



ONE TO ONE

The official quarterly newsletter of SDA Kinship Australia 2/9/06

NEWSLETTER NO 6 ISSUE 3

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 Intersexed 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.

AUSTRALIAN STYLE KAMPMEETING Health and Well Being Sydney

29th of September to
the 1st of October 2006
ALL ARE MOST WELCOME

Dear Friends,
Just to say - I wish you all the best for your coming Kampmeeting. I will be thinking of and praying for you while I am in Tasmania at the same time. Your speakers should be great and the fellowship will be warm.

God bless you. - JOY BUTLER

GAY CHRISTIANS UK

A Gay Christian group in the UK is calling on the Blair government to stop public funding of homophobic churches.

The move from the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement comes after anti-gay demonstrators protested outside Parliament, seeking a review of the incoming Equality Act. They claimed it discriminated against Christianity in the provision of goods and services. A group of clergymen wrote a letter to the Daily Telegraph criticising the legislation, saying "regulations force Christians in churches, businesses, charities and informal associations to accept and even promote the idea that homosexuality is equal to heterosexuality ...this is not what the Bible teaches and it is not what we believe to be the truth. In our view, these regulations are an affront to our freedom to be Christians.

But the Reverend Richard Kirker, chief executive of the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement called the statements an embarrassment for Christianity. "I can find no place in scripture where Jesus calls on his people to behave in this way, and I am ashamed for them," he said.

Mr Kirker added, "I can only try and apologise to British gay and lesbian people for the prejudice the pastors are seeking to impose and say that many, if not most Christians of all colours, denominations and sexuality's do not share these people's hurtful and harmful views." Subsidising homophobia was not in the public interest and should certainly not be encouraged in any way by the government, he said. (Blaze)

NZ HEALTH CARE STUDY

A new study on LGBT health care shows that doctors react more negatively to women than to men who reveal they are gay.

Details of the study, carried out by NZ'Massey University, are reported in the latest issue of the Journal of Advanced Nursing.

Researchers surveyed 2,269 lesbian, gay and bisexual people to discover how they felt about revealing their sexuality and the reaction of primary health care providers, such as family doctors and practice nurses, when they did. Both men and women reported that health care providers generally assumed they were heterosexual.

But for women the number was significantly higher.

Women also found their health care providers were more likely to become uncomfortable when they said they were either lesbian or bisexual.

The study found gay male patients - especially those over the age of 40 - were much more likely to report positive experiences. After the disclosure of their sexuality, 43% of men said they felt their health care provider's attitude influenced the care they received in a positive way, compared with only 28% of women. One of the study's authors, Dr Stephen Neville, said "It's important that health care providers are aware of people's sexuality as non disclosure has been shown to have a negative impact on their health. For example, people who are lesbian, gay and bisexual are more likely to face an increased risk of suicide, depression and other mental health problems." (Blaze)

US KINSHIP KAMPMEETING

Friends, I have just returned home from a six week vacation. That included the US, the SDA Kinship Kampmeeting, as well as London, Ireland and Hong Kong.

The US Kinship Kampmeeting was held at a Catholic retreat centre near Orlando, Florida, July 2-9. There were members from England, Scotland, Australia and Brazil at this years meeting.

The Kampmeeting coordinator was Marcos Apolonio, formerly the youth pastor of the largest Adventist church in Brazil. He chose the very appropriate theme, "No One Like You—Celebrating Uniqueness."

Two pastors, who attended with their families, gave excellent talks tied to the theme: "Accepting Yourself," "Learning to Live With Yourself," "Job's Dilemma: Trusting Your Own Experiences When Others Don't," "Learning to be Your True Self," and "Jesus' Dynamic Ministry—Finding Ways to Empower People" Each Morning started with devotional's, after breakfast and as always, music was an important part of our worship.

Sabbath was a high day, with a rich diversity of musical gifts lifted in praise to God. This was followed by church in a small chapel that had stained glass windows and a pipe organ. It featured a former Baptist minister and author, currently teaching psychology at an Adventist university. His sermon, "Clowns and High-Wire Artists," was based on Peter's confession of Christ in Matthew 16:13-23. He also gave a presentation on "Individuality, Intimacy and Relationships."

Another Adventist couple, both university professors and marriage and family therapists, gave a workshop on "families of origin" and were available for private counseling. Michelle O'Mara, a clinical social worker from Indianapolis who specializes in relationship

counseling and was at last year's Kampmeeting, returned to give two presentations. And Dr. Baker-Hargrove, a psychotherapist in Florida, spoke on "Depression and Homosexuality."

Other presenters included Harry Knox, director of HRC's Religion and Faith Program, who spoke on "Discovering our Language for Faith-based Advocacy;" Linda Potkovic, an HIV/AIDS education specialist; and Peterson Toscano, a former teacher and Christian missionary in Zambia; a survivor of 13 years of reparative therapy, counseling, ex-gay ministries and three exorcisms; and currently an actor and writer. Peterson gave a workshop on "Life Inside the "Ex-Gay" Movement" and showed part of his video, "Fish Can't Fly." He also performed his hilarious but poignant play, "Doin' Time in the Homo No Mo Halfway House (How I Survived the Ex-Gay Movement).

There were two outstanding musical treats: Concerts by Jason and DeMarco, a young gay couple with fantastic voices, and a top ten hit in the charts. The Orlando Gay Chorus was a highlight in the chapel, which made the voices sound just great. Special meetings were held for first-time attendees and for members of IMRU? (say each letter separately), the under-30 group. The Space Shuttle took off on the fourth, which could be seen from the Retreat site. We then enjoyed the Fourth of July fireworks celebration at Lake Eola in the middle of Orlando, and all day Wednesday as usual was set aside for seeing the many attractions in the area.

I went to Disney World the Epcot Centre on the Wednesday with a couple of Kinship friends. I did enjoy the friendship and the Epcot Centre.

Business meetings featured reports of goals achieved last year and elected officers, board members, executive committee and regional coordinators who will continue to focus on present and future goals. The new Board was elected on the Thursday with an Australian elected, (Scott) as the PR person for Kinship Int.

The traditional "Coming out storytime" when attendees are invited to tell their stories, was replaced by a small group exercise conducted by a marriage and family therapist from Loma Linda. Everyone enjoyed this format and suggested that it be included, at future Kampmeetings. Friday evening's communion service was the spiritual highlight of the week, into which the several (former) Adventist pastors poured all their unique talents in order to make it memorable, especially for those who look forward to this as their only communion service of the year. The Saturday night talent program included both "sacred" and "profane" performances that showcased the wealth of creative gifts possessed by SDA GLBTI Kinship people. This climaxed a week that was both entertaining and thought provoking.



IMRU, KINSHIP

As you know, for the last year and a half, IMRU has grown exponentially and has seen heightened involvement in posts and in-person get-togethers, as well as become more visible & involved in our larger organization, SDA Kinship.

As a result of that growth, we have 4 of our members on the Kinship board. I can't tell you how encouraged and inspired I am by that. My life has been enriched with Kinship & IMRU in it, and I am so happy that we have younger members stepping up and taking on the role of furthering an organization that means something to us and that has helped many, if not all of us in some

way, with our coming out experiences, or it's simply been a space where you hold on to your Adventist roots even if you are no longer an Adventist church-goer. The major thing of course, that being a part of this family provides, is the safe space of Kampmeeting. Kampmeeting was an amazing experience for me. It really re-awakened my personal faith and spirituality and in a fun environment with like-minded, beautiful people of God. I hope that everyone can be there next year, but if not in San Francisco, the year after that. Luckily, these things are annual, so you always have the chance to go. :)

I am not emailing to talk specifically about Kampmeeting, because we do talk about that a lot, but that it is our opportunity to show up. If we have any interest at all in keeping this organization alive, that's the first thing we can do. And it's really pretty simple. We show up, and then we get involved in some small or big way. And then, 4 of us get elected to the Kinship board. I am so excited about where we are headed as an organization in this next year. Being a part of IMRU has been extraordinary for me. From our humble roots as a handful of people called AGY (Adventist Gay Youth), we've grown into something really great and we're over 130 members now. To me, that's incredible! And, if we have 130 members now, that just tells me that we have hundreds, if not thousands more out there in our age range that we need to find. One of our members said that it took him 6 years to find us - others like him. We have a big push with the Heartstrong brochures to get more exposure, but there have to be other ways of reaching out. We certainly have a tough road ahead in the Adventist community, trying to find teenagers and young adults as they are coming out, but I feel it's so necessary for their safety and survival that we do find them. The leadership team of IMRU, the Kinship Board, and other members of Kinship are going to be working this next year on this issue and many others, and they need and want the input of their entire membership body, because without us and you, Kinship doesn't exist.

This letter has been long-winded, and all of it was to lead up to this: I have been privileged to be on your leadership team for the last year and a half. I was given the extraordinary opportunity of being involved in a larger capacity in an organization that has meant so much to so many people and has the potential to reach so many more. It is time for me to step down from the IMRU leadership team to make way for someone younger to step up and infuse us with new ideas and new passion - and, so that we can get on a yearly election cycle. This means that we have two positions up for election as Jeremy is now Kinship Vice-President. I can't wait to see what the new leadership team comes up with for the next year leading up to Kampmeeting '07. I will still be around - I'm not giving up my involvement in IMRU just yet, so count me in for any help and support.

Naveen will send out the e-mail announcing the elections and I want each and every one of you who has an inkling of interest in taking on leadership in our sub-group of Kinship to submit your name for either position, because I know it will be an enriching experience for anyone to have, even if you don't think you have the time. It's definitely worth it.

Thank you thank you for your support, encouragement, family and love - I can't tell you how much I appreciate that. Suzy.
(Past coordinator of IMRU women)

There Are Hundreds Of Paths Up The Mountain

There are hundreds of paths up the mountain, all leading in the same direction, so it doesn't matter which path you take. The only one wasting time is the one who runs around and around the mountain, telling everyone that his or her path is wrong. Hindu teaching.

DOES IT HAVE TO BE ALRIGHT?

By [Simon Houstoun](#) (Spectrum)

I was working at an ambulance station in a rural town on a major highway in Australia. It was one of those sunny afternoons when, even though you know better and your experience tells you otherwise, you still don't expect bad things to drop out of the sky onto your head.

We were called to a collision between a car and a semi-trailer ten miles south of town. When we arrived, we were told by a harassed-looking policeman that there was a "dead kid over there," and he pointed to an incongruous blue child seat, its back to us, upright on the road. He then said that we needn't go and look as she had "lost most of her head in the prang." I would normally have gone and looked immediately just to make certain, but I knew the officer in this case and it is fairly hard to mistake decapitation, so I took his word for it, which was accurate as matters turned out. The rest of the scene lay before me, with five patients still alive: one woman in her thirties, the driver of the car; two older children; the driver's elderly mother; and the truck driver. All except the truck driver had serious injuries - broken limbs and lacerations to their heads, chests, and bodies. We were fifty miles from a major town further south and I called for backup. Then my partner and I proceeded to triage and provide care in a stream of consciousness familiar to emergency workers. I found myself sometime later looking up and seeing that we had done everything we could. All our patients were on stretchers or backboards—we had only two stretchers in our truck and were still waiting for more to arrive.

We had done all of the paramedic things - applying splints, offering reassurance, handing out blankets, and administering IV's, drugs, and oxygen. All of our patients were conscious, and they all knew that little sister (seven years old) was dead. If I looked up, I saw trees and sky and a lovely afternoon. If I looked down a bit, I saw something else, in a kind of now-you-see-it, now-you-don't sort of way.

I talked to the mother. She was driving at the time of the accident. Her car had crossed the centerline of the road, colliding with the semi-trailer in a glancing, head-on, corner-to-corner fashion that impacted on her door, scooped out and ejected the child behind her, and rolled the car over and over.

The truck driver was shaken but unhurt and waited with the police, giving his statement in a dazed sort of way that people do when these things happen. It was immediately clear to the mother and me that this crash was all her fault. She knew it and stoically suffered us manipulating her nearly severed right arm to restore some circulation. She looked me in the eye and said, "It's all right isn't it?" with an upward lift in her voice that told me she needed for it to be so, in some way. I have been in such situations before and my one rule is not to tell easy, small, convenient white lies when people need and deserve the truth, yet may not have time for polite insincerity's. "No," I replied, "it's not alright." I paused briefly. "But it's OK for it to be that way just now." She seemed to understand and started to cry quietly for the first time since the accident had occurred forty minutes before, forty-one minutes after she had a seven-year-old daughter and a right

arm and no greater problem than getting to Melbourne in time for whatever or whomever was waiting. Before her were months of physical healing and a lifetime of dealing with an event that required only a few seconds of inattention to occur. My statement to her may seem hard for some people, but it is a simple truth that Nietzsche alluded to when he claimed that those things that don't kill us makes us stronger. **1.** It appeared to me from watching such experiences among others that this lady would live through the ordeal, albeit with scars of the physical and psychological kind. However, she would come through, and the horror of the present would be replaced with something else. I hope she choses the positives - the value of what and who is left behind and the need to remember - in an appropriate and meaningful way. I often think back on that woman, her broken family, and her uncertainty about the future. She is like me and I am like her.

I can look at the damage I have done, the injuries I have caused myself and others, and I know it is not all right; I am certain of my culpability.

I can link cause to effect in my actions, and no amount of shifting blame to my society, my advantages and limitations, or God's decision to allow sin to endure or any other thing can move the blame from me - it is mine. I accept Jesus' forgiveness and experience the renewal he gives in return for some part of my innocence. I forgive myself and know that I am a sinner. Jesus tells me this and accepts me, but the results of my actions remain to haunt me. Oprah tells of her discovery that the bad feelings she dealt with by overeating were OK.

2. It was, she discovered, OK to experience these feelings without having to resort to destructive culinary responses. The feelings were finite in their ability to hurt, and responding by eating only gave them more life and affirmed their hold over her. We are confronted with murderers and abusers and genocide and we ask the same question, "Is this all right?" Obviously it is not, but apparently it is OK for things to be that way just now. God has a long view that we lack (*Gen. 3:22; Rev. 1:18*), and he will eventually provide true justice for murdered children and raped mothers. He has promised that things will be all right in the end. This is called hope, the fruit of love that "hopes all things and believes all things" (*1 Cor. 13:7 NKJV*).

If I love, I choose to believe that things will eventually be all right in God. As a rational human, I can see with my eyes and hear with my ears that they aren't OK at present. But as a Christian and as a follower of the author of love and infinite patience, I see that it is OK for them to be that way just now. Ask yourself these two questions: Is it all right for you just now? Does it have to be?

ORGANIZATION FOR 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>

My Son, Beloved Stranger

by Carrol Grady

This excellent book has been reprinted with an added epilog. 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. "Contact your local Adventist Book Center to request them to carry the book!" This is a must have resource for both GLBTI people and Parents that are Adventists and have a gay child.

Open Heart, Open Hand (Video/DVD)

- USD \$14.95 plus postage

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: Dr. Walt and Virginia Cason (physician/daughter of Elder H.M.S. Richards), Dr. George P. Babcock (educator) and Mrs. Carrol Grady (minister's wife).

To order your copies of these, both Book and DVD/Video contact **Carrol direct** at carrolgrady@hotmail.com

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

Associations of Kinship Elsewhere SDA KINSHIP INTERNATIONAL www.sdakinship.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 : We are what we believe and all that we are springs from our own thoughts.

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 --- Co-ordinator.)

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