



ONE TO ONE

The official quarterly newsletter of SDA Kinship Australia 01/06/08

NEWSLETTER NO 8 ISSUE 2

OUR PURPOSE: Seventh Day Adventist Kinship Australia is a non-profit support organization which ministers to the spiritual, social and physical well-being of former and present SDA Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Transgender and Intersex individuals and their friends and families. Kinship is not supported by the SDA Church. Kinship is a confidential organization which supports the advancement of human rights for all people.

Communication

Once a human being has arrived on this earth, communication is the largest single factor determining what kinds of relationships he/she makes with others and what happens to him/her in the world about him/her. ~ Virginia Satir

To keep the lines of communication open is often very painful for sometimes it forces us to face our issues and it is easier to simply "go into retreat" and avoid the pain of opening ourselves up to others. Many marriages and friendships have died simply because of lack of communication.

I see the need for more communication that is open and honest but at the same time non judgmental. There must be a genuine effort to understand the position of others and this takes considerable effort, but after all, everything in life that is worth-while takes effort. If your friends mean something to you then put forth some effort to have meaningful communication.

Sent in by, Tom Durst. Tom can be contacted at tomdurst1@msn.com

The Australian Kampmeeting.

The Australian Kampmeeting 3-6 Oct 2008.
 "Rejuvenation"

Our Kampmeeting this year is called Rejuvenation and is in a place that is in the heart of Rejuvenation.

The Gold and Tweed Coasts are a wonderful place to have a holiday and the Northern Rivers Area is the place to have our next Kampmeeting.

Invercauld House Conference & Function Centre is a unique facility of Southern Cross University Lismore, set within 2.5 hectares of tranquil rainforest gardens & secluded from the hustle & bustle of the surrounding area. Invercauld House Conference & Function Centre is situated within 10km from the Lismore airport, 5km from Lismore CBD. It is designed as a multifunction venue. Additionally, the centre has 27motel-style suites within a short walk from the main facility. Originally an elegant private residence, the magnificent property was purchased by Southern Cross University, in order to provide a venue for seminars & in-service training activities. In 1994 & 1995, significant development of the site was undertaken. Invercauld House Conference & Function Centre was officially inaugurated by the past Governor General of Australia, Sir Zelman Cowen in Dec 1995.

We have very good speakers and activities for this event. The Australian Kinship web-site gives the details of Costs and Registration forms. So check our Events page on the web.

Virgin flies into Ballina. Rex flies into Lismore. Pick ups can be arranged from both airports.

So do register early and that way you will not miss out.



Kinship at GLBTIQ Pride Fair Day's this year.

Kinship was present at the Pride Fair in Brisbane. There were quite a number of People who came and took the information on hand, about us.

Kinship people and Friends kept coming through the Day to say hello and help with the Stall.

Brisbane recorded its biggest annual Pride rally, March and Fair Day on the 14th of June.

The day started at Queens Park in the city with a rally and was finished off with a colourful and vocal march that made its way to Musgrave Park in South Brisbane.

Fair Day attracted a colourful and diverse crowd. Brisbane Pride Festival organisers said they were happy with the attendance.

A Queensland Police spokesperson praised the crowd for its good behaviour, saying there were no incidents reported during the event.

Our Health

Why Adventists Should Consider Supporting Gay Marriage

By Jared Wright

Taken from The Spectrum article.

Today is an historic day in the history of the State of California and in the history of the United States as a whole. Today is the day when a ban on homosexual marriage will be lifted in accordance with a **decision** of the California Supreme Court. Homosexual couples from across the United States will descend on California in the coming days and weeks, and will receive the legal rights and responsibilities that accompany marriage.

Today's removal of the ban on same-sex marriage is part of a larger debate in America over the definition of marriage. Because at stake in the discussion are issues

of morality, justice, ethics, and separation of church and state, Adventists cannot and must not remain silent on the issue. Adventists have always insisted on speaking the truth, demonstrating God's love, and working for justice. For those reasons, I suggest several reasons below that voters in California and elsewhere should stand in firm opposition to any constitutional amendments that would ban same-sex marriage. Below, I enumerate my reasons and provide a starting place for further conversation on the topic.

Seven reasons to oppose a ban on same-sex marriage

1. Adventists affirm separation of church and state. Advocating a ban on same-sex marriage on moral grounds is tantamount to coercive mandating of a religious viewpoint. We cannot spread morality by force through law! We should oppose all efforts to do so.
2. Protecting marriage: Supporters of a ban on same-sex marriage define the issue as protection of marriage. We must note that same-sex marriage is still marriage. Marriage as an institution is not under attack. Rather, it is being affirmed.
3. Promoting fidelity and monogamy: If we, as Christians, support and uphold fidelity and monogamy as better than cohabitation, then we should be consistent. The purpose of marriage is to promote monogamy and fidelity. Get it?
4. Marriage is beneficial for society both structurally and fiscally. Marriage promotes stable, lasting relationships over transient ones. Further, **marriage is related** to greater financial security and mental and physical health. Married people provide societal benefits for those reasons.
5. We cannot defer to the "will of the people" or "deeply rooted tradition," as attempts by some organizations have done, to ban same-sex marriage. The will of the

people and tradition consented to slavery in America. America's elected officials outlawed slavery as a violation of human freedoms and dignity. America enacted laws banning interracial marriage by the will of the people and tradition. Appointed judges rescinded the laws as violations of the U.S. Constitution's 14th amendment. Majority does not equal right. The court-ordered desegregation of schools in the 1950's also went against the will of the people.

6. Same-sex marriage is NOT a slippery slope to the permitting of polygamy in America.

7. Same-sex marriage does not pose a threat to me, my choices, or my way of life. The practice of marital fidelity by homosexual couples does not impinge upon any of my liberties, it does not harm me or my religious practice, and it does not threaten God or God's sovereignty.

Discussion – an opening for polygamists?

Some have argued that allowing same-sex marriage will open the door to a broad definition of marriage that will inevitably come to include polygamy. That slippery slope argument is demonstrably false. The following discussion comes courtesy of the article [Gay Marriage and Polygamy](#), and is reprinted here for your convenience.

Any proposal for the expansion of marriage must be good both (1) for the individuals involved and (2) for the society in which they live. Gay marriage meets both of these criteria. The case for polygamous marriage is distinguishable (and weaker) on both counts, especially the second.

On the first issue — the effect of allowing gay marriage on homosexuals themselves — the deprivation for gays if gay marriage is banned is greater than the deprivation to polygamists if polygamy is banned. A polygamist may still marry someone if we ban polygamy; he simply may not marry many someone's.

The deprivation to the polygamist is large, especially if polygamy involves the exercise of his religious faith, but not total. The gay person, however, has no realistic choice of a mate available under a gay-marriage ban. The deprivation is total.

Further, there is no "polygamous orientation" causing a person to need the close companionship of multiple partners (though some people may prefer it). There is, however, a homosexual orientation, causing a person to need the close companionship of a same-sex partner. The ban on polygamous marriage is the denial of a preference, perhaps a strong one; the ban on gay marriage is the denial of personhood itself.

On the second issue — the effect of recognition on society — the differences between gay marriage and polygamous marriage are more pronounced. There is ample evidence that people who live in stable, committed couples are healthier, happier, and wealthier than those who are single. Gay marriage is a good idea because it will benefit not only the gay couple but their families, friends, neighbors, and taxpayers whose burdens to care for unmarried gay partners is greater.

Pastor Jared Wright is pursuing a M.Div at La Sierra University.

“OUT LATE”

'Out Late' is a booklet about sexual identity and coming out as an older gay man. It includes information about health and safe sex. It's not a 'how to' guide but it does explore a range of topics that many men in this situation have experienced. Copies of the booklet can be downloaded by clicking on the link below.

http://www.afao.org.au/library_docs/resources/OutLate07.pdf

Christianity and Homosexuality: Some Seventh-day Adventist Perspectives.

Review by David Potter , Australia

Are same-sex relationships natural? Do homosexuals and heterosexuals deserve equal treatment in the church? Is sexual preference chosen, or is it biologically determined? Are the Leviticus 18 and 20 edicts timeless moral laws that apply equally to Christians as to Israel? Do Paul's comments on "unnatural" relations (Romans 1) cover all same-sex relations, or only the perverse practices of the godless Gentiles? These questions and many more are addressed in this book.

Most of the 18 papers in the book were presented at a 2006 conference organised by Seventh-day Adventist Kinship International, an organisation set up in the 1970s to nurture gay and lesbian Adventists. Eight were written by current church academics. Most question aspects of the traditional church position on same-sex relations. The reader faces two challenges: firstly, to properly assess the growing body of literature that suggests homosexuality is a predisposition, not a choice; and secondly, to re-examine what Paul is really saying in Romans 1.

Part one is biographical, presenting the stories of Sherri Babcock, the great-great-granddaughter of one of the founders of Atlantic Union College; Leif Lind, former SDA pastor and missionary; and Paul Grady, son of a church pastor, missionary and administrator. All three are gay. According to Lind, coming out of the closet was "the hardest thing I have ever done." Lind lost his marriage, his career, and his respect and acceptance in the church – a terrible price. But he had to be honest about who he was. "Who would choose to pit themselves against all odds and make life as difficult as possible if it were really a matter of choice or sexual 'preference'? Not too many people I know," writes Lind.

Part two examines biomedical perspectives. Research continues to suggest that homosexuality has a genetic predisposition and is biologically determined, a conclusion that was widely resisted. One of the last impediments was removed in 1973 when the American Psychiatric Association unexpectedly declared that homosexuality was not an illness. As Fulton asks, if homosexuality is neither a choice nor an illness, how is the church going to deal with its anti-gay bias?

Part three presents insights from behavioural science. Change ministries have failed repeatedly. The church that has called itself "the caring church" and a "welcoming church" has not given evidence of these claims in its treatment of gay members and workers, most of whom have been forced to live deeply closeted, lonely lives. To come out risks ostracism and dismissal. To express sympathy is to be treated with hostility.

The church attempted to distance itself from Seventh-day Adventist Kinship International when in 1987 the General Conference filed suit for "breach of trademark." The church lost. Later, in 1994, the GC administration committee voted that GC personnel were not to speak to gatherings of homosexuals. As Lawson notes, the official church position was becoming more polarising at a time when law courts were recognising the equality of homosexual and heterosexual persons.

Part four examines scriptural and theological perspectives. Jones writes, "Romans 1:24-27 contains the Bible's only substantive consideration of homosexual conduct." But it is not a complete discussion. It is a preliminary comment that serves to introduce Paul's thesis that Jews and Gentiles are equally lost in sin and in need of salvation. Those that read Leviticus 18 and 20 literally, bring a preformed perspective that distorts Paul's message. Homosexuality is not the central issue in Romans 1. Furthermore, in discussing homosexuality, it is not clear that Paul's conceptual horizon and ours coincide. Indeed, there has been a serious confusion of categories.

For Guy, "It is Scripture as a whole that is properly the 'rule of faith and practice.'" Applying this principle leads him to conclude that "Scripture does not condemn all same-sex love." Gane's literal interpretation of Leviticus does not let him entertain pro-gay views. Nevertheless, he concludes that the church has some work to do to restore itself as "the trusted friend rather than the enemy of sinners." Rice notes with approval that in recent years the church has "become more open to the complexity of human sexuality and willing to consider more helpful responses."

Part five contains four papers on Christian social perspectives, in which the writers press the church towards greater fairness and compassion, towards becoming the "just, open, caring" community it should be. "God puts a tremendous value on human freedom." We must do no less.

We all have our responses. Perhaps these are well-informed; on the other hand, they could be tainted

by prejudice or by misuse of Scripture. Whatever your current view, this book will inform and challenge your understanding.

GLBTIQ Faith Groups

Story SSO.

Former Uniting Church minister Dorothy McRae-McMahon knows the fear that comes with outing yourself to your church.

Having gone through it herself she will be one of several ministers and gay people of faith congregating at the Pitt St Uniting Church on 13 July to make a stand against World Youth Day and open the doors to the more inclusive side of religion.

A Jubilee medal and Australian Human Rights medal recipient, McRae-McMahon will stand alongside fellow out and proud people of faith Michael Kelly, Anthony Venn-Brown and David Reeder in an interfaith service designed to challenge the Catholic Church's opposition to gay and lesbian rights.

Talking about the conflict felt by many gay people who have been brought up with religion, McRae-McMahon says, "If you have a faith and if there is an institution that transmits that faith to you, i.e. the church, it has a very, very powerful role to play in relation to your life because if it's presenting to you a God who believes that people of different sexualities are abominations then that is very damning to you if you are of those different sexualities.

"Years ago during the time that I was facing my sexuality, I was being attacked by neo-Nazis for various reasons while I was working at the Pitt St church, and I remember thinking at the time, I am more afraid of the church and what it might do to me than this neo-Nazi group, who were threatening my life and the reason for that was the church was like my family so it's like your family rejecting you," she told the *Sydney Star Observer*.

"Luckily for me my church didn't reject me, but at that point in time I felt that fear that others go through. People commit suicide from it.

"I'm a patron of Twenty10 and I've been a part of Suicide Australia and I know. There are people who would commit suicide rather than handle that damning God."

McRae-McMahon and the other spiritual leaders who will be heading the service and open dialogue being held on 13 July are stressing this is not an event that is just for the religious.

"We're inviting young and old alike because we as the elders of the community would like to have a dialogue in the presence of all sorts of people," she said.

"We're hoping that the news will spread to some of the young pilgrims who are going to be here and we would love them to be with us – if they're heterosexual or not.

"We would love to be supported and affirmed by anyone who wants to claim the ground with us. We really want to fill that church so it looks strong and clear.

"Even though we'll be speaking as people of faith I think that all GLBTQI people need to understand that every institution in the world in society must be reformed so that it includes us all, so they can be there affirming that and talking about how we've survived, to gather around us in the church as we try to claim our ground there. We would be most grateful to be supported in that way. The more people we have the better."

The GLBT interfaith service happens on 13 July at the Pitt St Church, 264 Pitt St. Sydney

Metropolitan Community Church.

Please be aware of these churches in Australia. They are on the East Coast of Australia and are welcoming of all peoples. People who attend MCC often come from widely diverse Faith backgrounds as well as from no identified faith tradition.

All are Welcome.

Look at Our Events

Kampmeeting

Australian Kampmeeting will be 3-6 October 2008 in Lismore, Northern NSW. The theme for Our conference is "Rejuvenation." Check our events page for the details.

This has had a change of venue because of unforeseen circumstances.

I think you will be surprised at the level of comfort the venue has.

So come and be part of it "Rejuvenation".

My Son, Beloved Stranger

By Carrol Grady

This excellent book has been reprinted with an added epilogue. This is a great book to have in your library and to have extra copies to give to parents, pastors, friends and anyone else who deals with having a loved one come out to them.

Open Heart, Open Hand

Three conversations about homosexuality and the family—a life and death matter. Introduced by Dr David Larson, a professor with the Faculty of Religion at Loma Linda University, this new resource features interviews with Adventist parents of gay and lesbian people.

Christianity and Homosexuality

Some Seventh-day Adventist Perspectives

The Book of the decade is out.

Kinship is offering a special price for all three items. This book has been two years in the making and is collaboration between the Adventist Forum and SDA Kinship International. For more information go to www.sdagayperspectives.com

Support for the Parents of Gay/Lesbian Adventists

Someone to Talk to.... Carrol Grady
(Aka Kate McLaughlin My Son, Beloved Stranger),
Coordinator.

Web-Site <http://www.someone-to-talk-to.net>

P-flag Australia For parents
and friends of GLBT people
Web site: www.pflag.org.au

Associations of Kinship around the World
SDA KINSHIP INTERNATIONAL
www.sdakinship.org

SDA KINSHIP AUSTRALIA - Principal Office:
P O Box 8097
Maroochydore DC 4558, Queensland Australia.
www.sdakinshipaustralia.org

MEMBERSHIP FOR KINSHIP IN AUSTRALIA IS WELCOME.

Membership is **FREE** in Australia, but relies on donations, to reach out to other people within the GLBTI community.

Finally: Others know more than I will ever know, Have more than I will ever have, Except for one thing.

Articles in this News Letter are not necessarily Kinships view: Contributions to this news letter are welcomed and encouraged. (The Newsletter One to One has been prepared by N Thorpe --- Coordinator.)