

CONNECTION

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A PUBLICATION OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST KINSHIP, INTERNATIONAL, INC.



SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST KINSHIP INTERNATIONAL WHO WE ARE

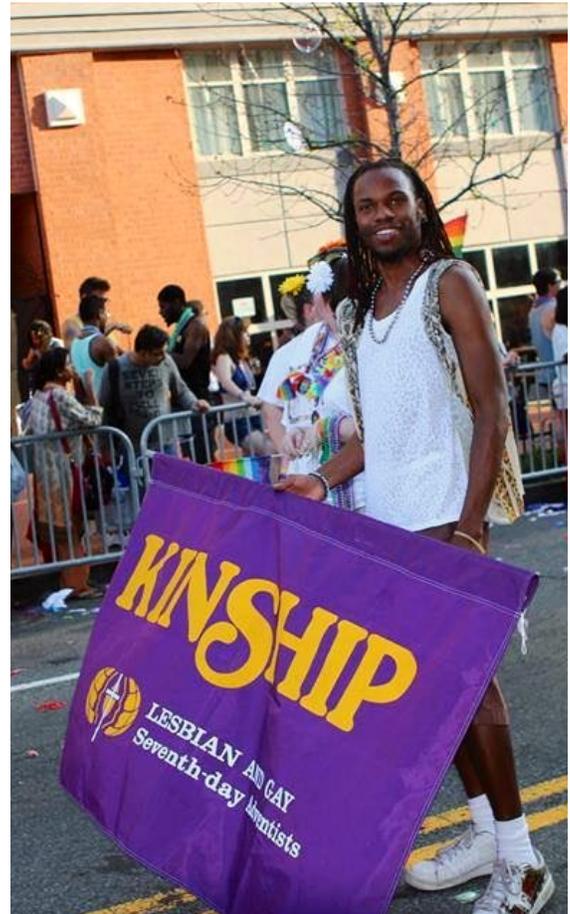
Seventh-day Adventist Kinship, International, Inc. is a non-profit support organization. We minister to the spiritual, emotional, social, and physical well-being of current and former Seventh-day Adventists who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex individuals and their families and friends.

Kinship facilitates and promotes the understanding and affirmation of LGBTIQ 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) non-profit organization in the United States. There are also regional and population coordinators in specific areas. The current list of members and friends includes approximately 2,500 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 LGBTIQ has its roots in the misunderstanding of what the Bible says.



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

SDA Kinship's elections take place each year during the annual Kampmeeting in the U.S.

The 2016 elections were for the positions of Secretary, Treasurer, Director of Communications, Director of Development, and Director of Youth Interests. I can share the results with you now.

Jonathan Cook was elected secretary. Jonathan had served as our director of communications for two years, but decided to run for the secretary position this year. I have no doubt he will do a fantastic job in this new role.



Karen Lee, who was re-elected treasurer, has done a great job of getting Kinship's finances current and keeping the books accurate. We are very grateful to her for working to keep Kinship fiscally secure even when donations have decreased over the past year. This coming year we hope to increase donations so that Kinship can continue important programs and projects that have been taking place in the United States and around the world.

Our new communications director is Clinton Sorzano, who brings to our community his experience in graphic and website design, branding, photography, and writing. His vision for our publications and website is fresh and contemporary, and you'll see them in action very soon.

Yeshara Acosta was re-elected director of development. Because she will be away for several months at boot camp for the U.S. National Guard, she has laid out a plan for the continuation of her responsibilities during her absence. The development program will be well cared for in the meantime.

And finally, our new director of youth interests joins the board from Alberta, Canada. Jaden Rajah wants to be a positive influence on LGBTIQ youth by mentoring and supporting youth the same way he was supported when he came out. He plans to use his resources and contacts as he works with our Kinship youth. We look forward to supporting him in his plans!

If you attended Kampmeeting in person or watched the livestream of our business meeting, you have met Ann Craig, the organizational consultant we've hired to help Kinship grow and move forward. She will be attending our fall board meeting in October to help us analyze how best to meet the needs of our members.

This is just a short summary of our 2016 elections. As we move into fall, I hope that you will let me know whatever you might have on your mind so that I can take your thoughts, comments, and ideas to the board in October. Thank you for being the reason I love Kinship so much.

*Yolanda Elliott
President*



*Yolanda Elliott
President*



*Naveen Jonathan
Vice President*



*Jonathan Cook
Secretary*



Pictured is Region 9 leader Kristina at the recent Wine and Canvass event held 8/21/16.

If you live in the Arizona/ Southern California area, find out more about upcoming events by signing up for their monthly eNewsletter.

For details, email region9@sdakinship.org.



Tell us how you are a part of this community! We want to hear your story!

@SDAKINSHIP



\$1195 RAISED THANK YOU!

Last August, we participated in Give Out Day, raising funds so that we could increase efforts to support LGBTIQ Adventists and strengthen the resources offered to our membership worldwide.

The funds raised benefited

- International Growth and Development
- Kinship Kampmeeting
- Women's Interests
- Youth Interests
- Building Safe Places

These programs offer a variety of resources to specific demographics and help to keep these efforts going!

SUPPORT SDA KINSHIP
www.sdakinship.org

MEET
YESHARA
 Pronounced ye-SHAH-ruh

Tell us a little about yourself.

I'm 25 years old, and I live in California, near L.A. I identify as Queer and gender-fluid.

What was it like growing up LGBTIQ for you?

I was a late bloomer so I wasn't aware of my sexuality when I was growing up. I only became aware when I went away from home to college and started becoming more self-aware to who I was in general. But growing up I was only taught to have a negative view of homosexuality, that it was sinful, and it was very influential on my processes of accepting myself.

I accepted what I was taught as true and even told others I came across who were gay that it was wrong. It was extremely difficult to change the self-talk that told me who I am is wrong. But by the grace of God and friends who have supported me through it, I've been able to undo a lot of those hurtful thoughts.

Do you currently attend church? If so, tell us about where you worship. Are you involved in any ministry?

I do attend church, go to a couple different ones in LA. Glendale City Church and Hollywood Seventh-day Adventist Church. I help out with music at both churches and I love it. I've made a lot of friends at both places and they are extremely open and affirming. Which was amazing to find at an Adventist church. They weren't just "ok" with LGBTIQ persons being there. They welcomed and fought for their recognition and acceptance. And that meant a lot to me. I'm not just tolerated. I'm celebrated as a child of God. That's the kind of atmosphere I want to help build at any church I'm at.

If you could educate other Christians on one thing about the LGBTIQ community, what would it be?

I would tell other Christians that God is using LGBTIQ Christ followers in powerful ways that is beyond their comprehension, and that being open to God means being open to the children that He's using to teach them important lessons about love. God is not limited to our ideas of him/her. Jesus did things beyond the understanding of the religious leaders of His time. He's doing the same now. Just because you don't understand it doesn't mean that God is not in it. The Holy Spirit can use anyone and everyone, and I have seen the Spirit move among my LGBTIQ brothers and sisters in amazing ways.

You're about to leave for bootcamp; how long will you be away, what are you most excited and nervous about?

I'm going to train for the National Guard and I'll be gone for 7 months. I'm excited to challenge myself in new ways, and I'm nervous about how well I'll do. I want to make my family and friends proud, and I want to use the skills God has given me to the best of my ability. I'll be sad to be away from everyone I care about for that long, but this is important to me and I know I have the support of the ones I love and that love me. I'll definitely be leaning on that love while I'm gone.



IN LOVING MEMORY DR. MORRIS L. TAYLOR



Kinship member Dr. Morris L. Taylor passed gently to death on August 9, 2016; he was at home, surrounded by his family. A memorial service for Dr. Taylor was held Aug. 13, 2016, in San Francisco, California.

On August 9 at 7:44 pm, the world lost a light.

Dr. Morris L. Taylor went to sleep after battling multiple myeloma for almost two years.

In *Nine Lives of Morris: Great Tales from One Cool Cat* he describes himself as: child, pianist, artist, soldier, father, missionary, professor, master, and leatherman.

He was a man of many talents and one cool cat who enjoyed a full nine lives. He lived authentically. He was a renaissance man who truly enjoyed life to the fullest, involving himself masterfully in music, painting, and writing.

I had the privilege of knowing him. This was one of our last visits in April at his home in San Francisco. A memory that is even more meaningful now. We shared stories, discussed art, beauty, and created music together. I look forward to hearing him play the piano someday soon.

Rest in peace, my friend.



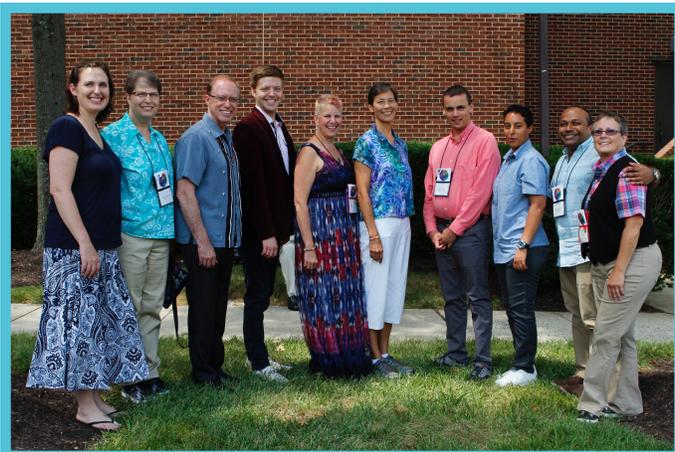
—Jonathan Cook

KAMPMEETING 2016 RECAP

Last July, we came together to enjoy Kampmeeting 2016 under the theme “breaking down barriers for a healthier community.”

Kampmeeting was described by many as one of the most fun, diverse, and thrilling yet!

This once-a-year event took place in Baltimore, Maryland, featuring a variety of sessions, musical concerts, outings/activities, and opportunities to socialize with new and old friends, showcasing a lineup of dynamic keynote speakers including Keisha McKenzie, Mitchell Tyner, Steve Chavez, Chett Pritchett and Olive Hemmings.





31 attendees from 7 countries came together to enjoy European Kinship Meeting during the week of Sep. 1-5, 2016.

Hosted in Hassenroth, Germany, the theme was *Mind-Body-Spirit, and a culture of appreciation.*

Activities included *Adventures with Tanja, Ingrid and Frieder*, with trips to historic Michelstadt, thai chi, a German phrases class- giving insight on German language and culture and more.

A highlight was Bradly Nelson's *A Gay SDA Play*, a documentary-styled play based on more than two dozen interviews with former and current Adventist LGBTIQ individuals.

Speakers included Karsten Stank (pastor from the North German Union) who shared devotionals, and Floyd Poenitz who presented on topics such as *Brain Function and Gender Differences in the Brain.*

Delicious German food was enjoyed at all meals to the delight of the attendees.

EUROPEAN KINSHIP MEETING RECAP



SAVE THE DATE: NOV. 29, 2016

This year, on Tuesday, Nov. 29, SDA Kinship is participating in #GivingTuesday, a global day dedicated to giving.

Last year, more than 45,000 organizations in 71 countries came together to celebrate #GivingTuesday.

Since its founding in 2012, #GivingTuesday has inspired giving around the world, resulting in greater donations, volunteer hours, and activities that bring about real change in communities.

We invite you to join the movement and to help get out and give this November 29 to SDA Kinship.

More details on our website this October.



Did you know?



AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support SDA Kinship every time you shop, at no cost to you!

When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection, and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to us.



Scan the QR Code to support SDA Kinship when you shop on Amazon, or visit smile.amazon.com.

Finished with College but Not My Orientation

In January 1979, after a second mission term in Japan, I was back at Canadian Union College (now Burman University) and ready to finish my degree in theology. I wish I could say it was an amazing stress-free experience. There were high points, but it seemed as if every few months there was a new incident related to my orientation. Two of them were traumatic.

As far as my studies and campus life went, if you had watched me from a distance, you would have seen me faithfully attending class, diligently writing papers (on a manual typewriter), leading out in religious activities, playing my trombone in the band, or singing in the choir. I was also practicing my preaching skills in class and at local churches. Donna often went with me, and we occasionally performed our unheard of trombone-flute duets. My “relationship” with Donna was still ambivalent, and I continued to fumble about with attempts at dating others. Although no one knew about my attraction to male friends and how it was affecting me one friend saw through my façade.

Because of the myth that homosexuals are not or cannot be spiritual, it is important to reiterate that in addition to the religious activities I was publicly involved in, I continued to be very intentional about my private devotions. I routinely immersed myself in studying the gospels along with my well-worn 800-page volume of *The Desire of Ages*. I continued to be preoccupied with Morris Venden’s lectures that focused on prayer, Bible study, and Christian witness as the key to all personal victory and continual obedience I sought in my life.

Since Kelvin had relocated to the US, I moved in with a group of theology majors who had taken over a small white bungalow we called The White House. Sharing a house with a gang of theology majors was enjoyable and created a sense of community. Because it was a house, the typical bathrooms allowed for private grooming. That was a great relief. Even theology majors, however, roam about scantily clad in the privacy of their home. That was awkward for me.

As well, I never allowed myself to be as playful as others when we did let loose. I know, it is hard to imagine theology majors letting loose, but when we did, I was always reserved and unsettled by the pleasure I felt when in close proximity to my housemates. I was afraid that if I relaxed too much, as when people do when playing affectionately, I would reveal my secret. There was always a level of fear around playful contact. Except for this, the first semester was manageable and relatively uneventful. That changed during the summer of 1979.

After a quick trip home to visit family, I returned to the college to work and take a couple of courses I needed in order to graduate the following spring. Two events occurred that summer. The first, oddly enough, remained unknown to me until much later. I was painfully aware of the second. I’ll share the unknown-to-me incident first.

Terry was one of my theology-major friends whom I admired and for whom I felt some attraction. Because there were far fewer of us on campus during that summer, Terry and I hung out a lot during those very long Alberta evenings. Spending so much time with him set me up for an inadvertent and unknown-to-me disclosure of my orientation.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

If you are reading my story for the first time and you feel you are missing some context, I suggest you start at the beginning with the May 2015 issue of The Connection. Why I am writing my story in such detail? In short, I am answering questions while hoping to educate. Over the years, I have been asked the same questions over and over by friends, family, and church members. The answers to those questions are found in different decades of my life. I'm grateful to the Connection for giving me this space to share my story. Publishing as I write is a great motivator!

—Jerry McKay

Continued...

In a moment of unguarded conversation with a group of friends that included Terry, I said, "If Terry's name were Tom, we could be Tom & Jerry!"

I had the cartoon characters Tom & Jerry in mind when I made this pronouncement. I blame Japan for that. In Japan, all things cutesy are displayed on everything from erasers to clothing. When I would introduce myself, people would inevitably associate me with those cartoon characters. I was frequently given Tom-&Jerry mementos. So, my comment, although a little odd, was not random. It did, however, catch the attention of one female friend.

In a conversation that took place after the fact, when I was not present, this friend came right out and told Donna that, "Jerry can never be interested in a girl because he is homosexual." Really? How did she know that? What was it about my comment that red-flagged my orientation? How could she know what I barely knew? Apparently, she had experience with this kind of thing. Her brother, she disclosed to Donna, was one!

I felt a bit unnerved to learn about that exchange, but now I see it as yet another external confirmation of what was going on internally. This incident reminds me of junior camp days when a fellow camper told me to "stop standing like a woman." I have always been aware of how I carry my body compared to most of my heterosexual male friends. Even my Christian friends posture themselves differently. I have felt the unspoken expectation to conform to so-called masculine mannerisms -- not crossing my legs, for example -- but those norms seem so silly to me. In this incident, however, it was the way I expressed affection for a male friend that was suspect. It was probably the enthusiasm with which I expressed myself that got me into trouble. Nevertheless, my comment was deemed too intimate!



What did Donna think about this revelation? She said my Tom & Jerry comment did catch her a little off guard, but that it was our friend's response that struck her. "There was something about what she said, and the way she said it, that made sense to me. There was intimacy in the way you made that comment that struck me. There was an aha moment for me. At the time, however, we had no way of making sense of these things. I thought to myself, "Jerry wants to be a pastor. He is a good person. How could this be true about Jerry? You have a growing realization on the one hand and a this-cannot-be response on the other." Donna's summary said it all. "It cannot be, I told myself, because it is not allowed to be!"

What friends may have noticed over the years but discounted because of naivety or lack of context, others, like our mutual friend, recognized as clues of my orientation. When those clues are pointed out, only then do others, like Donna, have their aha moment. With respect to this experience, one fact is important. In the 15 years between summer camp and the summer of Tom & Jerry, I had not been imitating any stereotypical mannerisms associated with homosexuality -- whatever those are. Neither was I trying to draw attention to any affection I might have felt for Terry.

Continued...

I was barely aware of it myself. In all my twenty-three years, I had never been exposed to any “evil liberal secular” media influencing how I expressed myself physically or verbally. I was not trying to “be homosexual” in any sense. The opposite, in fact, was the case. Throughout high school, college, and my two years as a missionary in Japan, I had been immersed in a conservative Christian environment. That was the environment that had shaped me. The only other homosexual I had met – that I knew of -- was the guy at the bus stop in Honolulu while en route to Japan for the first time in 1975. That encounter was through the window of a bus and lasted 30 seconds. My mannerisms and affectionate enthusiasm came from within, not from any external influence. This speaks to something innate about my experience – something “woven into my substance” as Psalm 139 suggests. While I never knew about my inadvertent discovery until years later, I was certainly aware of the second incident.

Around the time our friend was flagging me as homosexual, without my knowledge, my orientation was about to move from suppressed feelings to outward expression.

Around the time our friend was flagging me as homosexual, without of my knowledge, my orientation was about to move from suppressed feelings to outward expression. Because repairs needed to be done on our “white house”, we were asked to find other accommodations for the summer. Instead of moving into the dormitory, I wanted to live on my own. I was given access to a tiny old trailer at the edge of campus. My introvert nature liked the novelty of it, but living alone was more of challenge than I expected. Preparing my own meals, rather than joining others in the cafeteria, for example, added to my sense of isolation. To make an awkward story short – it was there that a moment of intimacy occurred that caught me totally off guard.

A similarly lonely friend often came by to visit. One evening, while I was preparing my supper in my cramped kitchen, we brushed up against each other. In the next moment, we were in each other’s embrace.

This was not a casual hi-there-give-me-a-hug embrace. In an instant, years of emotional and physical isolation broke through my stoic control. Our embrace touched everything raw and suppressed in my body and soul. It tapped into a loneliness I was not prepared to deal with. It was not just because another human was giving me a hug, but because it was a man who responded similarly. I wanted to cry more than pursue anything sexual even though the urge was there to do so. I felt nauseous, in fact, from the rush of emotion exploding to the surface and seeking expression.

READ THE REST AT WWW.SDAKINSHIP.ORG



It’s hard enough to be a young adult Christian in today’s world, let alone one that’s also gay. Why not just love and embrace us? We are all God’s children.

–Tazio

My journey to become an ally of my friends who are LGBT+ began seven years ago. I remember the day I first felt righteous indignation spark deep within my soul about how LGBT+ people were treated in the Seventh-day Adventist church, the denomination my family has been a part of (often in leadership roles) for five generations.

My husband, Stephen Eyer, and I were attending a small church in San Francisco that wasn't officially Adventist but met on Saturday mornings at 11 AM and was pastored by two pastors who had both been Adventist pastors. Word was getting out that if you were an Adventist on the margins in the Bay Area, you were welcome. We had found the Adventist churches in the city to be deeply conservative, and this spiritual community grew and challenged us in all the right ways.



Two women, Linda and Jacquie, SDA Kinship members who were long-time partners and life-long Adventists, started coming to this same little church community once in a while. They also were active volunteers in one of the biggest churches in the area with a host of positions. Between them, they ran the church website and newsletter, coordinated the children's programming, played the organ for services, and directed the choir (and that's just what I can remember). They were church ladies, in the very best sense—the type of people who are the backbone of a church community. And one or both had been part of this church for more than 16 years--and so had several other LGBT Adventists in the area.

And then Prop 8 came to town.

I'm sure most readers here remember this incredibly divisive piece of 2008 legislation that eventually banned same-sex marriage in California. It stirred up a lot of angst, fear, stereotypes, and hype. Conservative churches were ground zero for the spread of propaganda. The pastor of this big church preached a sermon that a well-known, ultra right-wing Adventist pastor also preached (and shared with other pastors to maximize exposure) titled, "Gay Marriage: A State of Dis-grace."

It was a sermon full of the lowest and most debase arguments that circulated in the run-up to the 2008 election. Jacquie and Linda sat through this dehumanizing sermon, wondering what had become of their church. The next week, they lodged a complaint with the pastor, who in turn interrogated them about their relationship—he had only recently become the pastor and apparently hadn't realized they were a couple. This led to a series of meetings and inquires that resulted in Jacquie and Linda being stripped of everything but the right to sit in a pew and pay tithe.

They couldn't participate in the life of the church in any way except for directing the handbell choir because it turned out that nobody else in the congregation knew how to direct a choir. So Linda could continue to direct the bell choir, but she had to keep her back to the congregation. Not surprisingly, they soon stopped attending. To this day, only a few people from that church they were a part of for over 16 years have even called to ask how they are doing.

It's been more than seven years since I first heard that story, and it still makes me shake with anger to type it. I now know that far too many people actually do know what this overt marginalization feels like. I've now heard story upon story from LGBT Adventists on the receiving end of "Love the sinner, but hate the sin"--like the young mother who was told, when it was discovered that she was a lesbian, that she could drop-off her almost-two-year-old child for Sabbath School but couldn't be around the other children herself.

Or the woman who was told she could only play her trumpet from the pew and not the platform, as the board wanted to make it clear that they didn't condone her committed relationship to another Adventist woman.

Or the college student who was outed by unsigned pamphlets slipped under every dorm room door the night before he was running for a student association office.

Or the many stories I couldn't hear because far too many young people of faith have committed suicide, convinced that the rejection they felt from the church over their sexuality or gender identity was from God.



Continued...

Over and over again, I've heard stories that seem like the absolute antithesis of Jesus' directive in John

13:35, "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

Seeing this huge injustice done in the name of Christianity--in my own church--really got my attention back in the late summer and fall of 2008. Stephen and I worked with several other social justice-minded Adventists, including Kinship members and allies, to start an online petition called, "Adventists Against Prop 8." Our hope was that we could tap into the historically strong respect for the separation of church and state that has been a big part of Adventism since Adventists feel like a misunderstood religious minority themselves as Sabbatharians.

We felt that even if California Adventists weren't sure what they thought of same-sex marriage from a scriptural or doctrinal perspective, they of all people would get that the state shouldn't be writing a religiously-motivated definition of marriage into the constitution that would deny their fellow Californians crucial rights and equality under the law. It actually worked quite well to raise the consciousness of this issue within the Adventist church, and many high-profile Adventist thought leaders signed on.

When Prop 8 passed in November of 2008, we were deeply disappointed. This was something directly impacting the lives and families of people we knew and worshipped with weekly. And the arguments we'd grown up hearing about the scriptural wrongness of same-gender relationships weren't holding up for us in the lived experience of Sabbaths spent with our LGBT friends and their families. If I looked at the fruits of their life, I knew God was working in their lives the same as in mine. They were teaching me more about love, gentleness, compassion, patience than those who were condemning them. I realized that the assumptions I'd always had might need adjusting in the light of day and real people.

That's what happened to awaken me seven years ago. I wanted to engage in my denomination to prompt some serious reflection and prompt conversation. Not insignificantly, I was eight months pregnant with our eldest daughter in November of 2008 when Prop 8

passed, and my husband and I were wondering if she was going to grow up to be a sixth-generation Adventist. Could we raise her in a church that marginalized our good friends, relegating them to roles that kept their backs turned to the congregation? The answer was no, so the next step was wondering if we could help spark a consciousness shift. So we set out to tell stories, stories like the ones that had first opened our eyes and hearts.

Since then Stephen and I have been deeply blessed to be trusted with the stories and friendships of many LGBT+ people which we've done our best to share in our films. It's been the most challenging work we've ever done on many levels, and yet also the most rewarding.

This summer I was asked by the Kinship Board to become the director of the Friends portion of the Friends & Family outreach of Kinship because family members have their own need for support and resources in a way that friends/allies do not. Family members are not always, especially at first, allies. And so the Board is splitting those roles. I'm honored to be asked to help Kinship, which has been a community where our family has been nurtured and welcomed with open arms. On almost a weekly basis I have someone message me or our film Facebook page asking if I can help connect them to resources or someone to talk to, and I'm always so glad that Kinship exists to share with people as a resource.

And now I'd like to ask the wider SDA Kinship community what you hope allies/friends can do, can be? How can we support this community? What is your hope for allies within Kinship and the church? I'd love to hear from you as we go forward! You can reach me at daneen@daneenakers.com.

Daneen Akers is the co-producer/ director of the documentary film, *Seventh-Gay Adventists* as well as a companion dialogue film, *Enough Room at the Table*, *It Gets Better* (for Adventists Too), and *We Are SDAs*. She and Stephen are in the middle of production of a new series of short profiles to be released soon. They live with their daughters, Lily and Lucy in Oceanside, CA.

- *Seventh-Gay Adventists*: www.sgamovie.com
- *Enough Room at the Table*: www.enoughroomfilm.com
- *We Are SDAs*: www.wearesdas.com
- *It Gets Better* (for Adventists too): www.itgetsbetter.org/video/entry/6239/
- *Love & Listening Campaign*: www.sgamovie.com/love



- **In September of 2016, the Intercollegiate Adventist GSA Coalition (IAGC) will be highlighting a listing on *Campus Pride**, that adds Andrews University to their *Shame List*, calling out what they say are “shameful acts of religion-based prejudice.”**

Andrews University made the list, partly for its refusal to allow an official LGBT+ group on campus. Although there is AULL4One, an unofficial group that seeks to “create a safe and supportive space for LGBT+ students,” they are not allowed to meet on-campus or advertise to find others who may need help.

During his Freshman year at Andrews University, Jonathan Doram, IAGC President shared these words which reflect how difficult life can be if you’re an LGBT+ student on a Seventh-day Adventist campus: “I think one of the hardest times is when you’re just sitting in vespers or church and everything is fine... until the speaker says something negative about homosexuality and how wrong and sinful it is. Suddenly the people around you and the congregation echo their amens and you’ve never felt so small before. And then in the dorm and on campus people proudly proclaim their homophobic slurs/comments and your friends laugh along. You feel like no matter how good, how friendly, how Christ-like you try to be, no one will like you if they knew the real you. And then you truly feel alone.”

*Campus Pride is national non-profit dedicated to helping create safer college campuses for LGBT students.

- **The 2016 Loma Linda University leadership retreat will feature a three-hour session, providing information to campus leadership on more constructive ways to deal with LGBTIQ students on campus.**

The session is expected to feature interviews of a young gay man, a young gay woman and a parent.



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Limited Sizes: Small to 2XL
Cost: \$25.00

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MEMBER

If you would like to help make a difference, encourage and learn with other people, and promote God's unconditional love for all His children, please visit sdakinship.org.

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How do you
LIKE IT?

How do you like –or not– the new Kinship *Connection Newsletter*? We'll love to hear your feedback!

Send an email to us at communications@sdakinship.org.

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RESOURCES RESOURCES RESOURCES

We understand what it is like to be an Adventist struggling with issues of sexual orientation and gender identity because we each had similar experiences.

And we also know that this struggle is often painful, frightening, and discouraging. Kinship is here to help and to provide support.

If you are feeling lonely, depressed, or suicidal, or if you need a professional counselor who is supportive of gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender concerns, chances are we know someone in your area who may help.

Be assured that we are sensitive to your need for confidentiality. If you wish, we can also refer you to an understanding Adventist pastor, teacher, or other professional we know who is sensitive and informed about sexual orientation and gender identity issues.

Above all, please know we care. We understand that you need to think through

what your sexuality means, what to do about it, what it may mean to your loved ones, and whether it is possible to be gay and a Seventh-day Adventist. We will not try to determine your conclusions if you reach out to us. We will endeavor to understand and help you while you make those important decisions about who you are and God's plan for your life.

We want to respond in the most helpful way. We are people of diverse ages and backgrounds, so please let us know the type of person to whom you feel most comfortable talking. For example, a woman rather than a man, someone who came out while being married, or someone with a similar background or profession. You may also be more comfortable talking to someone who speaks your native language.

If you are a pastor, teacher, counselor, or parent, please know that we welcome all inquiries and that we also respect and honor your need for confidentiality.



info@sdakinship.org



PO Box 244
Orinda, CA 94563-0244



Scan the code for these resources, or visit www.sdakinship.org

- Find an LGBTIQ-Friendly Church
- Homosexuality: Can We Talk About It?
- Support Kinship- Make a Donation
- Previous *Connection* issues and more



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Doing our part to prevent violence of action or of word means standing against all manner of hate from society, from the pulpit and from families who would discard their sons or daughters for being LGBTIQ. Our community and our allies and friends can make a difference against such hate, together. We pray for an end of violence against LGBTIQ people. Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims and families of this tragedy. We mourn together.

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