

# connection.



## COMING OUT STORIES

**Finding Peace  
Out of Hiding**  
**The Other Side of Exile**  
**An Uncomfortable Mix**

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David Kato ★ 15 February 1964 † 26 January 2011

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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.

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### 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.)



PO Box 69, Tillamook, OR 97141, USA

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



## From the Editor

*Have not I commanded you, be strong and of a good courage? Don't be afraid. Don't be dismayed. The Lord your God is with you.*

—Joshua 1:9

Israel camped on the edge of Jordan. Behind them were centuries of Egyptian slavery, a world they were born into that denied their destiny and said their God had decreed them to be slaves. In the recent past there had been growing pains: times when Israel wished to return to places and concepts that were comfortable, if enslaving; times when Israel panicked on the edges of Canaan, afraid to face the foes ahead; times when miracles showed them God was guiding; times when they didn't believe Heaven; and times when God sent them support from unexpected places.

I think our closets are like ancient Egypt. In them we know our boundaries. We have a place where we can lay our head. We look through peep holes and see dangers lurking if we step out. We also find the air is stale, more difficult to breath. Staying in our closets delays our journey. Staying stunts our growth. Staying makes us liars. Staying keeps us from knowing the God who knew us before we were born, Who gives us grace. Staying makes us lonely. I am becoming increasingly convinced that coming out of the closet is a spiritual journey. The metaphors for that journey are powerful.

God called Moses and Joshua to be free. They could have said, *Oops, no. Sorry, you have it all wrong. We're slaves. We were born slaves. We'll die slaves. If we try to be anything else, we'll die sooner.* Moses and Joshua would have been partially right. They might have died. We all know of people who have died because they chose to be whole. We know people who have lost their jobs, lost their church, and lost their friends. But we also know people who have found new jobs, have seen God more clearly, have found new friends, have built a new community, and have found safety for their souls. The choices are before us. They always have been. You must decide. You have the right to choose to follow the way God leads you. This choice is individual, and it has powerful repercussions.

This issue is focused on coming-out stories. If studies that indicate gay and lesbian people make up ten percent of the population are correct, then there are 1.5 million gay and lesbian Seventh-day Adventists in this world, pondering how to deal with closets. I find this thought mind-boggling. We deal with our parents, children, family, schools, culture, the Bible, God, each other, our hearts...and we still also try to find work and go grocery shopping. It's amazing anyone can function at all. I, and every LGBTI person I know, have had to deal with the question, *How do I become a whole and honest person?* I don't know the answer for you. I have been clumsy enough figuring it out for myself. I, along with other Kinship members, would like to be a support for you: listen to your stories, help you find resources, and ache and rejoice with you. Hopefully, we will not stand outside our closets and judge those who still yearn for safety in one. Hopefully, we will be gentle. I want that for you. But mostly what I want is for you to take good care of yourself, for you are infinitely valuable.



Catherine

## Health Tip of the Month

Is your problem spot that area right around your belt buckle? Well then, here are two kinds of healthy carbs you should be eating: beans and whole grains. In a study, obese men and women who were put on a heart-healthy diet lost more belly fat when their daily meals emphasized these two foods rather than refined grains. In the 18-month study, all participants ended up losing about the same amount of weight. But the people eating diets rich in beans and whole grains enjoyed especially good results around their middles. And all that was required for extra middle melting was eating whole grains instead of refined and replacing two daily grain servings with a couple of servings of beans—like lentils, chick-peas, or kidney beans. These changes created a low-glycemic-index diet that was satisfying, blood-sugar-balancing, and belly-fat-blasting. Other research has linked higher bean consumption with less belly fat, probably because beans—like whole grains—are made of good, less energy-dense carbs that are higher in fiber and take longer to digest, keeping you satisfied longer. ▽



# coming out stories

## Finding Peace

*David Coltheart, Australia*

I was born in New Zealand into a good Adventist home—my father was the conference evangelist and my mother his most faithful assistant. We moved every year; and then, when I was 9, we were transferred to Australia. Three years later my dad baptized me at the evangelistic meeting he was conducting. Even at that age, I knew certain things triggered my mind and made me feel guilty. I knew there was something different about me that I couldn't define. Sex was not discussed at home or at the Adventist school in England. I spent my teenage years in questioning ignorance.

Answering what I still believe was God's call, I studied theology at Newbold College. My best friend was a fellow ministerial student from Eastern Europe; when he embraced me in a manly hug, my heart melted. The next summer, when we were both 19 years old, we worked together in Iceland, selling children's books door-to-

door. I longed for a closer relationship, but I kept my dreams to myself.

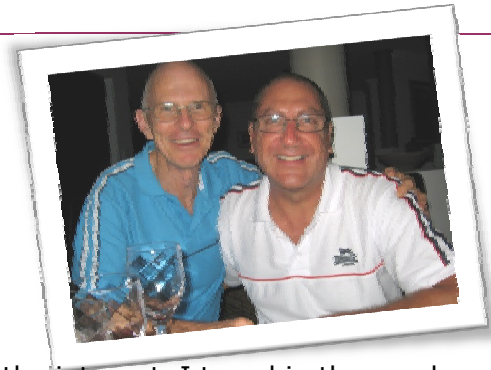
After graduation and the death of my father, I returned to Australia to take up evangelistic work in Sydney, a role I knew was God's will for my life. I assumed one day I would fall in love, get married, and live happily ever after. That was what my church decreed, society required, and my family expected. I believed marriage would "fix the problem." But even after I met and married the perfect woman, I wasn't sure I was doing the right thing. Since I didn't dare trust anyone with my secret, I decided it was better to say nothing and hope for the best.

As I was union evangelist, my wife and I moved frequently over the next twenty years. Every shift was a fresh start; and I determined, with God's help, to conquer my desires by sheer willpower. I read the Bible and prayed that God would change me. But the formula never worked. My prayers, though answered in every other way, on this subject

were unanswered. I desperately wanted to talk to someone. At church meetings and ministerial retreats, I scanned everyone I met, hoping to find someone in whom I could confide. But to even hint at the reason for such a conversation was to invite exposure—and I had a wife and three sons I had pledged to support.

My belief in God's grace and assurance of salvation never wavered; but while attending a memorable camp meeting, I was reminded that Jesus loved me and died for me. In a glorious conversion experience, my days were suddenly filled with joy and I dared to hope that my problem was solved. But it was not to be. I began to understand that I was wrestling, not with a problem, but a part of my being that was beyond choice.

I accepted the task of editing a magazine for a self-supporting ministry. Over the next five years my life took a new direction, and I gained vital skills that I could take with me beyond church employment. When we first connected to



David Coltheart and his partner John live on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland, Australia, where he attends his local Seventh-day Adventist Church. He enjoys bush and beach walking, writing, and making new friends.

the internet, I typed in the words “gay” and “Adventist” and, to my astonishment, discovered SDA Kinship. I was overwhelmed to learn that I was not alone after all. Suddenly, I could identify with people who affirmed my experience. Soon after, I looked in the mirror and said, out loud, “David, you’re gay.” The realization had been creeping up on me for decades. Now all that remained was to tell someone.

I grew up in an era when Adventists didn’t go to the movies, so it took all my courage to go to the cinema and see *Brokeback Mountain* early in 2007. As the achingly beautiful story unfolded, I knew it was my story and I was overwhelmed by emotion. Now the pain of staying in the closet was worse than the pain of coming out. I began to plan my exit strategy. I set a date and made my preparations. I had been practicing my speech for years, but now it became an obsession. On the appointed day, sitting on a park bench overlooking a beautiful beach, I hesitated until the last second, knowing that civilization was about to end. With my wife beside me, I drew a breath and told her my story.

I woke next morning to a day I never expected to see. The burden of my life had rolled away and I felt as if I could fly. Events outside my control took over; and, after almost 30 years of marriage, I moved out of the family home, bought a fridge and a microwave, and began a new life. Unfortunately, my relief brought pain to those I loved, a pain I still wish had been avoidable.

As the process of self-disclosure continued, I surrendered my job; and, for the first time in my life, I was unemployed. When it was obvious there were no jobs for me in the local area, I packed up my possessions and shifted 1000 kilometers north to Queensland. With no job, I had nowhere to go; but that’s when God intervened.

Through a series of remarkable providences, God led me to a job as a technical writer for a training organization located in a semi-rural area north of Brisbane. That same week I met John and we became best mates. I found a small, welcoming church to attend and a circle of church friends who knew my story and accepted me regardless. Six months later I bought a house near where I work.

Nearly five years have gone by, and I could not be happier. I have a great job, a supportive family, an accepting church, and a wonderful partner. John and I live in a beautiful area surrounded by rainforest, close to the beach. We have some great friends and a relaxed lifestyle. Coming out, even at 55, was the best thing I ever did—it restored harmony and peace to my life. Coming out forced me to confront my worst fears and made me face the world with honesty and integrity.

I praise God for His love and grace. He has led me all the way, and I thank Him for His blessings. I can only look back and see His providential hand over me, guiding me and caring for me. My faith is stronger than ever, and my spiritual life is deeper and more meaningful. Most of all I have peace, knowing that God made me the way I am, and accepts me just as I am. ▽

## Out of Hiding

Rena Otieno, Kenya

**C**oming out means I once was hiding, and now I am in the sun. I was in the closet, and now I am getting out. I had never told people about this side of me, and now I am becoming more open. I was not comfortable with myself, and now I can be.

Some are afraid to come out of their closets because they fear they will lose their jobs, be dis-fellowshipped, be dismissed from school, or have spouses who are mad at them. But air runs out in the closet. I don’t want to suffocate my soul. If I am hiding who I am, I cannot be happy or whole. In hiding, I cannot find a partner. Living in fear is to live waiting for disaster. If I open myself to fellowship with those who understand me, I gain support for the disasters that do come. I also gain dignity, pride, friends, and a place to hold my head high.

I have come out to a variety of groups and individuals. One of my friends told me she had always suspected that I might be lesbian while we were in college. When I came out to her, she ended up sharing with me that she has been bisexual but never told me. She didn’t want a lie to come between us and spoil our friendship. I told some friends while they were visiting from England. I told my supervisor, >



# The Other Side of Exile

Keisha McKenzie, Jamaica, England, USA



who is also a friend. I told my social group because I was already living with a woman and wanted the men who were interested in me to know I do not date men. I told my cousin who is a lesbian. I announced it on Facebook. I told my aunts who are easy to deal with. I came out to my girlfriend's family. I came out to my family. I came out to my colleagues.

Now that I have come out, I feel proud of whom I am. I like that it is easy for me to meet other LGBTI people, including the women I have dated. I like that others in the LGBTI community can identify me and come for moral support and social contact. I don't care what people at work say when they gossip. One time they sat me down to tell me it would not be good for me if my director found out. I told them she had known for a long time. No need to worry. I have grown strong enough to stand up in any venue and advocate for our issues.

There have been difficulties. I come from a very close-knit family, and some members will not talk to me at all anymore. People gossip about me. My girlfriend's family does not always accept me. Sometimes people who are not out will not associate with me because they think being seen with me will out them. I worry about my personal security since I live in a country where homosexuality is against the law.

Even with the difficulties, I say, **Come out! Don't suffocate and die in that closet!** ▽



I was reading an email from an old college friend with whom I reconnect every year or so. It was her birth month, and I'd written her to catch up, talk about a few important things, and wish her birthday blessings. All was well until her last paragraph, which ended, "How personal is this Prop 8 issue?" I froze.

It was such a simple question, and whenever I looked back at the email I felt silly for being unprepared to answer. Each time I opened it back up to reply, I found my inspiration jar full of *Empty*, and so delayed answering until another day.

Another day didn't come until more than a year later when I emailed her again at birthday time. In her response, she asked me about my previous silence. I explained that I hadn't been silent because I'd been offended, but I had needed time to grow into my answer, and that couldn't have happened before its time. In the moment my silence had felt like a clanging omission; but now that I'm looking back, I see how much can change in a year.

This last year of coming out has been an uneven journey: questions and prejudices, attacks and assurances. I asked myself questions I could have asked and answered years ago but never did; I declined arguments with relatives who covered their fear in certainty; I filled in some gaps for loved ones who didn't understand, and sought out the company of those who did. As I told and retold my story this last year, one thing that occurred to me is how powerful storytelling can be. Storytelling is as much a creative act as it is a memory-building one, and this may be why it is so important for us to tell our own stories and not defer to those who presume to tell them for us. Coming out is about the right to write, tell, and live your own life story. No one can do that justice but you.

Recently, I found a website of stories told: men and women from all walks of life have shared video interviews and personal memories at [www.imfromdriftwood.com](http://www.imfromdriftwood.com). The international "It Gets Better" campaign also inspired people worldwide to open up to others and talk about their journeys. It's hard for me to calculate how much power lies in these ordinary conversations. Yet, when I consider my own life, and how many people I've come closer to because we each chose to speak up and listen in turn, I can't help but feel grateful. I'm not entirely sure what the next few years will bring for me, but I feel confident that my future will outshine my past. I can't assuage the doubts of those who haven't been where I am, but I do know my path is secure with the One who called me to come out of darkness.

The exile and return of God's children is a recurring theme in the Hebrew and Christian scriptures. For years, many of us have heard the call, "Come out and be separate," as a call to withdraw from a sullyng world. That interpretation has its place. But the call out of exile also means something deeper to us at another level. At each stage in our lives, we're called again, not to isolation, but to individuation. Individuation is the process of integrating one's parts into a seamless whole, and also integrating one's self with the wider world. To do this, we have to abandon self-rejection and embrace self-awareness in its stead. We

# An Uncomfortable Mix

Elodie Souil, France

have to leave that lonely darkness in which we disown our created natures, and walk out into greater and greater truth about ourselves, the communities we're part of, and the world in which we're placed.

Many people find this process traumatic, and it can be. Moving somewhere new is a common path for those who can afford to do so; yet I wonder if it's really more important to move into a new life story than it is to move to or from any physical place.

To me, coming out marks the challenging joy of designing and building a whole life with others. It's not a light responsibility, and yet we're called to it anyway. Our return from exile begins when we start letting go of whatever ideas kept us too tied up to live well—at war with ourselves and the Creator who made us as we are. I believe we are each larger than we imagine; and while it may not be realistic to expect that I can discover my whole self in a few short years, I do think I can approach greater wholeness. So that's what I intend to do.

*For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people." "The Lord will lay bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God. Depart, depart, go out from there! Touch no unclean thing! Come out from it and be pure, you who carry the vessels of the Lord. But you will not leave in haste or go in flight; for the Lord will go before you, the God of Israel will be your rear guard." "I will accept you as fragrant incense when I bring you out from the nations and gather you from the countries where you have been scattered, and I will show myself holy among you."*

—1 Corinthians 6:19;

Isaiah 52:10-12; Ezekiel 20: 41 ▽

I like January in the same way I like birthdays. These times give me the opportunity to tell people I love that I am thinking of them. I am "compelled" to take a break, enjoy choosing cards, and consider the words I want to share.

Recently I turned on our computer to take a look at photos from last year. I kept aside the ones I preferred. Some of them were landscapes; most were pictures of me, my partner Nathalie, or both of us together. Of course, I had kept aside way too many pictures! Nath helped me remove some of them; Picasa finished the job. We were ready to send our greeting card!

It has been years since I have been silent about my personal life. I have come to believe that the only way to be at peace involves introducing myself to other people as the person I really am. I do not want to build or sustain relationships with lies or omissions. This decision did not fail to bring about loss, particularly with those I knew through the Seventh-day Adventist Church. I find that it is often easier to speak about my faith and homosexuality among non-Christian friends than within what I used to call my "Seventh-day Adventist family." I could not be seen by that community as a member unless I lived *their* norms; I would have had to hide my real self. I was so hurt that eight years ago I decided to leave both the Seventh-day Adventist Church and its members.

I did keep in touch with some Adventist friends. Lately I wrote to some with whom I had lost contact, admitting I may have cut ties without giving them a chance to express themselves. I sent them our greeting card in January.

*We wish you success at work. Lots of love and best wishes for the year 2011.* This is one of the answers I got, and it hurt me. I was disappointed and angry. "Success at work" and nothing else?! They wrote as if I was a diligent learner who, apparently, would only live to study. Is professional success the only thing Seventh-day Adventist friends can wish to the young homosexual lady I am? Must they so obviously refuse to recognize my family, and my emotional and love life? I would rather they had not answered my card than deny the most important part of my life. On the other hand, I suppose these few words also meant they were thinking of me upon this New Year. I have to admit they sent me their "best wishes." Nevertheless...

In my quest to live as a lesbian without being judged, the only solution I considered was to completely cut my ties with the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Though this decision enabled me to live freely, being separated from my Adventist "family" and culture deprived me of some of my equanimity and stability—and my relationship with God. I over-armed myself to avoid suffering. Then, three years ago, when I discovered Kinship on the internet, I was ready to put my two selves back together. I thought that meeting homosexual Seventh-day Adventists would help me integrate myself.

In the three European Kinship Meetings in which I have participated I have found a friendly, non-judgmental atmosphere. I feel welcomed >



and liked for who I really am. I feel surrounded by a family very similar to the one I lost when I left the Church eight years ago. Several times, a friend I met at my first EKM wrote, "Spending time with Kinship people [was] like heaven." This statement is not my complete experience.

These weekends are also trying for me, because I often feel fragile when my well-polished armor falls apart. I wish I could find again the sense of ease and well-being I used to experience at church but now am not able to find there. My faith has changed over the last few years. I am still unable to convince myself that God accepts me as a lesbian, that the Biblical texts do not condemn my homosexuality. I still believe this is the reason why Adventists will not recognize me as a member of the Church. At the moment, believing these things and taking the risk of being disappointed is too much to bear. I don't want to risk more wishes of "success at work." It hurts me too much.

And yet, the next European Kinship Meeting is planned for Paris this September, 2011, and I am doing my best to organize it. I know I have to make progress to figure things out, even though I have no idea where this will lead me. For several months, I have been attending a group whose members pray and study the Bible. I am trying, sometimes unsuccessfully, to find my place there.

I do not want to go back to the Adventist Church. I don't think I would be able to do so, anyway. At the same time I have just finished a mailing meant to increase the awareness of French Seventh-day Adventist ministers of the necessity of talks on homosexuality in our church. Now I just need to send it.

I'm on my way, as I go trying to remember and believe those words of Catherine that touched me the first time I read them: "*Take good care of yourself, for you are infinitely valuable.*" ▽

## What's Saving My Hope Right Now

Daneen Akers

**N**ow that we've spent much of the past two years immersed in the stories and politics surrounding gay rights in religious communities, I've had my eyes opened to an entire world of hurt, pain, and downright hypocrisy that I'd not really stopped to listen to before. Of course I had heard a story here or there, sat through the occasional sermon that threw around phrases like "the gay agenda" in ominous tones; but I hadn't had a true or authentic encounter with a gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender person until I started going to an inclusive (truly non-traditional in the best sense of the concept) church in San Francisco.

When I finally started paying attention, there wasn't a lot to give me hope for real and transformative change. My home state had just passed Prop 8 and stripped people I knew and loved of their newly acquired right to marry, and the Adventist churches around me were preaching outrageous sermons and slowly but surely shutting their doors to gays and lesbians.

And now that I have actually journeyed with several people who mean a great deal to me over the past two years and heard their stories (and the stories of their friends), it's gotten harder in many ways. When I hear that someone I know was just told that she can no longer play her instrument in church because that might be seen as "condoning her lifestyle," it just hits me at my core. When I get an email from a friend saying that the elders at his church just stripped him of his Sabbath



School class teaching duties because he personally believes that committed, monogamous same-sex relationships might not be sinful (even though he never said anything on the topic in class), I feel utterly discouraged and start to wonder what the heck we are even thinking in attempting a film project like this.

### What was missing was the stories...

**B**ut last week I had a conversation with a friend that reminded me again why there is good cause for hope. My dear (straight, formally conservative Adventist) friend Heather came to visit me last week. We stayed at her house twice while filming, and she has heard me talk a lot about the people and stories we've encountered with this film.

As we walked to one of my favorite restaurants in the neighborhood, she suddenly stopped and said, "By the way, I have to thank you so much for doing your film project. I've always had compassion around the whole gay topic in the church, but I didn't know what to do with it. What was missing for me was the stories. Real people and real stories. What you have shared with me about the people you are filming has completely transformed me and my heart. Thank you."

Her testimony couldn't have come at a better time. Stephen has been logging long hours in front of the computer editing the nearly 150 hours of footage we have, and we're in that space that comes with every creative endeavor of knowing there is something very good ahead but



not being able to see exactly how we're going to get there. It's really like walking with a flashlight in the dark to a great destination—morning will come, but right now, we can only see a few feet ahead, and not all that clearly.

Hearing Heather affirm how her heart was moved and transformed by the stories of LGBT Adventists is what's keeping me fueled for the next few months. And as Stephen said later, "And she hasn't even seen the movie yet!"

So here's to the Heathers out there giving me hope that stories do have immense power. Thanks for being willing to listen. Oh—and can you sit on a few more church boards? ▽

## Those were the Days



**KAMPMEETING 2004 MENUCHA**



## EUROPEAN KINSHIP MEETING 2002 TUNHEM, SWEDEN



# Leading Black Pastor Eulogizes Slain Ugandan Gay Rights Advocate David

NEW YORK, New York—February 8, 2011

One of the leading African-American ministers in the country stood in his pulpit to eulogize Ugandan gay advocate, David Kato, who was murdered after having a death threat against him



published on the front page of a local newspaper. The Reverend Dr. Calvin O. Butts, III, head pastor of the historic Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem, announced to the 150 people gathered at the memorial service on Monday, February 7,

2011, that he was "beginning the conversation" to engage Black church leaders to save the lives of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender leaders such as David Kato.

*"Tonight we make an important first step in bridging the chasm that separates gay and straight people in the church," Butts proclaimed. "This discussion on human sexuality should have happened a long time ago and if it had maybe Kato's and many, many others' lives would have been saved."*

Frank Mugisha, Executive Director of Sexual Minorities of Uganda, who worked closely with David, said, "Being here tonight inspires me and gives me strength to carry on David's work advocating for gays and lesbians, bailing them out of jail, providing financial support and protection. Before coming here I did not know that a religious leader could stand up freely and support gays and lesbians. In Uganda when a pastor did that he was excommunicated."

Uganda has been under international scrutiny as it continues to consider a law that would have included the death penalty for gay people. Conservative Evangelicals have been documented spreading anti-gay sentiment to Uganda so that Ugandan LGBT people are now having to flee their homes due to threats and persecution.

"So long as these laws remain in force millions of people will continue to live their lives under the



threat of arrest and in some cases even execution. These laws legitimize homophobia by giving it a government-sanctioned seal of approval," said Charles Radcliffe. "Our first challenge has to be the decriminalization of homosexuality." Mr. Radcliffe is the chief of global issues for the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

New York City Speaker Christine C. Quinn, in a written statement read by a representative, called Kato's death *a reminder that every single individual has the power to promote equality and stand up against injustices both near and far.*

Pastor Joseph A. Tolton, Pastor of Rehoboth Temple and organizer of the service, praised Dr. Butts for his leadership in this critical moment. *The gay and lesbian African-American community had a historic homecoming in this memorial service for David Kato. We found ourselves welcomed home to the cradle of the Black Church. We are clear that we all walk under the banner of love where our community will work together and not allow ourselves to be divided because of sexual orientation or gender identity. This is our first step in a long journey.*

The service, reminiscent of those held for the many martyrs who paid the ultimate price for freedom in the U.S., included a solitary portrait of Kato bearing the words, "Demand Justice" positioned in

the front of the church. Local church choirs and a featured solo from violinist Juliette Jones brought the gathered community to their feet with tears in their eyes. The memorial was one of two memorials held in New York City just two weeks after Kato was murdered in his home in Uganda. His death captured international attention and yesterday's memorial will certainly carry forward the discussion of homophobia in Uganda, the United States, and the 70 countries that still imprison or execute gay and transgender people.

**About global justice institute**

**T**he Global Justice Institute is a dual institutional initiative of Metropolitan Community Churches and The Fellowship (of affirming Churches). The Global Justice Institute provides faith-based support for LGBTI liberation movements around the world. The Institute partners with leaders on the ground providing consulting services and gathering resources to sustain liberation movements in regions and nations that systematically oppress LGBTI people.

**About Sexual Minorities Uganda (SMUG)**

**S**MUG is a coalition of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex (LGBTI) human rights organizations. SMUG was born on March 3, 2004, to organize LGBTI groups to create one big strong LGBTI community in Uganda. The need for a coalition arose because several LGBTI groups operating in the country lacked concrete organization and teamwork with fellow groups. SMUG works on behalf of its member organizations, enforcing their activities and representing them in a more organized manner.

**About Gay by God**

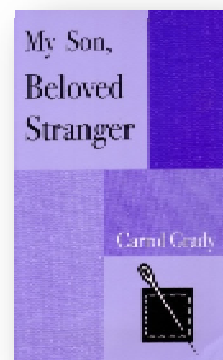
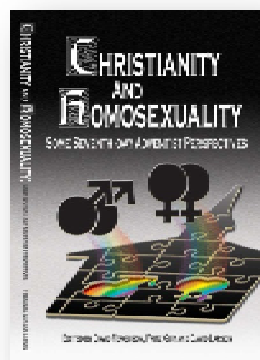
**W**e are Christians who understand the universal principal of love as applied to our tradition; we embrace the idea of salvation as both a spiritual and embodied reality. We affirm same-gender loving and transgender people and welcome everyone who seeks to follow Christ. We come together to worship and we go out to serve. ▽

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*Never confuse  
 efforts  
 with  
 results*



**Christianity and Homosexuality:  
 Some Seventh-day Adventist Perspectives  
 &  
 My Son, Beloved Stranger**  
 can be ordered online at  
[www.sdgayperspectives.com](http://www.sdgayperspectives.com).

**The Leaflet:  
 Homosexuality:  
 Can We Talk About It?  
 in different languages  
 can be printed from  
<http://www.sdakinship.org/leaflets/leaflet.html>**



**DVD  
 Open Heart,  
 Open Hand**  
 contains stories of three supportive Seventh-day Adventist parents of gay and lesbian children. This DVD can be ordered online at  
[www.sdgayperspectives.com](http://www.sdgayperspectives.com).

**Public Relations Cards (4" X 10")** have information on one side about our book, *Christianity and Homosexuality*, and can have Kinship regional information on the other side. They are perfect to have in any gathering place for LGBTI people, such as pride parades, or other public events. For more information you can contact us at  
[communications@sdakinship.org](mailto:communications@sdakinship.org).

# Gardening and the Good Life

From "Horticultural Therapy: In the Gardening Moment" by Virginia A. Smith. *Philadelphia Inquirer*, November 26, 2010.

*Ren Reynolds, Coordinator Older Kinship Adults*

For those who love gardening it will come as little surprise to learn that such activity is now being used for therapeutic purposes. Why did it take so long, one might ask. In any case, people being trained to work with the elderly, and particularly those diagnosed with dementia, emotional problems, autism, and other diseases, are learning to give them opportunities to grow things. As therapists see it, working with plants can be healing, not just physically, but psychologically. Roger S. Ulrich, a director of the Center for Health Systems & Design at Texas A&M University, has found that simply looking out a hospital window at greenery, water, or flowers, or even images of these things, can lower stress and hasten recovery from surgery. For dementia patients, horticultural therapy improves concentration, cognitive functioning, and a sense of well-being. Peg Schofield, who works with people with dementia, believes that "we are reducing stress; they're peaceful and calm, they feel they've accomplished something. I know this has meaning for these folks, and that is the point."



Kansas State University was the first to offer a bachelor's degree in horticultural therapy, and Rutgers University does now as well. Certification programs are also available at various schools. Jack Carman, a faculty member of Temple University's "hort therapy" certificate program and landscape architect, specializes in designing therapeutic gardens for senior communities and health-care facilities. He believes that gardens should be enclosed for safety; filled with nontoxic, colorful plants; and have paths and furniture that accommodate walkers and

and wheelchairs. Bird feeders, fountains, and benches should all be sensually engaging and appropriate for the region. For more information on horticultural therapy, go to the American Horticultural Therapy Association website at <http://www.ahta.org>. ▽

## Golden Years?

*Joc Anderson, the Philippines/USA*

*Rise in the presence of the aged, show respect for the elderly and revere your God, I am the Lord.*  
—Leviticus 19:32






If you have reached the golden age of 65, our society deems you a senior citizen. If you live in the United States, you share this category with 36 million other people.

This age group is expected to increase 20% by year 2030. Growing up in the streets of San Francisco, I thought I would never grow old. The years moved slowly because all I did was eat, sleep, attend school, and play. I had no cares to ponder. Now, as I near my sixties, I look back at the changes in my life. Some of them include promises to myself that I kept and those I could not keep.

I did not plan to put my mother into a nursing home. I did not know that when she developed dementia and refused to eat that I would have to make the choice of letting her starve to death or placing her in a care facility with a feeding tube. My decision to access a nursing home for her gave us another eight months together. I felt helpless. I wanted her to be able to age gracefully. Dementia stole that dream from us.

I do not want the elderly to be neglected. God knew the ruthlessness of growing old is balanced only by the love of family and community. Some of us may resent our parents because of the way we were raised or treated by them. They may have been too rigid, exacting, unbearable, or indifferent. I would like you to consider loving them anyway. God loves us, even when we have been rigid, unbearable, and indifferent.

When you come upon an elderly person, look at them through the eyes of God. Our love for them is designed to be a reflection of God's love for us. ▽

PARIS    2011

*Liberté* ♥ *Egalité* ♥ *Kinship*

Réunion Européenne de Kinship | Septembre 9-12 | European Kinship Meeting



European Kinship Meeting 2011 will be located in a self-catering cottage, located in Auvers-sur-Oise! We have eight bedrooms with four beds and a bathroom each. The meeting room is a place where we can have our meals and discussions. All our rooms are on the ground floor. A terrace lies outside, next to the kitchen. Everything is on the ground floor. We have access to a private parking area. The train station is only a ten minute walk from our cottage. We are planning to enjoy the trails along the river, horseback riding, and a connection to the village and to the city of Paris.



Auvers-sur-Oise is a community 27.2 km (16.9 miles) from the center of Paris. During the 19th century, a number of painters lived and worked in Auvers-sur-Oise, including Paul Cézanne, Charles-François Daubigny, Camille Pissarro, Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, and, of course, Vincent van Gogh. Daubigny's house is now a museum where you can see paintings by the artist, his family, and friends. As you walk along the river from Auvers toward Pontoise, you can see a number of views which figured in the paintings of Pissarro.

You can register on [www.sdakinship.org](http://www.sdakinship.org)



*How far that little candle throws his beams!  
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.  
— William Shakespeare*

# A GRAND FAMILY REUNION

**32<sup>nd</sup> Annual  
SDA Kinship  
Kampmeeting**

**July 19-24, 2011**

You can register now at  
[http://www.sdakinship.org/en/  
usa-kampmeeting-2011/  
usa-kampmeeting-2011.html](http://www.sdakinship.org/en/usa-kampmeeting-2011/usa-kampmeeting-2011.html)



**Our Family Tree**



## **Join Us on the Queen Mary Ocean Liner / Hotel!!**

This year's pre-Kampmeeting Event will take place July 17 and 18. We have booked 30 staterooms on the luxurious Queen Mary, docked in the Long Beach, California, harbor. A mere US \$ 150.00 per adult or \$35.00 per child guarantees you lovely accommo-

dations, two complementary breakfast buffets, a chance to wander an historic ocean liner, transportation to Catalina Island (Commuters pay \$50.00), and a chance to meet or have a reunion with wonderful people. We are looking forward to seeing you! You can register at [sdakinship.org](http://sdakinship.org) (Events | Women & Children First) or you can send your registration check to our office at PO Box 69, Tillamook, Oregon 97141-0069. If you have further questions, please feel free to contact Karen, our Director of Women's Interests, at [women@sdakinship.org](mailto:women@sdakinship.org) (Events | Women & Children First). ▽

# Events Calendar 2011



## March

- 19 Region One cookout at David Thaxton's home, Springfield MA



## April

- 17 Region One at NYC Forum and Bronx Zoo
- 28-May 1 Rehoboth Mini-Kampmeeting



## June

- 11 Region One at Boston Pride
- 16 Region One at New York Pride Fest
- 26 Kinship Netherlands at "Open Day"



## July

- 17-19 Women & Children First
- 19-24 Kampmeeting USA



## September

- 9-12 European Kinship Meeting Paris
- 12-18 EKM Holiday week France



## October

- 20-23 The Book & The Beach




## November

- 4-6 Vermont Mini-Kampmeeting



## December

- 17 Boston's Gay Men's Chorus Holiday Concert
- 30-Jan 1 First Night in Williamsburg, Virginia



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Member of the Gay and Lesbian Press Association.

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*Come to the Boardwalk! Come to the Beach!  
Come Feed Your Soul and Your Body!*



**to Rehoboth Beach Mini-Kampmeeting  
April 28-May 1**



Rajkumar Dixit will be our guest speaker. Along with his enthusiasm and care, we're looking forward to great Sabbath School discussions, our annual Spiritual Open Mike Vespers, walks along the ocean, and time to see each other again.

To register you can access us at [sdakinship.org](http://sdakinship.org) (Events | Rehoboth Mini-Kampmeeting).

If you would prefer to mail a check (or US \$ 105.00 per person if you are staying at the beach house or US \$ 40.00 per person if you are staying at a nearby inn), you can do so by making it out to SDA Kinship and mailing it to our office at PO Box 69, Tillamook, Oregon 97141-0069 and noting that it is for the Rehoboth Beach Mini-Kampmeeting.

***We are looking forward to seeing you!***