

connection.

Ren Reynolds



A Kinship Pioneer

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WHO WE ARE...

Seventh-day Adventist Kinship International, Inc. is a non-profit support organization. We minister to the spiritual, emotional, social, and physical well-being of current and former Seventh-day Adventists who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex individuals and their families and friends. Kinship facilitates and promotes the understanding and affirmation of LGBTI Adventists among themselves and within the Seventh-day Adventist community through education, advocacy, and reconciliation. Kinship is a global organization which supports the advance of human rights for all people worldwide.

Founded in 1976 the organization was incorporated in 1981 and is recognized as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in the United States. Kinship has a board made up of thirteen officers. There are also regional and population coordinators in specific areas. The current list of members and friends includes approximately 1,550 people in more than forty-three countries.

Seventh-day Adventist Kinship believes the Bible does not condemn or even mention homosexuality as a sexual orientation. Ellen G. White does not parallel any of the Bible texts that are used to condemn homosexuals. Most of the anguish imposed upon God's children who grow up as LGBTI has its roots in the misunderstanding of what the Bible says.

SUPPORT KINSHIP

Seventh-day Adventist Kinship operates primarily on contributions from its members and friends. Help us reach out to more LGBTI Adventists by making a tax-deductible donation to Seventh-day Adventist Kinship International. Please send your check or money order to the address below or donate securely online at sdakinship.org. (You can also donate using your Visa or MasterCard by contacting treasurer@sdakinship.org. You will be phoned so that you can give your credit card information in a safe manner.)



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

From the Editor



I think of my spiritual tradition as the great Adventist movement. When I first heard this nomenclature, I imagined our humble beginnings, religious growth, evangelism, and the struggle of many of its members to study the Bible honestly. In my more chronologically gifted years, I have come to add the mental picture of a group of people, many of whom cannot stay in one place for any length of time. We have Adventist Kinship members who have known each other in Pakistan, Ohio, and Singapore. What regular people do this? I keep expecting to hear Pearl and Sherrie talk about their elementary school time on the warm shores of Antarctica. When I get your "We'd like to introduce you to..." responses, one of the first things I do is look at where the multigenerational Adventists got their education. I often read something like, *Well, we started out in Colorado, and then there was the second grade in Arkansas, and then in fourth grade in Sitka, Alaska, I met _____ who I met again at Newbold College near London, and then at graduate school in Australia...* I now believe that two of the requirements to enter first grade in an Adventist school are a passport and carry-on luggage. Kinship continues this form of vagabond ADHD (attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder). July's Kampmeeting in California had a group that popped over from Australia, someone who dropped by from Korea, many who had floated in from opposite coasts, and a few who had to leave early because they were heading for... now, where was it they were headed? I get lost in the travel plans. The European Kinship Meeting has people showing up from three continents and several countries. While I would get rich as your collective travel agent, one of the things I enjoy most is the worldview and varied experiences we share with each other. Knowing many of you in Kinship makes my planet a more intimate home. Knowing you also leaves me yearning for a Heaven where it will be easier to see you again. I miss you when you leave. I want to meet, in person, those of you who share your thoughts on KinNet, Kinship's Facebook page, the *Connection*, or the chats. What richness and value is in this group! Remember to take good care of yourselves for you are infinitely valuable, and...oops, I have to leave. It's time for me to catch my plane to the European Kinship Meeting!

Catherine

October

- 7 Region 2 Vespers*
- 15 Kinship Alberta meeting
- 20-23 Book & The Beach

November

- 3-6 Vermont Mini-Kampmeeting
- 4 Region 2 Vespers

December

- 2 Region 2 Vespers
- 17 Boston's Gay Men's Chorus Holiday Concert
- 30 1st Night in Williamsburg

* For more information about the Region 2 Vespers, write to region2@sdakinship.org



Kinship is delighted to congratulate Vern Davis and David Thaxton on their engagement.

...See all the People



This article is being published simultaneously in *Connection* and *Who Cares?*, a newsletter edited by Claude Steen for Seventh-day Adventist pastors and educators.

Catherine Taylor

When I was a little girl, I worked to make my hands accurately follow the rhyme: *Here's the church. Here's the steeple. Open the door. See all the people!* I delighted in the fact that my very hands could look both like a solid church with a steeple and then, amazingly, like a very small congregation.

When Claude asked me to write an article about the Adventist church response to homosexuality, my mind threw up an image of a monolithic church with steeple. The sides of this church displayed quotes from the *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual*. One of the quotes I picture on that monolith reads: *Adultery, sexual abuse of spouses, incest, sexual abuse of children, homosexual practices and lesbian practices are among the obvious perversions of God's original plan* (pg 170). Another quote reads, *Among the grievous sins for which members shall be subject to church discipline are the following: ...Such violations as fornication, promiscuity, incest, homosexual practices, sexual abuse of children and vulnerable adults and other sexual perversions, and the remarriage of a divorced person, except of the spouse who has remained faithful to the marriage vow in a divorce for adultery or sexual perversion* (pg. 185). Both quotes puzzle me because in their list that condemns those who use power to abuse the vulnerable, they also include a condemnation of mutually consenting, lovingly committed relationships between equals. No matter the logic, these views are often what people oriented to or involved in same-sex relationships face in their congregations.

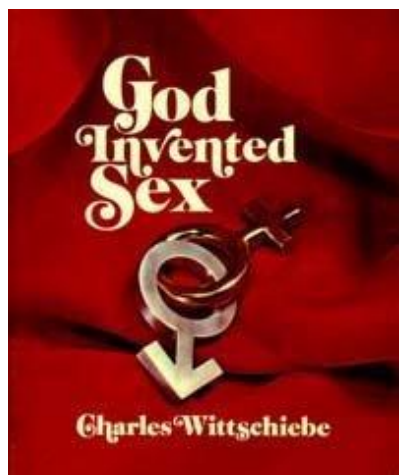
Adventist publications, including the *Church Manual* and *Adventist Review*, as well as the 2010 confer-

ence held at Andrews University, have systematically refused to acknowledge more than one opinion on the validity and value of same-sex relationships. As a result, many gay and lesbian members experience a sense of hopelessness, isolation, confusion, and anger at God as well as at the church. In some cases, individuals also experience extreme self-hate and suicidal ideation.

As a young lesbian, I remember wondering how I could somehow cut asunder two integral parts of myself and choose one in which to live. I thought if I were going to go to hell, I might as well go there in a handbasket. As a psychotherapist, I have been weighted with sadness as I have seen the lengths to which Adventist gay and lesbian people will go to somehow fit in and be accepted by the church. As a student of the Bible, I have been startled that people who profess to thoroughly investigate God's word can take statements and teachings out of context in order to condemn members of their church family. As the editor of *Connection*, I have been profoundly moved by the stories I read, describing the move toward wholeness. I wonder at a people who can sing, *Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary, pure and holy, tried and true*, while sending their "brothers and sisters" to an abyss of anger or despair.

But, then as in the nursery rhyme, I open my mental hands and find that the church is not a monolith but a group of pastors, theologians, administrators, teachers, medical personnel, and congregants with a wide continuum of study, journey, contacts, opinions—and heart. Here are some of the voices who have been the face, thought, heart, and arm of the Adventist church for me in my journey to inte-

grate myself as a Seventh-day Adventist lesbian Christian. While the initial request was for a response to a monolithic policy, I have come to find that the voices of the church are complicated, changing, and individualized.



The Books – In the early 1970s I first realized I was not going to end up in an opposite-sex marriage of two missionaries. I decided to check out what the Adventist Book Center carried that shed light on homosexual Adventists. I would casually wander in and surreptitiously scan the index of any book that

looked like it might be useful. None were. The only one I remember was *God Invented Sex*. Its comments on same-sex relationships offered the opinion that God may have invented sex for heterosexuals, but not for gay and lesbian people. I remember the despair I felt, standing there in the aisles of the Adventist Book Center during campmeeting. I tried to decide to leave the church.

Pastor Philip – My agnostic first partner announced to me that my level of misery indicated I could not and should not live without my church; we had better find an Adventist one, talk to the pastor, and begin to get this confusion clarified. She looked one up in the phone book, drove me there, and, a few months later, made an appointment for us with the pastor. Philip was a newly minted minister with a three-church rural district. He very kindly and gently showed me what I have come to know as the clobber texts. He said he could not figure out a way God could bless same-sex relationships. At the same time, he never once, as far as I know, told anyone in the church or pointed a pulpit finger of God's wrath at me. Some mix of his response, my clarity that I would never be in an opposite-sex relationship, and my need to participate in my spiritual home led my choice to gradually build a compartmentalized life. For the next twenty-seven years I was a Sabbath school teacher, lay preacher, personal ministries coordinator, conference women's ministries director, campmeeting speaker, and consultant to conference and union administrators and personnel. I never introduced my partners for who they were. Even as I write, I can feel the exhaustion from that double life waft over me. Keeping this secret left me a less open and emotionally accessible person. I believe it had a large part in my substance abuse. It affected the depth of emotional intimacy I had with Adventist

friends. It affected my trust in the way God could lead my life. For fifteen of those years, the clobber texts seared my mind and soul, heating end-of-time fires I could not figure out how to escape.

Larry Geraty – I have no definitive idea why it took me fifteen years to ask for help to study "those texts." In 1973 I found Troy Perry's book, *The Lord Is My Shepherd and He Knows I'm Gay*. I enjoyed the book; but, like many Adventists, I didn't want to get my theology from the Metropolitan Community Church, the Presbyterians, the Methodists, or even the Zondervans. I wanted a certified Seventh-day Adventist theologian who would understand those texts. I would like to tell you that courage drove me to clarify the meaning of Leviticus, Romans, and Corinthians. I think it was the exhaustion. I just needed to find out. I needed to know if I could live with hope. Murky despair is a difficult companion. I made an appointment to talk with Larry.

I remember his book-encompassed office. I remember his reading glasses, the kind you peer over to look at the person in front of you. I remember his kindly eyes. I remember watching him take down the books he used in our chat. I remember my sense of encountering revelation as Larry explained meanings of the context and words in Leviticus. I remember relief. I remember my "Oh, no" moment when Larry looked at me over his lenses and said, *Now, Catherine, this means you need to live a Biblical life—one partner, one God*. This meant I had to make an emotional and contractual commitment. I remember my mental, *Oh, I just don't think so* response when Larry said *Catherine, you need to let other Adventists know that there are conservative, Bible-believing, Bible-following gay and lesbian Adventists and that you are one of them*. I was selfish, self-protective, and still mistrusting that God would lead me. I did not want to give up being a campmeeting speaker or any of the rest of the ways I connected to the church. I remember my gratitude to Larry that only deepens, even now. He threw me a life preserver—and a responsibility.

Madeline Haldeman – was a speaker at the very first Kinship Kampmeeting I attended. I don't know much about her except that when she spoke about Jesus to our group of rather flowery LGBTI folk, she introduced us to a Jesus who loves us and plans to live with us—and our partners—in Heaven. I listened to her with open mouth and with remaining gratitude.

Hyveth Williams – To the faithful in the wooden benches of a New England campmeeting, Hyveth thundered a call for Adventists to become Bereans. She challenged us to study and think more deeply. She called us to understand the difference between Biblical principles, policies, and practices. She pushed me on the next steps of my journey to the ➤

Bible study that became *Eden's Gifts*.

Pastor Henry – Eleven years ago Henry came to our church district at the request of some of us in the leadership roles. At the time, he described himself as a choleric, task-focused personality. At about the same time I ended an unhealthy relationship. A year later I began to date the woman I would eventually marry. In a rage, the woman I had left began to write to every conference and union with whom I had worked in any capacity. She effectively helped me out of the church-related closet in a way that let Seventh-day Adventists in my part of the country know that, yes, there are Bible-believing, observant lesbian Adventists. I don't believe this is the way that Larry intended I should become an example, but it was effective. My campmeeting invitations ended. My consultations ended. Pastor Henry came to visit me at work to ask me if I was a lesbian. I told him I did not want to take part in what I described as a witch-hunt and would not be part of that conversation. Today I wish I had just said "yes." The outcome would have been the same and I would have felt less like the Cowardly Lion. Thursday of the next week, I got a call from a church elder saying the board wanted me to appear at a meeting to discuss the action of church discipline that the congregational leaders would take toward me.

Pastor Mitch – I was not ready to lose my membership in the Adventist church. I called a Kinship friend and asked him what my options were. He said to call Mitch. I did. Mitch listened. I told him the situation and asked him if I could find membership asylum in his Adventist congregation. He said he thought it was possible. I said, *I want to be very clear with you that I am a lesbian in a relationship*. He said I had been clear the first time. When did I need my membership shift? By next Tuesday. Friday night he called me back, told me he had talked to a member of his church who knew me, and asked me if it would be okay if his congregation welcomed me as a member by profession of faith the next day during worship. I had found sanctuary.

The Millers Falls Church – At the Tuesday board meeting Pastor Henry began proceedings by explaining that they had called this meeting in the belief that I was acting in ways that called for church discipline. He laid out the process that they planned to take. I told them I had already become a member of another Seventh-day Adventist congregation and believed this process was now no longer necessary. Pastor Henry was outraged. He condemned any church leader that would interfere with his actions toward a member of his congregation. I told the leadership that I loved this congregation, even in such a difficult time. I told them that even though I had needed to move my membership to another place, I was committed to their well-being. I told

them I planned to continue attending and sharing what gifts they would allow. Within two weeks the church called a business meeting and passed a motion that forbade me to come on church property, even as a guest.

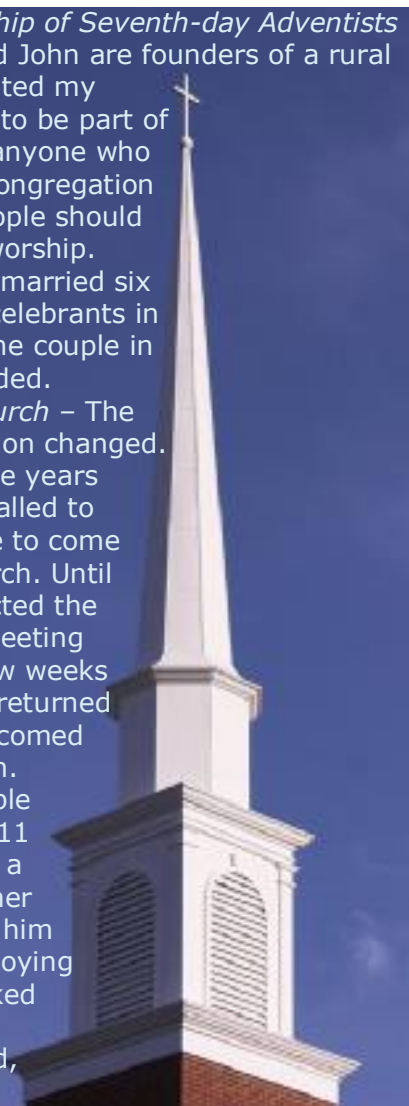
Laura refused to be part of the vote. A seventy-six-year-old taciturn New Englander, she had shared a campmeeting tent with me over several years, infinite numbers of mosquitoes, one flood, and many conversations. Talking to her daughter about her reactions to the church, she said, *I don't understand Catherine being a homosexual, but I know she loves God and I will just trust her to it*.

Ann has been my friend and fellow Adventist for thirty-eight years. She is a pastor's wife. Ten years ago, when we finally began to discuss my orientation, Ann went to the internet and studied everything she could about being a lesbian Christian. She came back to me saying, *It sure looks to me like this is a Biblical gray area*. She has become one of my staunchest advocates. My coming out to her has deepened our friendship and leaves me regretting the years I kept a wall of caution between us.

Cool Spring Fellowship of Seventh-day Adventists – Ann and her husband John are founders of a rural church plant. They invited my partner Karen and me to be part of that group. They told anyone who didn't want us in the congregation that perhaps those people should find another place to worship. When Karen and I got married six years ago, they were celebrants in our wedding. All but one couple in the church plant attended.

The Millers Falls Church – The voice of the congregation changed. Pastor Henry left. Three years ago a representative called to say they welcomed me to come back and visit the church. Until that point I had respected the vote of the business meeting and not returned. A few weeks after the phone call, I returned for a visit and was welcomed with hugs and affection.

Pastor Henry – People change. At the July 2011 Kinship Kampmeeting, a new member phoned her beloved brother to tell him how much she was enjoying her experience. He asked her if Catherine Taylor was attending. Startled, she asked him how on



earth he knew me. *I am one of those bad pastors I told you about and I was a bad pastor to her.* I was surprised that this new member was my former pastor's sister. I was surprised he was supportive of her. It seemed to me, at that moment, that I had looked into a window of how God is working in the church. It seemed to me like I had walked into a miracle. I don't have a tidy end to this part of the story; it's still in process.

The Bible – Adventists declare that the Bible is the originator of all church policies. My craving to learn more deeply the Bible's voice led me to more study. That study became a paper for a European meeting on the subject of homosexuality and the Adventist Church. Over the course of my research, I became increasingly clear that the Bible's voice on same-sex relationships is not the voice expressed in the church manual. My study, *Eden's Gifts*, is being used in a variety of ways. I invite you to take a look at this booklet and share your feedback.¹⁾

Ellen White – No discussion of Seventh-day Adventist policies or views on any topic would be complete without a study of Ellen White's contributions to the topic. The difficulty with our topic is that she said... nothing... about homosexuality. As I have read her writings and thought about how she affects the church and my life, I would like to leave you with this one quote. I believe this counsel, if incorporated into church policy, would change the lives of millions.

"Judge not that ye be not judged." That is, do not set yourself up as a standard. Do not make your opinions, your views of duty, your interpretation of scripture a criterion for others and in your heart condemn them if they do not come up to your ideal. Do not criticize others, conjecturing as to their motives and passing judgment upon them. Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, pg. 123, 124

Here is the church. Here is the steeple. Open the door. See all the people. I have read the policy. In others and myself I have experienced a broad range of reactions to that policy. But I have experienced The One who is greater than that policy, and I am seeing the way that Heaven is working in our church. That is a greater power than any policy. ▽

¹⁾ *Eden's Gifts* by Catherine Taylor can be found online at <http://sdakinship.org/en/edensgifts.html>.

If you have questions or thoughts you would like to share with Catherine, please feel welcome to contact her at katgurian@aol.com.

All I have seen teaches me to trust the
Creator for all I have not seen.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Job's Praise to God

By Joc Anderson

"At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship and said, 'Naked came I from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart; the Lord gave and the Lord has taken away, may the name of the Lord be praised.' In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrong doing."

Job 1: 10-22

Job, who lived in the land of Uz, was a blameless, upright, godly man who shunned evil and respected God. He was blessed with wealth as well as with his seven sons and three daughters. He lived as a well-known, greatly respected, prominent man of the East. And then came a council in Heaven.

The story of Job revolves around faith and trust in God. You can read the beginning details in Job 1. You can read his response and those of his closest allies throughout the rest of the book. The losses are catastrophic. The support Job received was unconscionable. Job's refusal to give up on his God was remarkable. What a man of undeniable faith!

Most of us have experienced hardship. Fortunately, it is rarely as all-encompassing as Job's. We experience trials and tribulations that Satan casts in our direction. This roaring lion of destruction seeks to devour us. He wants us to use God as our scapegoat, when all harm and hardship is the handiwork of Satan.

Have you had a tragedy befall you? Did you blame God and ask God, *why me?* I know I have had my share of thorns in my flesh. I have been guilty at one time or another of cursing God. Even as I write this text for today, I am still haunted by my past mistakes. Just like Job, we can vindicate God by worshiping and praising Him; for He did not send the fire from heaven to rain on your day. He is not the one who took away a child or loved one from you. All of these events occurred because Satan is on the prowl and wishes to divorce you from your Maker.

While it may appear that Satan has the upper hand, I have found that God will, indeed, save us. He will, at the end of time, eradicate all these trials and tribulations we have encountered here on earth. God operates only through His character of love, and love never lies. Don't lose hope. Like Job, cling to God's love. Come to know the Author of love.



Ren Reynolds

A Kinship Pioneer

Virginia (Ren) Reynolds is one of our Kinship pioneers. We want to share her story here so you can get a flavor of the people who built our community.

I was born in Colorado to a multigenerational Adventist family. My grandfather had known Dr. Kellogg at Battle Creek. My parents met during their Campion Academy studies. With few exceptions, I went to Adventist schools for my entire education. At home with my family in Colorado, I learned to love our ranch, rock hounding, mineral collecting, hiking, fishing, photography, and family quilts.



I worked in a variety of jobs as I studied. During years of World War II, I had an after-school job at Standard Machines in Boulder, Colorado. I was a "Rosie the Riveter." I don't like to share stories of the work I did there because of the nature of our product. It took many lives but it also saved others. I also worked in doctors' offices and the mailroom at Mountain View's Pacific Press. To save the precious, rationed gasoline, we rode bicycles. In those war years, we ate popcorn with little butter. We canned any peaches we could find with sugar we scrimped to save. We did have time to play tennis and other things we enjoyed. Even as we played, we noticed the too many stars in the homes of neighbors that indicated the battle field death of someone in their family.

At Union College, Virginia Shull, head of the English Department, was my favorite professor. Floda Smith taught library science and ran the library. Both women mentored me. I was most fortunate to have both of those friendships. The influence of each has lasted more than fifty years. I was also mentored and affected by Miles Cadwallader when he was head of the Education Department and

Virgil Logan when he was head of the Speech and Music Departments. The two men were lovers. They were eventually kicked off the faculty and sent away because of their relationship with each other. Their wives were banished, as well, and I have lost track of them. Even after all these years, it seems that little has changed. During my senior year, I met and lived with my first lesbian mate. We didn't get kicked out.

After graduating from Union

their throws accordingly. They came to recognize their muscles strengthening as they played. Physical activity led to greater mental acuity and academics and teachers who recognized improvement. My proudest moment was when all the sight-impaired students crossed the horizontal bars, hand over hand, unaided and uninterrupted by a loss of grip.

I began my teaching career at Mountain View Academy in Colorado. Then I moved to California

I loved the closeness and sense of family that we shared.

College, I took post-graduate courses from several institutions. I found my classes in Adaptive Physical Education the most rewarding because they allowed me to teach the blind and partially sighted. We bought special equipment and reading materials so children not accustomed to exercise and play could learn to use muscles they did not know they had. I wish you could have seen their smiles and experienced their pride as these children learned to use muscles they had not used before. These blind and partially sighted students played softball. They learned to toss basketballs by listening to the sound of the *swish* of the net and adjusting

and taught history in junior high schools there. Carmichael became my home and is where I still live. I share my heart with this part of the Golden State and with my family home of Colorado.

I first heard about Kinship in the 1970s at a lesbian/gay club. As I was leaving one night, I picked up several papers and found two ads for SDA Kinship! It took me a while to get connected because the area leaders moved. Vern finally answered my calls and let me know about a meeting at Ira Loop's home. Joyce called me several times before the meeting. Her persistence helped get me there. I became a member just after our second Kampmeeting.

Bob Bouchard appointed me to the board and then I met Richard Nivison. I have such fond memories of him. We attended several board meetings together. We had combined Region 7 and Region 8 meetings in my home and at his. We were part of naming the *Connection* and picking Vickie as our first editor. I had several ancient copies of the newsletter that I gave to Floyd when he came to visit me. Floyd is our old-folks' ambassador!

Building Kinship had its joys and its difficulties. We discussed inclusive language with intensity. We grieved and still grieve the deaths of members in those early AIDS/HIV years. Each board meeting and each Kampmeeting felt like an extraordinary experience. Colorado had a most spectacular Kampmeeting location. I loved the closeness and sense of family that we shared. I was asked to share some of my advice, so here you go.

Commitment is an invaluable tool to solidify any group. Contribute to KinNet and Facebook. Write for the *Connection*. Join the chats. Go to any meetings you can get to. Be open to everyone and don't lecture. We all mature at different rates. Be inclusive.

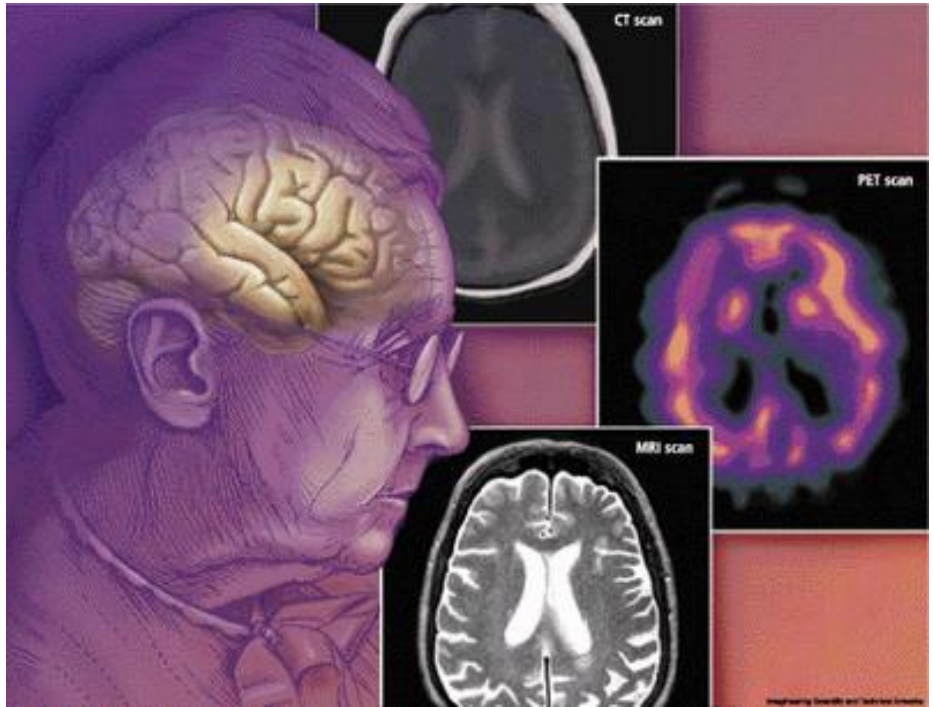
On my spiritual journey I try to remember that I am going to have to learn the same lessons of life over and over and over again. I learn to forgive myself. I try to live a true and honest life. I continue to honor the notion of and revel in being a part of *the family*. ▽

Whether you and I
and a few others will renew
the world some day
remains to be seen.
But within ourselves we
must renew it each day.
—Herman Hesse

Preventing Cognitive Decline

Kinship Older Adults Coordinated by Ren Reynolds

Trying to ferret out the really significant scientific findings from the wishful thinking variety, NIH (National Institute of Health) called together a panel of 15 experts across a range of various medical fields—nursing, psychiatry, mental health, family caregiving, and more—plus 20 experts who presented their data to the panel



Among the conclusions:

- There was no compelling evidence of a relationship between cognitive decline and childhood socioeconomic status, education, past alcohol use, or the use of pharmaceutical agents or dietary supplements to prevent cognitive decline.
- A robust association exists between the loss of a spouse and cognitive decline. This finding supports numerous other research reports in this newsletter pointing to the beneficial effects of social participation on well-being and longevity.
- There is a beneficial impact of physical activity and other leisure activities (such as club membership, religious services, painting, or gardening) on cognitive function.

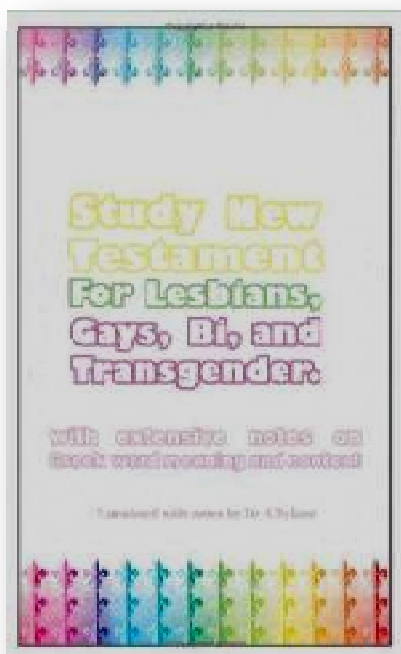
Increased involvement with cognitive activities in later life may also be beneficial. It should be noted, however, that there are difficulties in drawing firm conclusions, especially because there are neither standardized definitions of decline nor common measuring practices. Researchers may variously define and measure decline in several ways: memory of various sorts, planning, integrating information, focused attention, imagination, creativity, and more; and what is the case for one study may not be for another. ▽

From:
NIH State-of-the-Science Conference
Statement on Preventing Alzheimer's
Disease and Cognitive Decline, Vol. 27,
Number 4, April 26-28, 2010, National
Institute of Health, Office of the Director.
(<http://consensus.nih.gov>) and the *Positive
Aging Newsletter*.

Book Review

Gary Simpson

Title : *Study New Testament for Lesbians, Gays, Bi, and Transgender*
 Author : Ann Nyland
 Publisher : Smith and Stirling Press, Australia
 Year : 2007
 Available : Amazon.com and at <http://www.createdgay.com/review/review28.html>



The queer Christian community has come a long distance. The focus used to be on trying to get churches to treat gay, lesbian, bisexual, and trans-identified congregants with limited acceptance. There was a time when the focus was on queer apologetics. Gay, bisexual, and trans-identified Christians spent much of their time defending their Christian spirituality and showing that God does not damn people based on their sexual orientation or gender identification. Now we see theologians interpreting the Bible from the perspective of the queer community. And queer understandings of the Word are blessing straight Christians. This study Bible has valuable information, and it represents a coming of age of queer Christians.

This study Bible is based on *The Source New Testament* translation. *The Source New Testament* is a very refreshing read. *The Source* is one of the most refreshing translations since James Moffatt finished translating the entire Bible in the 1920s. Some passages feel so unique one wants to read more. One must read the translation to appreciate how much life it gives the Word. Three short quotes, to whet your appetite, appear below:

- 1 Corinthians 9:27 - Instead, I beat my body black and blue and enslave it, so that, when I have proclaimed the Good News to others, I myself won't fail to pass muster!
- Colossians 3:15 - And let God's peace be the umpire of your minds. God's peace is the reason you were chosen to be members of one body - and be thankful for it!
- Colossians 4:2 - Persist obstinately when you pray, being stirred up about it, and thank God.

When comparing well-written study Bibles, there is one easy way to distinguish between a good and an excellent study Bible. A good study Bible has short notes of explanation. Excellent study Bibles

have long commentaries and notes of explanation. *Study New Testament for Lesbians, Gays, Bi, and Transgender* has extensive notes. The notes are very academic, in some cases citing contemporary theologians. The quality of notes, the insightful comments made, the explanation of key Greek words, and the amount of commentary given make this one of the best study Bibles in this reviewer's personal collection. That is saying something, because this reviewer has over two shelves of study Bibles!

This Bible could have any or all of these titles: Gay Study Bible, Lesbian Study Bible, Bisexual Study Bible, or Transgender Study Bible. None of those titles, however, do justice to the study Bible. The queer New Testament study Bible is not just about queer spiritual interpretations of the Bible. In fact, few of the study notes have anything to do with homosexuality. This study Bible has outstanding notes on the Greek meanings of key words in the New Testament. Because of the excellent Greek language notes, this study Bible is a must for pastors and theologians. Even pastors and theologians who are strongly opposed to same-gender sexual relationships will find the commentary and the explanations of Greek good enough to justify having this book in their reference shelves. ▽

Destiny is no matter of chance. It is a matter of choice. It is not a thing to be waited for; it is a thing to be achieved.
 —William Jennings Bryan

Additional information about *Study New Testament for Lesbians, Gays, Bi, and Transgender* can be found on the website <http://www.createdgay.com/review/review28.html>. A free chapter can be downloaded for reading. People wanting to purchase this study Bible can do so on the Amazon.com website.

Same-sex Zebra Finches Just as Faithful as Their Hetero Counterparts



Homosexual zebra finches form long-term bond. The male-male pairs nestled and preened each other just like male-female pairs.

Same-sex pairs of monogamous birds are just as attached and faithful to each other as those paired with a member of the opposite sex. The insight comes from a study of zebra finches—highly vocal, colourful birds that sing to their mates, a performance thought to strengthen the pair's bond. Scientists found that same-sex pairs of finches sang to and preened each other just like heterosexual pairs. The study is reported in the journal *Behavioural Ecology and Sociobiology*.

Penguins Flirt with Homosexuality



Male king penguins have been seen to "flirt" with other males in the colony. Lead researcher Julie Elie from the University of California Berkeley said that the research showed that "relationships in animals can be more complicated than just a male and a female who meet and reproduce, even in birds."

Dr Elie and her colleagues are interested in zebra finches' behaviour. The birds establish life-long relationships and are highly social; males sing to their mates, the birds preen each other, and pairs share a nest. "I'm interested in how animals establish relationships and how [they] use acoustic communication in their social interactions," Dr. Elie told BBC Nature.

"My observations of [them] led me to this surprising result: same-sex individuals would also interact in affiliative manners, like male-female pairs." Dr. Elie decided to look more closely at the formation of

these bonds and the behaviour of finches in same-sex pairs. First, she and her colleagues, Clementine Vignal and Nicolas Mathevon from the University of Saint-Etienne, raised young finches in same-sex groups. More than half of the birds paired up with another bird of the same sex.

The team then closely monitored the birds for signs that they had bonded fully.

Bonded birds, Dr. Elie explained, perch side by side, nestled together. They also greet each other by "nuzzling" beaks.

Female partners copulate with a paired male then rear the young together.

In the next stage of their study, the scientists brought novel females to a group of bonded male-male pairs. Out of eight males that were engaged in same-sex pair-bonds, five ignored the females completely and continued to interact with their male partner.

The findings indicate that, even in birds, the drive to find a mate is far more complicated than simply the need to reproduce.

"A pair-bond in socially monogamous species represents a cooperative partnership that may give advantages for survival," said Dr. Elie. "Finding a social partner, whatever its sex, could be a priority."

There are many other examples of same-sex pairing in the avian world.

In monogamous gulls and albatrosses, females have the chance to breed without a male partner.

"Female partners copulate with a paired male then rear the young together," Dr. Elie explained.

In captivity, there have been at least two cases of male penguins forming long-term bonds when there are females available.

Perhaps the most famous of these was two male chinstrap penguins in Manhattan's Central Park Zoo, named Roy and Silo. They bonded and paid no attention to females in their enclosure for at least a year.

They even built a nest together and incubated and hatched a fertilised egg donated to them by one of the keepers. ▽

[Victoria Gill, science reporter, BBC Nature]

You wake up in the morning, and your purse is magically filled with 24 hours of unmanufactured tissue of the universe of your life! It is yours. It is the most precious of possessions. No one can take it from you. And no one receives either more or less than you receive.

—Dr. Thomas Arnold Bennett



SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS
A film about love, sex, and eternal life.

Summer Film Update

Summer is a relative term around here. We're currently in the midst of San Francisco's famous summer fog. While it may be cold and gray, it's actually great weather for hunkering down to edit a movie. And that's what we've been doing.

If you follow our Facebook page, you know that we've had an editor and an intern working out of our apartment this summer—we actually moved our bed into our living room to make a separate office, which sounds extreme but has actually been working really well. Now we can at least keep Lily out of the office, although she does like to sneak in to "help."

It's been an extremely busy summer, but a productive one. We're aiming to make some fall film festival deadlines, and I think with some more late nights, some luck, and some divine grace, we are going to make it. I saw a rough cut of act one last night (films typically have three acts), and I was blown away. Of course, it's the people who have generously agreed to let us into their lives to share their stories who make it compelling, but our editorial team has been absolutely rocking it.

Meet the Team



We feel extremely lucky to have Richard Levien, a local editor and filmmaker, on board as our editor. We met him a few years ago after the screening of *D-Tour*, a local documentary that had just won an award at the San Francisco International Film Festival. Stephen and Richard also took a master's editing class together from the great Walter Murch the next year, and when we started asking around for editor recommendations, people kept mentioning Richard. He's known to be especially good in situations where the director/producers are very close to the film sub-

ject. He actually has a PhD in theoretical physics from Princeton; and, while he's a Kiwi, he says that he's "one of the few New Zealanders who played no part whatsoever in the making of the *Lord of the Rings* film trilogy."



Our intern, Abby Potts, whom we're crediting as an assistant editor because she's been that good, actually sent me an email this spring asking if she might be a good fit for this film. She's a grad student at USC in their film program specializing in editing, and she had been following the project and wanted to be a part of it. In the small world of Adventism, it turns out that she and I shared a beloved favorite English Professor who had been at PUC but is now at Andrews. A generous friend in San Francisco who was off to Germany for work for the summer offered to let Abby stay in her apartment while working with us, and she's been here long hours assembling scenes for Richard to polish. She's also very patient when Lily wants to help, which has endeared her to all of us! We're already feeling very gloomy that USC will be back in session soon.

We're Getting Close and Need Your Help to Finish

We still have a great deal of work to do, but I am energized and enthused about how things are coming together. I feel like there was a period this past winter when we were faced with a mountain of footage to shape. I had moments of feeling overwhelmed and not fully up to the task, but now the shape has emerged, the stories are clear, and I know this is going to be a powerful film. (And we're going to have the world's best special features section on a DVD one day with all of that additional footage!)

This is still the most expensive phase of the film because we have to hire others to help and because the final touches of a film are done on expensive equipment (music composing, sound mixing, and color correction). In my last newsletter, I shared the good news that we'd received half of our post-

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Building Health

Algeria Meszaros

When I help someone who has cancer, the goal is to help the body heal itself. Homeopathy is based on similarities and energy that helps the brain to heal itself. homeopathy comes in liquid and pill form, and is measured by potency instead of milligrams. In the United States, the highest potency sold is 1,000; whereas, in Mexico, the highest potency sold is 100,000.

Most people who become ill with cancer (or another illness), have too many toxins and are nutritionally deficient. Therefore, by using the tinctures (naturopathy, we begin to help the immune system to cleanse and remove toxins that are in the body. We also have natural supplements that help kill the cancer cells.

It's important to keep in mind that diet plays a major role in aiding the alternative treatments for cancer. The ideal diet we recommend is almost a raw fruit, vegetable, and legume diet. In our healing program we offer raw juicing and nutritional supplements.

I became interested in alternative medicine because of experiences I had with my family. My paternal grandmother in Mexico prepared an herbal tea for women who couldn't get pregnant. When I was about eight, we had a neighbor who had been married for seven years, but who could not become pregnant. My mother gave her my grandmother's tea. Six months later she was pregnant. When I was fifteen, a woman from Venezuela came to the University of California at Los Angeles for six months of infertility testing. She was disappointed in the results. My mother gave her the tea. Six months later, she wrote to us from Venezuela that she was pregnant.

I studied naturopathy at the Global College of Natural Medicine. Later, I took the course on homeopathy. My instructors were a doctor from Portugal and another from Guadalajara, Mexico. I have also studied alternative methods of healing such as reflexology, magnetic therapy, and nutritional therapy.

I believe that alternative medicine can do what conventional medicine can't do. ▽

If you would like to contact Algeria with questions, interest in, or thoughts on this subject, you can reach her at: llamasmeszaros@yahoo.com.

A little knowledge is a dangerous thing
—unknown

Health Tip of the Month

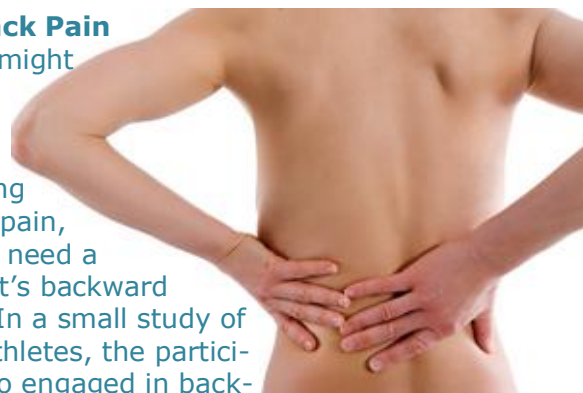
Belly Fat

Which should you cut back on first if you want to trim belly fat—carbs or fat? You might think that dietary fat goes straight to your middle, but research suggests that too many empty carbs is really the first thing to do your belly in. In a study, healthy overweight men and women went on two consecutive 8-week diet interventions. The first diet period was focused on weight maintenance and the second aimed for weight reduction by cutting calories. Through each phase, the participants followed either a reduced-fat or a reduced-carbohydrate diet. When all was said and done, both groups lost weight. But it turned out that the group on the reduced-carb diet—which, incidentally, also focused on quality, low-glycemic-index carbs—lost 11 percent more deep belly fat compared with the group on the low-fat diet. Plus, the low-carb group lost more fat mass overall. Shrinking the amount of belly fat you have is always a good idea for your health, because too much visceral—or intra-abdominal—fat increases your risk of diabetes, stroke, and heart disease.



Low Back Pain

There might be a simple approach for treating low back pain, but you'll need a spotter. It's backward walking. In a small study of college athletes, the participants who engaged in backward walking for several weeks experienced a significant reduction in their lower back pain. During the 3-week study, all participants—both those with back pain and those without—walked backward on a treadmill for 15 minutes a day, 3 days a week, at whatever pace they felt comfortable. And, at the study's conclusion, all the people with low back pain reported a significant decrease in pain, as well as better range of motion. What's more, most of the lower back pain group also showed a reduction in shock attenuation—a measurement that shows the



body impact of the foot striking the ground. Researchers think that backward walking may baby the back because it requires that the toe contact the ground first, rather than the heel—which may have beneficial effects on pelvis alignment and help alleviate the disc pressure associated with low back pain. But don't just hop on a treadmill and wing it. The study participants practiced for several weeks before the 3-week study intervention. And they were supervised. Plus, they were athletes—so assume balance was one of their strong suits. If you have any balance issues at all—or are at risk for falling or breaking a bone—it's probably not for you.

A Walk in the?
A walk on a treadmill or a walk in the park? Either one will get you fit, but the walk in the park may make you feel a whole lot better! Research confirms it: Exercising in a green environment puts you in a better frame of mind than working out in a sterile gym. In a study, people walked on a treadmill and viewed pictures of urban areas or images of rural scenes with lots of green spaces. The result? Besides bringing down blood pressure, viewing the green scenery improved energy and activity levels, raised self-esteem, and boosted mood. ▽

Source: www.realage.com

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Region 9 —Ruben López

After a few years of inactivity, Region 9 is waking up from its nap. Peter and Josh, Inland Empire chapter leaders, planned and executed a lovely potluck on August 21 at Peter's home. Attendees from Palm Springs, Sherman Oaks, and even Huntington Beach were in attendance, as well as Inland Empire locals. "Host with the Most" Peter made quite a few dishes in anticipation of members: homemade bread, bruschetta, black bean hummus, oatmeal patties, kale salad, and cream puffs (and, yes, it was all from scratch). Guests had their choice of the aforementioned dishes as well as salads, veggies, fruit, fried rice, tofu stir fry, and the Adventist classic—cottage cheese loaf.

It was a great way for many new and existing members to get together and make connections. One member had been looking to make a connection for quite some time and was able to meet another person willing to befriend her and accept her as she is. We had a great time talking about everything and nothing and some people were able to leave with new friends and a plate of food. ▽

Kinship Australia —Dave Coltheart

Three of the new Australian SDA Kinship leadership team met over the weekend of 13-14 August on Queensland's Sunshine Coast. John Wallace from Sydney and Ben Reuter from Cooranbong (NSW) travelled up to Brisbane (Qld) to meet with David Coltheart for the first meeting as new leaders of the SDA Kinship group that is being formed in Australia.

The three attended a lecture in Brisbane given by well-known psychologist and gay advocate, Paul Martin, on the dangers of ex-gay ministries, before heading north to the Sunshine Coast to spend the weekend at David's home. On Sabbath, they attended the friendly and accepting local Seventh-day Adventist Church where David actively participates in worship services and church outreach. The two visitors were warmly welcomed and invited to speak during the church "Sharing Time."

Over lunch and into the afternoon, the three discussed plans for the re-organised SDA Kinship in Australia and New Zealand. The plans include regular emailing of contacts, a screening of the soon-to-be-released movie, *Seventh-Gay Adventists*, in the Cooranbong area, and local meetings in Brisbane, Sydney, and Melbourne. Ben, who lives and works in Cooranbong, is in contact with a number of straight supporters of SDA Kinship and wants to contact present and former Seventh-day Adventists who identify as LGBTI in that area.

David will be preparing a regular newsletter that will be emailed to everyone who is interested. The newsletter will contain news of events, resources, and information, and short introductions of those who are willing to identify themselves to the rest of the group. David will also be the communications person to provide news and information to SDA Kinship in the USA, including the *Connection* newsletter, and will also provide support for whatever group may be formed in the Brisbane area.

John, who has personal contact with many Seventh-day Adventist Church leaders through his work in Sydney and knows many church officials personally, will be contacting them directly to put the case for acceptance. John is well-suited for this new advocacy role and believes that the current debate on gay marriage that is taking place in the Australian community at all levels is providing an excellent foundation for dialogue.

The primary focus for the rest of 2011 is to contact former members and supporters of SDA Kinship in the South Pacific. Although the leaders have a list of people who have registered with SDA Kinship through the US website, the list is neither up-to-date nor accurate. In fact, the list does not even begin to represent the Australian and New Zealand LGBTI people who have Adventist connections. There are many whose connections to SDA Kinship have been lost over the last two years due to the recent changes in leadership and organisation. If you are

one of those, we urge you to register with SDA Kinship through the US website and indicate that you are in Australia. If you have never registered, we urge you to do so. Your privacy will be respected at all times. ▽

David Coltheart may be contacted at
kinshipaustralia_news@sdakinship.org.

Canada — Debbie Hawthorn

I had the privilege of attending this year's Kinship Kamp-meeting in California. My wife and I met Ken Clarke from Calgary; and after we all heard about the socials and get-togethers that other regions have, Ken and I decided that we needed to do something in Alberta. Alberta is part of the Western Region; but, as Canada is so spread out, it is not always feasible for us in Alberta to get together with those in British Columbia or Saskatchewan. Ken and I have been working on planning an event for October 15, starting at 1:00 PM (lunch) in Red Deer (AB); restaurant to be determined. If you are interested, please reply to my Facebook page not later than October 7, so we can have an idea of how many are coming and for reservation purposes. This is open to Kinship members and partners. I do know that there might be some members that have transportation difficulties. If you need a ride or are able to provide one, please let us know. Thank you. We hope to see you all there. ▽

▽ World ▽ News ▽ World ▽ News ▽

USA —Dave Ferguson

Research funded by Arcus shows almost 70% of young adults under 30 think that churches are alienating young people with their anti-LGBT attitudes and policies. ▽

http://www.religionnews.com/index.php?/pressreleases/new_poll_millennial_generation_transforming_landscape_on_gay/

Australia —Scott Tetley

Just thought I'd let you all know about JOY 94.9. It a great LGBTIQ radio station broadcasting 24x7 that you can listen to wherever you are in the world. We love getting emails and texts from our listeners overseas. When I was announcing yesterday, I got a text from NYC; Portland, Oregon; London; and Singapore. Where would we be without the internet? Also you can download the iPhone app or subscribe to the many podcasts via the website or iTunes—lots of diverse content. ▽

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www.SGAmovie.com

—production funding. Well, it's time to begin raising the other half now.

If you're able to contribute to help us finish the film, we need your support one last time.

I'm in awe of what this community has done so far to get this film made. There are hundreds of people who have contributed, and many who have done so very generously. I'm humbled by your trust. And I finally feel fully confident that we will be watching it with you soon. *Daneen Akers* ▽

connection ▽

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

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Production	: Ruud Kieboom
Proofing	: Jacquie Hegarty, Floyd Pönitz, Carrol Grady, Yolanda Elliott
Printing	: Doolittle's PrintServe

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

If an item is to be acknowledged or returned, please include a self-addressed stamped envelope. Some *Connection* contributors have chosen to remain anonymous or use pseudonyms.

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Subscription requests or address changes may be sent to Subscriptions, PO Box 69, Tillamook, OR 97141 USA or emailed to subscriptions@sdakinship.org.

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YOU ARE INVITED TO
BOOK AND THE BEACH

Local Wisdom Weekend October 20-23

Are there questions or issues you have always wanted to have a chance to discuss at leisure? When you read *Christianity and Homosexuality: Some Seventh-day Adventist Perspectives*, *Eden's Gifts* or those clobber texts, were there revelations or confusions that crossed your mind? Would you like a calm place to think about how to deal with some difficult or complicated family members? Would you like to have some time to play at the beach? Here's the Kinship weekend for you!

Book and the Beach is focused on creating a time and place for us to talk with each other. There will also be morning worships, time to sing, optional field trips to local places of interest, outlet shopping, and comfortable chairs in which to listen and share your thoughts.

Our beach house is located across the street from the ocean. Our third floor deck looks out onto waves, sailboats, and spectacular sunrises. Our rooms are airy and comfortable. Most of them have their own bathrooms. The food is homemade with great "reviews." For those with differing abilities and energy levels we have an elevator. We have a hot tub in the back yard and hear rumors that there will be a swimming pool in place then.

Questions? Contact Catherine at region1@sdakinship.org or call her at her cell phone, 413 325-3648.

Registration:

<http://sdakinship.org/en/the-beach-a-the-book.html>.

You are invited to: Vermont Mini Kampmeeting —Building Sanctuary!!



Windsor, Vermont November 3-6

First of all, take a look at www.juniperhillinn.com and think about how nice it would be to spend the weekend here. Our hosts, Robert, April, and Samantha are gracious and welcoming. Lyda makes us remarkable and delicious meals. Previous attendees have enjoyed themselves so much that we had to add an extra day.

Our weekend will include:

- ❖ Talks on the Sanctuary by Larry Geraty, university president emeritus, and archeologist.
- ❖ Prayer, Praise, Promise, and Pajama morning worships
- ❖ Local historical and shopping tours on Friday
- ❖ Hayride
- ❖ Harvest time Sabbath banquet
- ❖ Bible study on gold, silver, brass, blue, scarlet, and purple.
- ❖ Sunday workshops on accupressure facelifts and the game Jeopardy (with prizes!)
- ❖ The opportunity to receive chair massages from our accupressure therapist guest Janet Masucci (self pay)... and a few surprises!

For information:

contact Catherine at region1@sdakinship.org or call her at her cell phone, 413 325-3648.

For registration:

<http://sdakinship.org/en/vermontminikm/vermontminikm2011.html>.