and Columbia Union College. He is beginning his doctorate at George Washington

University where he works as an accounting analyst. He says he "loves working with the Education Department." Brian must really enjoy his education because he lists academia as one of his hobbies. He also enjoys travel, meeting people, and home décor. The things that are most exciting for him this year are his new job and "planning to be a dad." Brian says he is one of the many people who enjoys Kinship's fellowship and Kampmeetings. The most important thing for his spiritual journey is "being able to draw closer to God and then share Him with others." He says, "My family is a very close-knit group. This year we have been going through a lot of turmoil, and it is drawing us even closer and stronger." ▽

We are not human beings having  
a spiritual experience.  
We are spiritual beings having a  
human experience.  
-Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

## KINSHIP OLDER ADULTS



Recently, researchers have found more positive news about the brain. For some time the idea of a naturally declining brain has been challenged by research showing continued plasticity and cellular regeneration. However, more recently researchers suggest that, if kept in good shape, the brain can continue to build pathways that can enable some problems to be solved even faster than when younger. For example, the brain, as it traverses middle age, gets better at recognizing the central idea, the big picture. The trick, however, is finding ways to keep brain connections in good condition and to grow more of them. "The brain is plastic and continues to change, not in

getting bigger but allowing for greater complexity and deeper understanding," says Kathleen Taylor, a professor at St. Mary's College of California.

Educators say that one way to nudge the neural pathways of adults in the right direction is to challenge the very assumptions they have worked so hard to accumulate over the years. With a brain already full of well-connected pathways, adult learners should "jiggle their synapses a bit" by confronting thoughts that are contrary to those they customarily have, says Dr. Kathleen Taylor, who is 66. Continued brain development and a richer form of learning may require that you "bump up against people and ideas" that are different from the ones you currently know. In a history class, that might mean reading multiple viewpoints, and then reflecting on how what was learned has changed your view of the world.

"If you always hang around with those you agree with and read things that agree with what you already know, you're not going to wrestle with your estab-

lished brain connections... We have to crack the cognitive egg and scramble it up. And if you learn something this way, when you think of it again you'll have an overlay of complexity you didn't have before — and help your brain keep developing as well," according to Dr. Taylor.

Along these lines, Jack Mezirow, a professor emeritus at Columbia Teachers' College, proposes that adults learn best if presented with what he calls a "disorienting dilemma," or something that "helps you critically reflect on the assumptions you've acquired." Thirty years ago, Dr. Mezirow studied women who had gone back to school. The women took this bold step only after having many conversations that helped them challenge their own ingrained perceptions that women could not do what men could do. ▽

*New York Times* by Barbara Strauch, Jan. 3, 2010, Education, 10.  
*The Positive Aging Newsletter*  
 (<http://www.healthandage.com>,  
[www.taosinstitute.net](http://www.taosinstitute.net))

## Local Wisdom

### – Building Relationships



#### By Stephanie Lou

Because I am a child of an abusive home, I've come to realize that most of the things people fight about are silly. Either they jump to conclusions about their partner (lack of trust) or they are unwilling to do what their partner wants (compromise).

#### By G. Phillips

"If you can't trust someone, then how can you love them?" I have no idea who started this quote but I love its meaning.

#### By Heidi Johnson

About my relationship with Geri, I'd have to say (and I'm sure he'd agree) that sex is at the top of the list. Perhaps I should call it the pleasure bond because it's more descriptive. We were very lucky to find each other because we are very compatible. We have similar standards of cleanliness. We're comfortable with a lot of togetherness. Neither of us wanted children or to get married when we were younger. I'm an atheist and he's a deist, which is the same thing for all practical purposes. We're both pretty sensible with money. He doesn't smoke cigarettes. He's very patient with me. I have learned that another deal breaker for me is that I don't want to waste my life on living with a man who isn't funny. (My first husband was a drama king!) We have similar interests in watching sports. We both admire each other. ▽



**AIDS WALK BOSTON**  
SUNDAY, JUNE 6, 2010

From **all walks of life**™

**AIDS Walk Boston Blog**



Dear Friends,

Did you know that in the United States someone is infected with HIV every 9 1/2 minutes? Or that every half hour someone in the U.S. dies due to HIV/AIDS? These are just a few of the reasons why I will be joining over 10,000 other people on Sunday, June 6, 2010, for the 25th AIDS Walk Boston to raise awareness and raise money to make a difference in the fight against HIV/AIDS in our community; and I need your help.

This is my 9th year doing the walk and it means so much to be able to give back to an organization that means so much to me. The work they do is monumental and vital to the community they serve. I know the economy is awful right now, and not everyone can give as they have before. Give what you are able, even if it's only emotional support. Please keep in mind that when times are tough, governmental support of community outreach organizations is one of the first to be cut.

Please help me by making a pledge to support the programs and services of AIDS Action Committee of Massachusetts. AAC is the oldest and largest AIDS service organization in New England. They provide vital services to over 2,500 clients living with HIV/AIDS helping with healthcare management, legal assistance, utility assistance, and counseling support. AAC also conducts statewide prevention programs that reach tens of thousands of individuals at risk of infection. Plus, AAC is involved in essential advocacy and policy efforts, such as developing the National AIDS Strategy. Most importantly, these programs and services need our help to ensure they continue.

You can learn more about this event by visiting AIDS Walk Boston's website at [www.aidswalkboston.org](http://www.aidswalkboston.org). If you would like to participate in the Walk, you can also register easily online.

Thank you in advance for your gift!

Sincerely,

Travis Roe

## **Soul Force and Colin Daniels**

I grew up in the Seventh-day Adventist church, and decided to attend an Adventist boarding academy for high school. It came out there that I was gay, and my dean and principal cornered me one day and asked me about my sexual orientation over and over. Finally, I looked them in the eyes and said the hardest words I have ever said in my life: "No, I am not gay." I followed that by asking what would happen to a student who was gay and open about it on campus. I found out that their protocol was similar to that of the campuses that we will be visiting on the Ride. I vowed to myself that night that I would never sit idly by and watch my sisters and brothers who are LGBTQAI suffer in the closet by themselves, that instead I would blast those doors off and bring them a message of love.

I advocate fearless faith, and testing mine and that of others. I constantly tell people, to borrow a line from Hanisch, to "match my lightning with your own light." This is why I joined the Ride—I want to show people that you can be harmoniously gay and Christian, that you need not choose one over the other. I want to empower people to talk about the intersections of oppression, and to plant and cultivate seeds of change. Lastly, I am a person who is physically disabled, and I want to empower those who are disabled LGBTQAI people of faith to get involved in these conversations. Oftentimes, our bodies are censored by queer and straight people alike because they feel uncomfortable looking at us. But people need to see and hear us because we are valid members of this community. To be the first disabled person selected in the history of the Ride is such a privilege; and throughout this journey I keep thinking of a quote by Ben Harper: "I am blessed, I am blessed, I am blessed to be a witness." ▽

<http://www.soulforce.org/article/1581>

# PASSOVER FOR A PROSTITUTE

*Catherine Taylor*

The land lies huge in our mind, expanded through millennia and miracles: shaking mountains, brass serpents, disasters and redemptions, object lessons that touch the end of time. Though this story takes place on the edge of the Jordan, it actually begins at the Red Sea. Well, no. It actually begins with Joseph in Egypt. No, before that. Logically, I think I can begin the story with Abraham. But it really starts at the edges of Eden. And while the focus of this vignette is on a hospitable prostitute, it is actually about the character of God.

When the administrators of Earth chose not to trust God, and fell for the insinuations of the evil one, they lost Eden, at least for a while. In order to redeem and return mortals to Eden, Jesus lost Heaven, at least for a while. Characteristically, even in the midst of this first disaster,

God was looking at the hope-filled, bigger picture. Our Deity designed a redemption that encompassed everyone who trusted the Offer. And God always had town criers from many backgrounds who invited those around them to a place of sanctuary. Enoch warned of the end of time. Noah warned about the need for an ark. Abraham lived God's love and protection to some of the most selfish and violent people alive.

What we often forget about Abraham is that he was the town crier/ambassador/messenger/prophet for Heaven to a really odd lot. Abraham did not march into Canaan to conquer the territory. He crossed the river to herd sheep. As you probably remember, Bible writers used people and actions as object lessons. It was no accident that God sent a shepherd to cross the river. He was a representative of the other Shepherd. While herding sheep, Abraham was a demonstration of God's love. He rescued the kings of the Sodom valley. He showed a

way of generosity and peace. He taught about the precepts and expectations of Yahweh. And so did Isaac. And so did Jacob. Each of them left their prophetic and ambassadorial footprints on the land and the memories of Canaan.

When Joseph got his job transferred to become a missionary in Egypt, the people of Canaan got a few hundred years to contemplate the lessons they had been shown and to choose whether or not they would put them into practice. Any Mesopotamian archaeologist can tell you the details of that particular collective decision-making process. I get emotional at television commercials. I get arrhythmias when I think of how the ancients in that part of the world chose to treat their women, their children, and their vulnerable.

El Shaddai has limits to His tolerance of violence. In the fullness of time, the children of Israel were sent on their way back to Abraham's adopted homeland. Their job was to be a light to the world: open their doors to the vulnerable and alien, destroy violence (and only then to destroy those who clung to violence), and build a country that would demonstrate the grace of God to mortals.

Designed to be Heaven's messengers to the surrounding nations, Israel had trouble understanding and accepting their job

description. They couldn't understand their own responsibilities and opportunities. They had difficulty believing that the brass serpent could mean "and if I be lifted up, I will draw all unto Me."

Despite their "difficulties," the news of the burning Sinai, the sanctuary, the cloud by day and the fire by night, the brass serpent, the Egyptian losses, the flowing water, the falling manna, the reluctant blessings of Balaam, and the redemptive object lesson of Moses had reached the homes of the people of Canaan as surely as the BBC, CNN, or Google reaches us today. The owners of the iron chariots were close to the end of their contemplative probationary era. It was time to make some decisions.

And it was Passover. (Joshua 4:19)

These things don't happen by accident.

The first Passover happened as Egypt made the choices that set it against Yahweh. This Passover began as Canaan made the final choices that set them against El Shaddai. In the first Passover, a heavenly messenger (angelos) avenged the cries of those who had been persecuted in Egypt. In this Passover, earthly messengers (angelos) were designated to avenge the cries of those who had been persecuted in Canaan. Before the first Passover, believers



were told to brush scarlet blood across their door posts and to bring all who would come into their homes for protection. Before this Passover, the believer was told to hang a scarlet cord from her window and bring all who would come into her home for protection. A series of miracles accompanied Israel as they prepared to leave Egypt. A series of miracles accompanied Israel as they prepared to enter Canaan.

The criteria for Passover salvation in these two stories are quite similar. It is NOT based on nationality, occupation, marital status, age, gender, food preferences, athletic ability, or.... It is based on a willingness to accept God at His word, a willingness to build a relationship based on that acceptance, and a willingness to match behavior with belief. It is belief and relationship that shine redemptive beacons across time, defying all prejudice. The collective chosen people failed miserably to represent God. Yahweh so loved and honored Rahab that He chose her genes to be part of Him for eternity. ▽

**A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step.**  
-Chinese Proverb

a heterosexual lifestyle. There are

*News from Australia*

# Don't Ask, Don't Tell

*David Potter*

Our church should re-examine its approach to sociology. We still officially regard women as somehow beneath men and unworthy of ordination to the gospel ministry, based on the sole criterion that they are female. This is unjustifiable in an age which has seen women overcome almost all the obstacles society has put in their way.

And despite mounting evidence to the contrary, we continue to insist that sexual orientation is a choice. It wasn't a choice for me. From the earliest age I was aware of a natural instinct that drew me to females. At the age of 61, I still find women attractive, especially my wonderful wife. Sexual orientation, it seems, is innate and not very amenable to change. It may be as irreversible as eye or skin colour.

In his article, Russell (March 17, 2010) makes no attempt to identify the "gay lifestyle" that he fears someone might be trying to impose on him. There is no more a gay lifestyle than there is

many heterosexual lifestyles. The one I subscribe to is monogamous and has Jesus at the centre. Do I share my heterosexual lifestyle with someone like, say, Tiger Woods or Jesse James?

It is misguided to suggest that there is a single gay lifestyle. It is equally misguided to suggest that Scripture clearly identifies homosexuality as sin. The word homosexual is not found in the KJV. The first Bible to introduce it was the RSV, in 1946. Yes, there are several references in the Bible to some kind of same-sex activity; but those convinced these represent a blanket ban on ALL same-sex relationships and activity would do well to re-examine the issue. The traditional interpretation is simply not the only way to understand the sacred text.

Sadly, the few voices trying to make this point are not being listened to. Anyone reading Romans 1 with a clear mind will recognise that verses 26 and 27 are addressed to heterosexuals. The verses clearly refer to individuals who go against their own nature and switch sides. This is unnatural; it is perverse. But it is not perverse for a homosexual man or a lesbian to be attracted to a same-sex individual. Same-sex attraction is natural for perhaps 5% of people, including 5% of Christians.

When I opened my Bible this morning, my eyes fell on these words: "And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation" (Eph 1:13). I would like to share this message with all GLBTI believers. All His children are precious in His sight; all are included. ▽



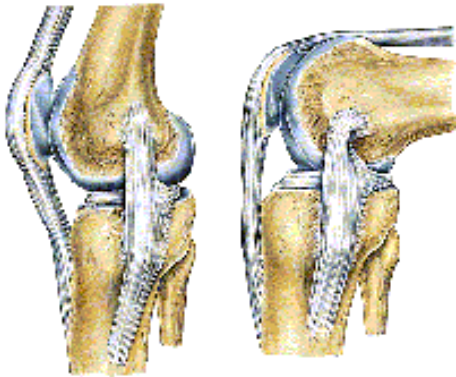
# Health Tip of the Month

**Walnuts are already in a heart-healthy league of their own** because of their cholesterol-improving powers. And now a small new study suggests that eating walnuts every



day may help give blood vessels a much needed tune-up in people with diabetes. In the study, people with type 2 diabetes were asked to eat about 2 ounces of walnuts every day. After 8 weeks, endothelial function improved significantly in the walnut eaters. Why is this good news? Because endothelial cells - that thin layer of cells that lines the inside of blood vessels - may be one of the first places to go bad when people with diabetes start developing vascular disease.

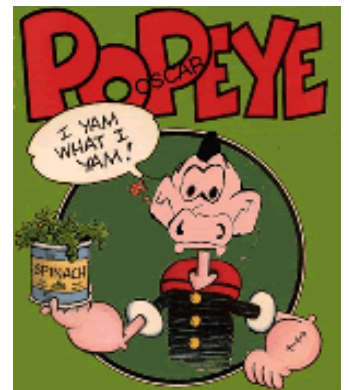
## If your knees bother you when you bend 'em, try these pill-free pain beaters.



Strengthening quads (leg muscles in the front of the thighs) can help you maintain cartilage because your muscles act as shock absorbers. Strong quads have been shown to protect against cartilage loss in a certain area of the knee (lateral compartment of the patella-femoral joint). Even if cartilage has vanished in other parts of the knee, people with the strongest quads have still reported less knee pain and better physical function than people with the weakest. Don't wait to strengthen; more than half of the people with cartilage breakdown are under age 65. **Take a hike.** Or a walk. People who pick up their feet and commit to regular aerobic exercise have much less muscle and joint pain as they age. Even better, pick up the pace. Vigorous activities like running, swimming, and brisk walking - anything that boosts your heart rate and makes it slightly difficult to talk - could increase the

amount of cartilage in your knees. The caveat: Vigorous exercise = good for the knees; vigorous exercise that causes a joint injury = really bad for the knees. **Fill up.** Berries, ginger, avocado, flaxseeds, omega-3-rich fish (trout and salmon in North America), or the algae where the fish get their omega-3 (you'd get it in the form of a DHA supplement) all help stifle joint-damaging inflammation.

**Environmental toxins are often bad news for your liver.** But you could safeguard your health by eating spinach. Chlorophyll and chlorophyllin, two substances found in spinach and other leafy greens, may help reduce the body's absorption of aflatoxin, a common, but potentially harmful, type of environmental toxin. Aflatoxin is a problematic substance produced by the molds that grow on certain food crops, like corn, cottonseed, peanuts, tree nuts, and wheat. And since aflatoxin is known to cause liver damage, the FDA sets limits on how much can be in our food sources. But you may be able to add an extra measure of protection by eating leafy greens. When volunteers in a study were exposed to very small, safe doses of aflatoxin, less showed up in their systems if they were also given a little bit of chlorophyll or chlorophyllin. Researchers believe chlorophyll and chlorophyllin may form some sort of beneficial bond with aflatoxin that reduces intestinal absorption. In addition to spinach, other good sources of chlorophyll include broccoli, parsley, green beans, kale, arugula, and leeks. And here are some delicious ways to enjoy some of these veggies:



## From Yolanda's Kitchen: Raw Veggie Picnic Salad

### Ingredients:

- 6 slices Worthington® Stripples®
- 4 c. broccoli florets
- 1 c. chopped celery
- 1 (10 oz.) package frozen green peas, thawed
- 1 c. sweetened dried cranberries
- ½ c. chopped green onions
- 1 c. seedless green grapes
- 1 c. seedless red grapes
- ½ c. slivered almonds (toasted lightly)

### Coating:

- ¼ c. white sugar
- 1 t. salt
- ¼ c. white wine vinegar
- 2 T. grated onion
- ¼ c. grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 ½ c. mayonnaise
- Serves 6
- Prep Time: 20 minutes
- Cook Time: 10 minutes

### Directions:

- 1 Prepare Stripples® as you wish (either fried over medium-high heat or on baking sheet and place under broiler until lightly browned). Drain, crumble, and set aside.
- 2 In a large bowl, toss together the ingredients.
- 3 In a separate bowl, whisk together the sugar, salt, vinegar, grated onion, Parmesan cheese, and mayonnaise.
- 4 Pour dressing over the salad. Gently toss to coat.

## Note from Uganda



*Kiyimba Brown*

Right now we are very concerned about the legislation that is before our parliament. If this bill passes into law, the lives many gay and straight Ugandans will be in great danger. I am concerned about the spirit in which it was introduced and is being promoted. Many LGBTI people have said they will leave Uganda and seek asylum in other countries.

If this bill passes, pastors will not be able to offer prayers, counseling, and information to anyone in the gay community. The law requires us to report a lesbian or gay person within twenty-four hours. It has increased hate against gay people and even against people who are "suspected" of being gay or lesbian. I didn't used to be afraid if people knew I was gay. Nowadays I am very scared. I know I can be attacked anywhere and anytime. I know two young gay men who were assaulted and had their properties destroyed. People like Pastor Martin Sempa use this situation and their pulpit to stir up animosity and danger for our community.

The one good thing about this bill is that it has broken down the taboos about discussing homosexuality. The issue has been all over our television stations. ▽

## Women and Children First

*July 19-21, 2010*

Holiday Inn Express Hotel & Suites  
520 John B. Wilson Ct—Lawrenceville, GA

The cost for the two days will be \$125/per person if you are sharing a room and \$175/per person if you would like a hotel room to yourself. Children 19 and under stay free in parents' room.

Fill-out the registration/payment form on  
[www.sdakinship.org](http://www.sdakinship.org).

## connection ▽

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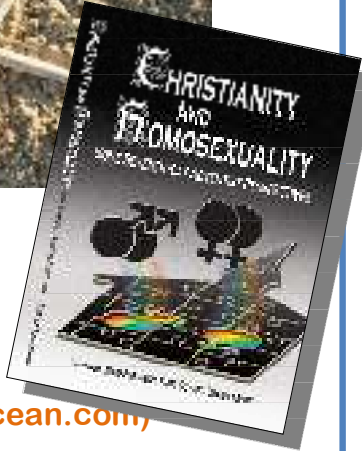
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Member of the Gay and Lesbian Press Association.

# The Beach and The Book



September 30  
—October 3

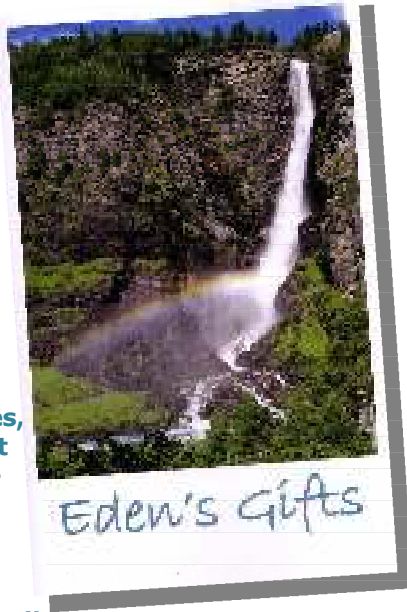
Location:  
Sandfiddle Beach  
House  
([www.rentalsontheocean.com](http://www.rentalsontheocean.com))

To register access [www.sdakinship.org](http://www.sdakinship.org)

- Click on Events
- Click on Book and the Beach

For more information please feel free to contact Catherine at [region1@sdakinship.org](mailto:region1@sdakinship.org)

Here's a Bible study for those of you who would like something easy to give to the people in your life who have questions about the "clobber texts." Based completely on Bible study techniques used by Adventists and careful Bible students, this study written by a Kinship member, looks at the principles, policies, and practices that affect the discussion of homosexuality and the Bible. If you would like us to mail it to you, write [katgurian@aol.com](mailto:katgurian@aol.com) and give us your snail mail address and number of copies you would like.



# European Kinship Meeting 2010 & Holiday week Neer (Limburg) The Netherlands

We would like to welcome you to our annual European Kinship Meeting and EKM Holiday Week! This year we chose the luxurious bungalows complex *Braampeel* to meet with our needs for the weekend. If you are interested in staying with us to see more of The Netherlands, Belgium, and Germany, a cozy holiday house will be rented to enjoy a nice short vacation after the meeting. Our outstanding guest speaker will lead us in discussion on Friday and Sabbath. More information about our theme will follow soon. On Sunday we will go on a tour.

*One of the EKM2010-bungalows*



Interested? Complete the booking form which will be available on [www.sdakinship.org](http://www.sdakinship.org) soon, and pay at least a deposit to be sure of your participation! More questions?

Contact Ruud at [KinshipEurope@sdakinship.org](mailto:KinshipEurope@sdakinship.org).