

REQUEST FOR

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ACTION

Regarding

Request for NAD Executive Committee Action on
Publicly Documented LGBTQ-Related Institutional Matters
Conflicting With Biblical and Voted Standards

Submitted To:

Submitted By:

Date:

This page intentionally blank (for double-sided printing).

DOCUMENT OVERVIEW

Linked page numbers for navigation. Left header link jumps back to document overview

LETTER AND ACTIONS 5

LETTER to the Conference Executive Committee.....5

ADOPTED Church Board Action.....6

REQUESTED Conference Executive Committee Action.....7

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE 11

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE SUMMARY -- A: Southern California Conference.....11

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE SUMMARY -- B: La Sierra University & Southeastern California Conference.....14

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE EXHIBITS.....17

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE EXHIBIT -- A: Southern California Conference.....19

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE EXHIBIT -- B: La Sierra University & Southeastern California Conference.....157

Detailed overview of Supporting Evidence Exhibits is found on next page

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE EXHIBIT OVERVIEW

EVIDENCE EXHIBIT -- A | SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE (SCC) 19

SCC & LGBTQ Pastor / Glendale (2004-2026)

A.1	Career of LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale.....	(Spectrum Magazine: April 8, 2026).....	20
A.2	LGBTQ Pastor & Glendale Female Pastor Ordination.....	(Church Video: April 27, 2013).....	44
A.3	LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by SCC President.....	(Church Video: June 6, 2015).....	49
A.4	LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by SCC President.....	(Church Video 110-Years: Jan. 23, 2016)...	51
A.5	LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by SCC Secretary.....	(Church Video: Oct. 15, 2016).....	53
A.6	LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by SCC President.....	(Church Video: Aug. 5, 2017).....	54
A.7	LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by SCC Secretary.....	(Church Video: May 14, 2022).....	55
A.8	LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by Alicia Johnston.....	(Church Video: July 16, 2022).....	56
A.9	LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Speech by Floyd Poenitz	(Church Facebook/Video: Feb. 4, 2023).....	60
A.10	LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by Aaron v. Voorhis. .	(Church Video: June 24, 2023).....	63
A.11	LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by SCC LA Director. .	(Church Bulletin/Video: Oct. 7, 2023).....	65
A.12	LGBTQ Pastor Farewell Service at Glendale.....	(Church Bulletin/Video: Feb. 1, 2025).....	70
A.13	LGBTQ Pastor & Glendale Sermon by SCC LA Director...	(Church Bulletin/Video: Jan. 10, 2026).....	88

SCC & LGBTQ Pastor / Glendale 120 Years (2026)

A.14	LGBTQ Inclusion & 120-Year Anniversary at Glendale.....	(Adventist Today: Jan. 23, 2026).....	91
A.15	LGBTQ Pastor & SCC Officers at 120-Year Anniversary...	(Church Bulletin/Video: Jan. 31, 2026).....	93
A.16	LGBTQ Pastor & SCC Officers at 120-Year Anniversary...	(Conference Article/Video: Feb. 3, 2026)...	108
A.17	LGBTQ Pastor Continues Preaching at Glendale.....	(Church Bulletin/Video: March 7, 2026).....	112
A.18	LGBTQ Pastor Continues Preaching at Glendale.....	(Church Bulletin/Video: July 11, 2026).....	115

SCC & Glendale Pride Month / SDA Kinship (2020-2026)

A.19	Pride Month Glendale 2026.....	(Spectrum Magazine: June 23, 2026).....	119
A.20	Pride Month Glendale 2026.....	(Church Bulletin: May 30, 2026).....	123
A.21	Pride Month Glendale 2026.....	(GlendaleOUT Reports: May/June 2026). .	125
A.22	Pride Month Glendale 2026 & SCC Secretary Sermon.....	(Church Bulletin/Video: June 13, 2026) ...	127
A.23	Pride Month Glendale 2020-2025.....	(Church Bulletin/Facebook: 2020-2025)...	132
A.24	SDA Kinship Relations to Glendale and Pastors.....	(Church / SDA Kinship: Winter 2026).....	140

SCC Administration & Glendale City Church Pastors

A.25	SCC - Administration (2003-2026).....	(Various Sources).....	149
A.26	SCC - Glendale Pastors (2004-2026).....	(Various Sources).....	154

EVIDENCE EXHIBIT -- B | LA SIERRA UNIVERSITY (LSU) & SOUTHEASTERN CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE (SECC) 157

LSU & LGBTQ Affirmation (2018-2026)

B.1	LGBTQ Affirmation Background at LSU.....	(Spectrum Magazine: March 26, 2021)... 158
B.2	LGBTQ Affirmation by Board & Pastors of LSU Church...	(LSU Church Kinship SS: Sept. 2019)..... 173
B.3	LGBTQ Kinship Sabbath School at LSUC.....	(LSU Church Kinship SS: 2018-2026)..... 175

LSU & LGBTQ Lavender Graduations (2020-2026)

B.4	LGBTQ Lavender Graduation 2026.....	(Spectrum Magazine: June 10, 2026)..... 188
B.5	LGBTQ Lavender Graduation 2026.....	(Adventist Today: May 18, 2026)..... 197
B.6	LGBTQ Lavender Graduation 2026.....	(Raincross Gazette: May 15, 2026)..... 199
B.7	LGBTQ Lavender Graduation 2026.....	(LSU Church Kinship SS: April 24, 2026).. 201
B.8	LGBTQ Lavender Graduation 2020-2025.....	(LSU Church Kinship SS: 2020-2025)..... 204

LSU & LGBTQ Commencement Speaker / Presidential Medallion Awardee (2026)

B.9	LGBTQ Commencement Speaker/Awardee Event.....	(LSU: June 9 & 17, 2026)..... 209
B.10	LGBTQ Commencement Speaker/Awardee Background..	(Various Sources)..... 220
B.11	LSU Presidential Medallion Awardees (1990-2026).....	(LSU: Pre-2009 / 2009-2026)..... 223

LSU Administration & Board of Trustees / SECC Administration & LSU Church Pastors

B.12	LSU - Administration (1990-2026).....	(Various Sources)..... 224
B.13	LSU - Board of Trustees (2026).....	(LSU: July 2026)..... 228
B.14	LSU - Board Trustee Background: Chris Oberg.....	(Loewen / LSU: March 2022 / July 2026).. 231
B.15	SECC - Administration (2004-2026).....	(Various Sources)..... 243
B.16	SECC - LSU Church Pastors (2000-2026).....	(Various Sources)..... 245

LETTER TO THE CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**Re: Request for Conference Executive Committee Action
to Submit Request to the NAD Executive Committee**

Dear Members of the Conference Executive Committee,

The Coloma SDA Church Board submits the enclosed *Adopted Church Board Action, Requested Conference Executive Committee Action*, and supporting evidence concerning publicly documented LGBTQ-related institutional matters conflicting with Seventh-day Adventist biblical and voted standards. These matters affect our local church and Conference territory and require division-level action for the reasons set forth in the enclosed actions and supporting materials.

Our Church Board requests that the Conference Executive Committee place the enclosed *Requested Conference Executive Committee Action* titled **“Request for NAD Executive Committee Action on Publicly Documented LGBTQ-Related Institutional Matters Conflicting With Biblical and Voted Standards”** as a separate agenda item on its agenda, distribute the complete packet to its members, consider and adopt the requested action for submission to the NAD Executive Committee, and provide our Church Board the requested written response.

The enclosed *Adopted Church Board Action* sets forth the complete requirements of our request, and the remaining materials provide the requested Conference action and supporting evidence.

Respectfully,

Enclosed:

- Adopted Church Board Action
- Requested Conference Executive Committee Action
- Supporting Evidence Documentation

Inquiries:

ADOPTED CHURCH BOARD ACTION

In this Church Board Action:

- "Conference" means the
- "NAD" means the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists.

WHEREAS, Seventh-day Adventist doctrine and biblical and voted standards apply to the documented institutional matters, and GC Working Policy calls Church leadership to fidelity to those standards, spiritual accountability, and candid institutional examination;

WHEREAS, the documented institutional matters arise in the NAD, and their impact extends beyond their originating territories to our local church and Conference territory, affecting members, families, youth, visitors, Bible-study interests, churches, schools, and the Church's public witness. The matters are summarized in [Evidence Summary A](#) and [Evidence Summary B](#) and documented in [Exhibit A](#) and [Exhibit B](#);

WHEREAS, the documented institutional matters have persisted over multiple years, rendering continued inaction untenable;

WHEREAS, the documented institutional matters require division-level action because they affect the Church's biblical and voted standards, remain unresolved, and have cross-territorial impact. Our Conference, through its representatives on the NAD Executive Committee, has a responsibility to uphold those standards, raise these matters, seek timely formal action, and seek transparent institutional accountability;

WHEREAS, our local church, as a constituent church of our Conference, brings these matters before the Conference Executive Committee, which acts on behalf of the Conference constituency;

THEREFORE, our Church Board:

VOTED, to submit to the Conference Executive Committee this *Adopted Church Board Action*, the enclosed *Requested Conference Executive Committee Action* titled **"Request for NAD Executive Committee Action on Publicly Documented LGBTQ-Related Institutional Matters Conflicting With Biblical and Voted Standards,"** and its supporting evidence summaries and exhibits;

VOTED, to request that **A)** the *Requested Conference Executive Committee Action* be placed as a separate agenda item on the agenda for the next meeting of the Conference Executive Committee, **B)** the complete PDF packet, including our Church Board cover letter, this *Adopted Church Board Action*, the *Requested Conference Executive Committee Action*, and its supporting evidence, be distributed in full and without alteration to all Conference Executive Committee members, **C)** the Conference Executive Committee consider and adopt the requested action for submission to the NAD Executive Committee, or adopt an action equivalent in scope and effect that does not omit, materially narrow, or weaken any response, reporting, public-statement, public-disposition, deadline, deficiency, or further-action requirement of the requested action, and **D)** any adopted action and its supporting evidence be formally submitted to the NAD Executive Committee within fifteen (15) days of adoption.

VOTED, to request that our Church Board receive a written response from the Conference Executive Committee within twenty (20) days after the next meeting of the Conference Executive Committee. The response shall state separately whether **A)** the Requested Conference Executive Committee Action was placed on the agenda, **B)** the complete PDF packet was distributed in full and without alteration to all Conference Executive Committee members, **C)** the Conference Executive Committee considered the requested action, and **D)** the requested action was adopted, amended, referred, deferred, declined, or otherwise acted upon. The response shall also **E)** include the relevant minute entry, certified extract, or other official action record documenting the result and final text of any adopted action, **F)** if the *Requested Conference Executive Committee Action* was not adopted in the form submitted by our Church Board, state the specific reasons for any amendment, referral, deferral, decline, or other disposition and, in case of referral or deferral, identify the receiving body or meeting, and **G)** if a Conference request for NAD Executive Committee action was submitted to the NAD Executive Committee, include the full, unaltered text submitted.

Date:

Adopted by vote:

REQUESTED CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ACTION

Request for NAD Executive Committee Action on Publicly Documented LGBTQ-Related Institutional Matters Conflicting With Biblical and Voted Standards

The Executive Committee of the

requests that **A)** this Conference request be placed as a separate agenda item on the agenda of the next NAD Executive Committee meeting, **B)** this Conference request and all supporting evidence submitted with it be retained as one complete package and distributed in full and without alteration to every NAD Executive Committee voting member, and **C)** this Conference request be presented to the NAD Executive Committee itself for consideration and recorded vote, and not be screened out, declined, deferred, administratively resolved, or otherwise disposed of in lieu of Executive Committee consideration and vote.

WHEREAS, Seventh-day Adventist doctrine and biblical and voted standards affirm that Scripture establishes humanity as “male and female” (Gen. 1:27), marriage as a man being “joined to his wife” so that they “become one flesh” (Gen. 2:24), and Jesus as reaffirming this creation order: “He who made them at the beginning ‘made them male and female’” and “the two shall become one flesh” (Matt. 19:4-6). Scripture prohibits a man lying “with a male as with a woman,” declaring, “it is an abomination” (Lev. 18:22), and identifies both female and male same-sex relations as contrary to the creation order: “their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature,” and “likewise also the men” left “the natural use of the woman,” with “men with men committing what is shameful” (Rom. 1:26-27). Scripture further warns that neither “homosexuals, nor sodomites” will “inherit the kingdom of God,” while proclaiming transformation: “such were some of you. But you were washed ... sanctified ... justified” (1 Cor. 6:9-11). Consistent with this biblical understanding of humanity as male and female, and of marriage as their one-flesh union, Fundamental Belief 23 of the Seventh-day Adventist Church affirms marriage as the union of a man and a woman;

WHEREAS, the Seventh-day Adventist remnant mission requires fidelity to biblical and voted standards. Scripture identifies the remnant as keeping God’s commandments, upholding the testimony of Jesus, and proclaiming the Three Angels’ Messages (Rev. 12:17; 14:6–12);

WHEREAS, the Seventh-day Adventist Church calls for spiritual accountability and review. The GC Working Policy (2021/22 edition), in *Total Commitment to God - A Declaration of Spiritual Accountability in the Family of Faith* (A 15, including A 15 55), assigns the General Conference and its divisions responsibility for the Church’s spiritual life and mission, while A 15 05 calls for candid institutional examination, stating that “the Church as a whole must ask and answer the hard questions,” that “nothing should be excluded from these questions,” and that this challenge “calls for a frank and analytical approach,” with much “to be gained from careful and thoughtful evaluation of ... organizational life”;

WHEREAS, two publicly documented institutional matters in the NAD involve the following entities:

A) 2004-2026: Southern California Conference (SCC)

LGBTQ Pastor in same-sex relationship and LGBTQ-Affirming Glendale City Church

Documented pastoral service for decades while in a same-sex relationship, together with LGBTQ-affirming positions and acts of Glendale City Church (a SCC constituent church), both knowingly and consistently supported by past and current SCC leadership through repeated public affirmation, pastoral participation, and official recognition. These matters conflict with Seventh-day Adventist biblical and voted standards. See [Evidence Summary A](#) and [Exhibit A](#).

B) 2018-2026: La Sierra University (LSU) & Southeastern California Conference (SECC)

LGBTQ Kinship Sabbath School, Lavender Graduations and Presidential Medallion

Documented LGBTQ-affirming activities involving LSU include Lavender Graduations since 2020 with participation by LSU administrators, LSU Church pastors, and faculty, and the 2026 selection of an LGBTQ Caucus legislator as commencement speaker and Presidential Medallion recipient. The LSU Church Kinship Sabbath School has operated since 2018 with the support and participation of LSU Church leadership (LSU Church, a SECC constituent church). These matters conflict with Seventh-day Adventist biblical and voted standards. See [Evidence Summary B](#) and [Exhibit B](#).

WHEREAS, the documented institutional matters arise in the NAD, are widely and publicly accessible across conference and union boundaries, and have effects beyond the territories in which they originated, including actual impact within our Conference upon members, families, youth, Bible-study interests, educational institutions, churches, pastoral ministry, evangelism, member confidence, and the Church’s public witness;

WHEREAS, the documented institutional **matters have persisted for multiple years and remain unresolved**. To the knowledge of our Conference Executive Committee, there has been no publicly available official action by the identified denominational entities applying Seventh-day Adventist biblical and voted standards. These circumstances have reached a point at which continued inaction is no longer tenable;

WHEREAS, the documented institutional **matters require a clear and public institutional response** because they conflict with Seventh-day Adventist biblical and voted standards, involve public institutional conduct, and affect member confidence and the Church's public witness;

WHEREAS, the documented institutional **matters fall within NAD division administrative responsibilities** of its Executive Committee and officers: Working Policy B 40 55 recognizes Executive Committee authority in matters of division administration and counsel, and B 40 30 assigns administrative oversight and counsel responsibilities to the NAD president;

WHEREAS, the documented institutional **matters require division-level action** in light of the foregoing biblical standards, unresolved status, and cross-territorial impact. Conferences and other denominational entities represented on the NAD Executive Committee share responsibility, through their representatives, to raise these matters, seek timely formal action, uphold those standards, and seek transparent reporting and institutional accountability. Any unwritten expectations or conventions are subordinate to that responsibility and must not hinder it, including expectations that a conference should not address matters originating outside its territory;

WHEREAS, **this action is limited** to the **two documented institutional matters** specifically identified above;

THEREFORE, in view of these WHEREAS clauses and supporting evidence, our Conference Executive Committee requests that the NAD Executive Committee receive and retain this action and evidence as one package, consider and adopt it, and, through the itemized process below, address the two documented matters:

REQUESTED PROCESS

1. **Process Steps:** This action shall include: **A)** identification of applicable standards and preparation, submission, and distribution of the NAD written report (Paragraphs 2-4), **B)** official written responses by the named entities (Paragraphs 5-7), **C)** entity public statements (Paragraph 8), **D)** identification of deficiencies (Paragraphs 9-10), **E)** NAD Executive Committee consideration and vote (Paragraph 11), **F)** public disposition (Paragraph 12), **G)** deadline compliance (Paragraph 13), and **H)** further action (Paragraph 14).

APPLICABLE STANDARDS AND NAD WRITTEN REPORT

2. **Applicable Standards:** For this action, these are the Seventh-day Adventist biblical and voted standards relevant to the documented matters, including Fundamental Belief 23, "Marriage and the Family," as voted by the General Conference in Session, together with applicable Church Manual, GC Working Policy, credentialing and accreditation standards.
3. **Written Report Contents:** The NAD Executive Officers shall prepare an itemized written report, issued by the NAD president on their behalf, by the stated deadline, addressing each documented matter separately. For each matter, the report shall: **A)** identify the applicable standards, **B)** include the unredacted written entity responses required under Paragraphs 5-7 and any entity public statements issued under Paragraph 8, **C)** state whether the NAD Executive Officers affirm or dispute that the matter conflicts with the applicable standards, **D)** state each responding entity's reported status as corrected, unresolved, continuing, or will not be corrected and, if corrected, include the Paragraph 6(D) particulars, **E)** identify each Paragraph 9 deficiency, and **F)** state the factual, policy, doctrinal, and evidentiary basis for each conclusion.
4. **Written Report Deadline and Distribution:** The NAD Executive Officers shall submit the written report to the NAD Executive Committee no later than sixty (60) days after adoption of this action by the NAD Executive Committee. The written report, all unredacted written responses received under Paragraphs 5-7, and all entity public statements issued under Paragraph 8 shall be distributed to all NAD Executive Committee voting members at least seven (7) days before its consideration.

ENTITY WRITTEN RESPONSES AND PUBLIC STATEMENTS

5. **Written Response Entities and Deadline:** Each named entity below shall provide, separately and in its own name, an official institutional written response issued by its president on behalf of the entity no later than forty-five (45) days after adoption of this action by the NAD Executive Committee. Related supporting material shall not replace the required institutional response:

A) Southern California Conference (SCC)

Concerning a pastor serving for decades while in a same-sex relationship, with ministerial activity continuing through 2026, and Glendale City Church's LGBTQ-affirming positions (a SCC constituent church), both knowingly tolerated and repeatedly supported by Conference leaders.

B) La Sierra University (LSU)

Concerning the LGBTQ-affirming Kinship Sabbath School since 2018, Lavender Graduations since 2020 involving LSU leadership and faculty, and the 2026 selection of an LGBTQ Caucus legislator as commencement speaker and Presidential Medallion recipient.

C) Southeastern California Conference (SECC)

Concerning the LGBTQ-affirming Kinship Sabbath School since 20th18 and Lavender Graduations since 2020 conducted through or at LSU Church, a SECC constituent church, with participation by LSU Church pastors employed by SECC.

6. **Written Response Contents:** Each named entity's written response shall state: **A)** whether the entity acknowledges, disputes, or denies that the documented matter occurred, **B)** whether it acknowledges or disputes that the matter conflicts with applicable standards and the factual, policy, doctrinal, and evidentiary basis for its position, **C)** whether the matter has been corrected, remains unresolved, is continuing, or will not be corrected, and **D)** if corrected, what was corrected, the action taken, who authorized and implemented it, and the dates of authorization and implementation. Any proposed, promised, partial, or incomplete correction shall be reported as unresolved until completed.
7. **Entity Position on Unauthorized or Unofficial Acts:** If a named entity states that a documented matter was not its official, authorized, or sponsored action but the act of an administrator, institutional leader, employee, department, or subordinate entity, the named entity shall nevertheless state its official institutional position. It shall state: **A)** whether it acknowledges, disputes, or denies that the matter occurred, **B)** whether it acknowledges or disputes that the matter conflicts with applicable standards and the factual, policy, doctrinal, and evidentiary basis for its position, and **C)** whether the matter has been corrected, remains unresolved, is continuing, or will not be corrected, including whether the entity disavows, tolerates, or permits it, subject to Paragraph 6.
8. **Entity Public Statements:** Because the documented matters were public events or publicly reported matters, each named entity shall issue and make publicly accessible, through an official communication channel, a written statement by its president on behalf of the entity no later than forty-five (45) days after adoption of this action by the NAD Executive Committee and before the NAD written report is finalized and distributed. The statement shall identify: **A)** the documented matter, **B)** the applicable standards, **C)** whether the entity acknowledges or disputes that the matter is in conflict with those standards, **D)** the entity's present position on the standards as applied to the matter and the factual, policy, doctrinal, and evidentiary basis for its position, and **E)** whether the matter has been corrected, remains unresolved, is continuing, or will not be corrected and, if corrected, the particulars required by Paragraph 6(D). Any proposed, promised, partial, or incomplete correction shall be publicly reported as unresolved until completed.

DEFICIENCIES IN ENTITY RESPONSES AND NAD WRITTEN REPORT

9. **Deficiencies of Entity Written Responses and Public Statements:** The NAD written report shall identify each applicable nonresponse, omission, deficiency, unresolved matter, continuing matter, or other failure to satisfy this action, including: **A)** failure by a named entity to provide the written response required by Paragraph 5, **B)** failure to identify the applicable standards, **C)** failure to state whether the entity acknowledges or disputes that the documented matter is in conflict with those standards, **D)** failure to state the entity's present position and the factual, policy, doctrinal, and evidentiary basis for it, **E)** failure to state the matter's status as required by Paragraph 6, **F)** failure to issue and make publicly accessible the statement required by Paragraph 8 within forty-five (45) days after adoption of this action by the NAD Executive Committee, **G)** failure to include any element required by Paragraph 8, **H)** substitution of a subordinate-entity or individual response for the named entity's official institutional response, or **I)** any claim of correction that fails to satisfy Paragraph 6, including any proposed, promised, partial, or incomplete correction not identified as unresolved.
10. **Deficiencies of NAD Written Report:** The NAD written report shall fail this action's reporting requirements if it omits, incompletely addresses, or materially misstates any element required by Paragraph 3, or fails to identify each applicable deficiency required by Paragraph 9.

NAD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REVIEW, PUBLIC DISPOSITION, AND FOLLOW-UP

- 11. Executive Committee Review and Vote:** When the NAD written report is submitted, the NAD Executive Committee shall consider it as a separate agenda item and record findings by vote for each documented matter separately: **A)** whether the report satisfies Paragraph 3, **B)** each applicable deficiency under Paragraph 9 and, if the report does not satisfy Paragraph 3, each omitted, incompletely addressed, or materially misstated element and each reporting failure under Paragraph 10, **C)** for each named entity, whether the public statement required by Paragraph 8 was timely issued, made publicly accessible before the report was finalized and distributed, and satisfied each requirement of Paragraph 8 and, if not, each applicable deficiency, **D)** each responding entity's reported status and whether the matter was reported as corrected, unresolved, continuing, or will not be corrected and, if reported as corrected, whether the claim satisfies Paragraph 6, and **E)** any action taken or directed by the NAD Executive Committee on this matter.
- 12. NAD Public Disposition:** No later than fifteen (15) days after the vote under Paragraph 11, the NAD Executive Officers shall publish and make publicly accessible, through an official NAD communication channel, a written disposition by the NAD president on their behalf for each documented matter stating: **A)** whether each required written response was received, **B)** whether each entity public statement required by Paragraph 8 was timely issued, made publicly accessible, and found compliant or deficient under Paragraph 11, **C)** the applicable standards identified, **D)** whether the NAD Executive Officers affirm or dispute that the matter conflicts with those standards and whether each responding entity acknowledges or disputes that conflict, **E)** each entity's present position on the applicable standards as applied to the matter and the factual, policy, doctrinal, and evidentiary basis for that position, **F)** each responding entity's reported status and the matter's status recorded under Paragraph 11 as corrected, unresolved, continuing, or will not be corrected; if corrected, the Paragraph 6(D) particulars; and each deficiency recorded under Paragraph 11, and **G)** the action recorded by the NAD Executive Committee under Paragraph 11. A public disposition that omits, incompletely addresses, or materially misstates any required element shall fail this action's public-disposition requirements.
- 13. Deadline Compliance:** The deadlines in Paragraphs 4, 5, 8, and 12 are material requirements of this action and shall not be extended except by recorded vote of the NAD Executive Committee stating the specific reason and establishing definite revised deadlines, including any necessary adjustment to the report-distribution schedule. A revised deadline shall be subject to the same requirements and consequences as the original deadline.
 - A)** If a **named entity misses** either the **written-response deadline** under Paragraph 5 or the **public-statement deadline** under Paragraph 8, the NAD Executive Committee shall record the missed deadline as a nonresponse or deadline deficiency, identify the affected matter as unresolved until the missed requirement is satisfied, and place the matter under Paragraph 14. A later submission shall not erase the recorded deadline deficiency.
 - B)** If the **NAD written-report deadline** under Paragraph 4 is missed, the NAD Executive Committee shall record the failure as a report deficiency, treat each matter not timely reported as unresolved and the report as failing this action's reporting requirements, and place each affected matter under Paragraph 14. If the Paragraph 4 report-distribution requirement is not satisfied, the Committee shall record a distribution deficiency and place each affected matter under Paragraph 14.
 - C)** If the **NAD public-disposition deadline** under Paragraph 12 is missed, the NAD Executive Committee shall record the failure as a deadline deficiency and place each affected matter under Paragraph 14. A later publication shall not erase the recorded deadline deficiency.
- 14. Further Action:** If an unresolved documented matter, entity deficiency, report deficiency, distribution deficiency, deadline failure, or deficient public disposition is or should be identified under Paragraphs 9-13, the NAD Executive Committee shall place each affected matter on the agenda of the next NAD Executive Committee meeting for recorded consideration and further action consistent with Seventh-day Adventist biblical and voted standards and policy.

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE SUMMARY -- A SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE (SCC)

1. EXHIBITS A.1-A.11 | 2004-2025 | Conference Support of LGBTQ Pastor & Glendale City Church

Lind's stated views and legacy. Leif Lind states that he feels honored to have been “the only openly gay Adventist pastor ... who was able to continue serving my congregation for these 20 years” (A.1/23). He links LGBTQ+ equality to women's ordination, stating that both are related issues “depending on how you interpret the Scriptures” (A.1/22), and warns that polarization within the Church over LGBTQ+ equality may lead to formal division and that “in reality, the schism is practically already underway” (A.1/20).

Lind's ministerial background and Glendale service. Ordained in 1980, Lind lost his ministerial credentials after coming out as gay in 1996 but retained his ordination (A.1/11–12). In 1997, he met Taylor Ruhl at an SDA Kinship Kampmeeting. They entered a civil union in 2000 and held a wedding ceremony in 2008 officiated by an Adventist pastor (A.1/16). In 2004, Lind was called to serve as an associate pastor at Glendale City Church in the Southern California Conference (SCC), working there until 2025 (A.1/13–15). For over 20 years, except for about two Sabbath mornings each year during holidays, he served weekly by preaching, teaching, planning worship, preparing the bulletin, arranging prayers and Scripture readings, performing administrative work, or carrying out other pastoral duties (A.1/18). He also performed at least one same-sex marriage at Glendale City Church and several other same-sex and heterosexual ceremonies elsewhere while serving there (A.1/19).

Conference accommodation of Lind. Lind states that the conference allowed Glendale to provide a “safe haven for the LGBTQ+ community” (A.1/13), despite criticism from neighboring conservative churches and pressure from higher denominational bodies, including the General Conference (A.1/14). He states that the conference initially refused to cooperate with General Conference demands concerning his ministry but later relented, apologized to him, and requested his resignation, but Glendale then established a separate payroll arrangement that allowed Lind to continue serving at Glendale until his retirement in 2025 (A.1/15).

Conference interaction and recognition of Lind. Selected events from 2013 through 2023 document Lind's continuing public performance of pastoral functions, concurrent platform participation by conference officers, and, in several instances, express conference recognition of Lind or favorable statements concerning Glendale. At a 2013 ordination service for a female pastor, Lind led the congregational affirmation and participated in the laying on of hands together with the SCC President, executive secretary, and LA Metro Region director (A.2). In 2014, the local conference president invited Lind to share his life story with the conference organizing committee and answer questions during a two-hour session (A.1/19–20). In 2015, Lind prayed for and participated in laying on of hands on newly elected SCC President Velino Salazar before Salazar preached at Glendale (A.3). At Glendale's 110-year anniversary in 2016, Salazar congratulated the congregation for its “progressive ministry,” while Lind officiated and was named among Glendale's pastors in prayer (A.4). Later that year, Lind officiated when SCC Executive Secretary John Cress preached and told the congregation that it was “great to be with you” (A.5). In 2017, Lind officiated and joined SCC President Salazar and the SCC LA Metro Region director in laying on of hands on another minister (A.6). In 2022, Lind officiated when SCC President Cress preached and said, “thank you, Pastor Lind,” and told the congregation, “I love coming here” (A.7). In 2023, SCC LA Metro Region Director Chan preached as Lind led worship and prayer. Chan publicly stated, “Thank you, Leif, for your ministry here,” while the bulletin listed both Chan and Lind as members of Glendale's pastoral search committee (A.11).

Glendale's LGBTQ-affirming theology. Glendale presented explicit LGBTQ-affirming theology, with Lind repeatedly responding with public statements of appreciation. In 2022, Alicia Johnston taught that same-sex marriage and transgender identity could be understood as biblically valid, “good and holy,” and sanctified by God, after which Lind thanked her for “sharing your wisdom with us” (A.8). In 2023, Glendale conducted an SDA Kinship Sabbath at which Pastor Todd Leonard described the congregation as intentionally “open and affirming,” while SDA Kinship President Floyd Poenitz explained the organization and invited LGBTQ persons, families, and allies to participate, with Lind thanking the speakers for their courage and for standing up for others (A.9). During Pride Month in 2023, non-SDA pastor Aaron Van Voorhis preached that “the gospel should be understood as the queering of God” and that LGBTQ love, bodies, gender, and sexual identity were “holy and good and godly” and “fully affirmed,” after which Lind thanked him for his message of inclusivity, acceptance, and divine love (A.10).

2. EXHIBITS A.12-A.13 | 2025-2026 | Conference Support at LGBTQ Pastor Farewell Service

Farewell recognition of Lind (February 2025). On February 1, 2025, Glendale held a “service of recognition” celebrating Lind's “remarkable and dedicated ministry” to Glendale to “honor his years of faithful service” according to the bulletin, identifying Taylor Ruhl as “his husband” (A.12/1-2). The Call to Worship section stated, “God who has sent us Pastor Leif Lind to be our shepherd” (A.12/3). Lind delivered the sermon and benediction.

Glendale Senior Pastor affirms Lind. Senior Pastor Uriel Herinirina described the farewell service as a “sacred moment,” honored Lind and Ruhl together, characterized Lind’s life as a “journey of a ‘faithful servant’” and Lind as “a testament of what faithfulness to something sacred [is],” and thanked God for “calling and anointing Pastor Leif into the work of ministry” (A.12/10).

Current and former Conference officers affirm Lind. SCC Executive Secretary Danny Chan stated at the service that it had been his privilege to collaborate with Lind and conveyed “tremendous gratitude” for nearly twenty-one years of service, thanking him “from all of us here at Southern California Conference” for his ministry (A.12/13). SCC President John Cress stated that Lind’s compassion, empathy, and care reflected Christ’s love and that his ministry had made a “lasting impact” (A.12/14). Former SCC President Velino Salazar expressed his “appreciation for the ministry that Leif Lind has done,” stating that his ministry had influenced many lives, and expressed his wish for the “Lord to continue blessing you ... and your ministry” (A.12/15).

Conference representative lays hands on Lind for divine blessing. Glendale’s senior pastor introduced SCC LA Metro Region Director Brett Poynter, and referred to Lind as a “wonderful minister of our conference,” after which Poynter led out in laying hands on Lind together with the elders (A.12/16). Poynter stated that he wished Lind could remain in ministry at Glendale longer, that the congregation was healthier because of his service, and declared, “God is working through you.” In prayer, Poynter thanked God for calling, blessing, empowering, and qualifying Lind for ministry, described his “godly character,” asked God to continue blessing his pastoral work, and prayed that Glendale would carry on his legacy. He then requested that the Holy Spirit speak through Lind when delivering the farewell sermon (A.12/17). Lind expressed his thanks for the conference support (A.12/18).

Continued conference affirmation of Lind (January 2026). When Poynter returned to Glendale City Church on January 10, 2026, to preach, he referred to his participation in Lind’s retirement celebration, describing Lind as a “man of the Lord” and commending the congregation with “we are proud of you as a conference, the Sisterhood of Churches.” (A.13). The 120-year anniversary of Glendale followed three weeks later (see below).

3. EXHIBITS A.14-A.16 | 2026 | Conference Support & LGBTQ Pastor at 120-Year Anniversary

120-year anniversary and Glendale’s stated identity (January 2026). Public reporting preceding Glendale’s anniversary described the congregation as taking pride in being affirming toward the LGBTQ+ community and female leadership, and stated that this advocacy had been foundational to its community for decades (A.14). The anniversary bulletin similarly stated that “the paths we’ve chosen might have unsettled or even worried our early founders” and that “this church, this holy place ... where difference is honored ... is led by God,” that “we celebrate who we are today” (A.15/1-3), and “we do not discriminate based on ... sexual orientation” (A.15/8).

Lind, SDA Kinship, and Glendale’s historical claims. At the 120-year anniversary service, Lind was identified as Glendale’s former associate pastor and he conducted the Greetings and Litany of Thanks (A.15/4,10). Glendale also presented a message to the church from SDA Kinship International President Floyd Poenitz, thanking the congregation for years of support, describing it as a “safe haven,” and expressing appreciation for its ministry to LGBTQIA+ (A.15/5,11-13). In his anniversary sermon, Senior Pastor Uriel Herinirina cited as sources of joy Glendale’s status as “verified clear as fully LGBTQ+ affirming” and the “first female ordination at Glendale ... in 2013 ... with the support of the conference and union” (A.15/19).

Conference presence and support of Glendale. SCC President John Cress, Executive Secretary Danny Chan, Treasurer Kathleen Diaz, and LA Metro Region Director Brett Poynter all attended the anniversary service and were publicly welcomed as Conference officers present to “support” Glendale (A.15/9,14-15). President Cress then read an official Conference letter congratulating Glendale for 120 years of “faithful witness, vibrant community, and spirit-led ministry,” and further that it has “stood as one of the earliest enduring progressive expressions of Adventist faith,” that “your enduring legacy testifies of God’s faithfulness,” that “we give thanks to God for your vibrant community” and “may the Lord continue to richly bless your worship, your witness” (A.15/16). Diaz announced a \$5,000 conference gift to help Glendale’s ministries “continue to grow and reach even more lives,” and “on behalf of the Southern California Conference, thank you for your faithfulness, your service, your powerful witness” (A.15/17). The framed letter and gift to the congregation were then publicly handed over to the Glendale senior pastor (A.15/18).

Conference video report. A few days after the anniversary service, the Conference published a favorable anniversary report, emphasizing Glendale’s history, creative ministry, community engagement, conference gift, and attending officers (A.16/1-2), and released a highlight video featuring both Lind and SCC officers (A.16/3-6).

4. EXHIBITS A.17-A.18 | 2026 | Continued Post-Retirement Ministry of LGBTQ Pastor

Lind’s public ministerial activities have continued after retirement. He delivered sermons at the Glendale City Church on March 7, 2026 (A.17) and on July 11, 2026 (A.18).

5. EXHIBITS A.19-A.24 | 2020-2026 | Pride Month and SDA Kinship at Glendale

Pride Month events at Glendale (June 2026). Glendale's May 30, 2026, bulletin stated that the church "celebrates Pride Month with gratitude for God's love," and that we "honor our LGBTQ+ siblings," and that the church will mark "Pride Month with two special Sabbath events," namely "GlendaleOUT's Pride in the Park" and "Pride Movie Night at the GCC chapel at 6 pm" (A.20). External reporting documented the event, whose attendees, including the Glendale senior pastor, described their purpose as honoring LGBTQ+ persons (A.19). The non-SDA GlendaleOUT's event coverage included a video with the background repetitive soundtrack lyrics: "I am not gay. I am superegay" in various languages, also showing the Glendale City Church pastor (A.21).

SCC Executive Secretary delivers sermon at Glendale during Pride Month 2026. In the June 13, 2026, bulletin, Glendale welcomed SCC Executive Secretary and Ministerial Director Danny Chan as its sermon speaker for that Sabbath (A.22/1-3). The same bulletin page that introduced Chan included a report on the Pride in the Park event the previous Sabbath "to show support for our LGBTQIA+ neighbors" (A.22/3). The next bulletin page promoted the "Pride Movie Night" two weeks later on Sabbath (A.22/4). When Chan preached, he stated that he was "so honored to be back here at the Glendale City Church" and it is an "honor to worship with you today ... as a family member," commending Glendale pastors "for all your ministry" (A.22/5-6).

Established Pride Month pattern at Glendale (2020-2025). Glendale's 2026 activities continued a recurring public pattern. In 2020, the church asked how the congregation could "honor and celebrate" Pride Month and directed responses to Lind and the other pastors (A.23/1). In 2021–2023, it displayed and circulated a rainbow sign identifying Glendale as "An Open & Affirming Community," posted "Happy Pride Month," and promoted "Sanctuary PRIDE Worship" and Pride Sabbaths (A.23/2-6). Its June 7, 2025, bulletin celebrated Pride Month, stating that it "celebrates Pride Month with gratitude for God's love ... that affirms. We honor our LGBTQ+ siblings as members of God's family," and wishing "Happy Pride Month GCC!" (A.23/7–8).

SDA Kinship relationship with Glendale (1980s-2026). Glendale's website declares the congregation "Proud to Be Affirming," includes sexual orientation in its inclusivity statement, and identifies Glendale as an LGBTQ member church with SDA Kinship International, while also stating "we are in a posture of protest against the unjust actions taken by our General Conference" (A.24/1-2). In its February 3, 2026 article, SDA Kinship describes Glendale as a longstanding safe haven that has employed an openly gay, same-sex-married pastor, thanking Lind for his service, and praising Glendale and its current pastors as a welcoming and affirming congregation (A.24/3a-3c). Glendale posted two weeks later that "along with Seventh-day Adventist Kinship International," it believes God's love embraces everyone regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity (A.24/4). SDA Kinship states that the "Bible does not condemn LGBTQIA+ identities" and that its mission is to "reconcile faith and LGBTQ identities ... advocating for inclusivity within the SDA community" (A.24/5a-5c).

6. CONCLUSIONS

Long-term pattern. The evidence reflects a continuous progression, not isolated encounters. For approximately 21 years, Lind served publicly at Glendale with the Conference knowing his sexual orientation and same-sex relationship. Conference officers have repeatedly been with him on the platform during worship and ministerial acts, recognized his service, and spoken favorably of Glendale. The records also document LGBTQ-affirming theology, recurring Pride programming, and a formal relationship with SDA Kinship International.

Current Conference administration support. At Lind's 2025 farewell service, SCC officers praised Lind's ministry, with the regional director laying hands on him and thanking God for calling, empowering, and qualifying him. At Glendale's 2026 anniversary, multiple Conference officers attended, an official Conference letter praised Glendale as an enduring progressive expression of Adventist faith, and the Conference gave a \$5,000 gift for Glendale's ministries to continue and grow. Lind has continued preaching in 2026, and Glendale has continued its Pride Month activities and its SDA Kinship relations.

Continuity of current Conference officeholders. These actions are not merely remnants of former leadership. President John Cress served as executive secretary from 2016–2024, and Executive Secretary Danny Chan as LA Metro Region director from 2019–2024, showing continuity among current officeholders (A.25/1). They, as well as current LA Metro Region Director Brett Poynter, have participated in various Glendale City Church events in 2025-2026. Chan preached at Glendale during Pride Month 2026, commending its pastors and ministry. The overall evidence therefore directly involves both past and present Conference administrations (A.25/2-5) and Glendale City Church pastors (A.26).

Taken together, this sustained, intentional, publicly documented pattern involving SCC conflicts with SDA biblical and voted standards, raises issues of institutional accountability, and affects member confidence and the Church's public witness across the NAD, thus warranting submission to the NAD Executive Committee for formal consideration and action.

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE SUMMARY -- B LA SIERRA UNIVERSITY (LSU) & SOUTHEASTERN CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE (SECC)

1. EXHIBITS B.1-B.2 | Up to 2019 | Beginning of the LGBTQ-Affirming Institutional Position

Early development and founding of LGBTQ Sabbath School. LGBTQ initiatives at La Sierra University (LSU) grew through Prism and the Psychology Department (B.1/2–3). At the La Sierra University Church (LSU Church), lead pastor Chris Oberg's 2012 sanctuary screening of the movie *“Seventh-Gay Adventists”* before more than 1,500 people began six years of dialogue. In 2018, the LSU Church created a Sabbath School explicitly affirming LGBTQ, launched as a Kinship Class, led by two married gay LSU graduates (B.1/14). The church issued a welcome statement, resolving to become “fully welcoming and affirming for all LGBT people” (B.1/13 & B.2/1), which was voted without dissent by the church board and church business session (B.1/14). The LSU Church pastoral staff is described as “accepting and affirming of all of God’s children including LGBTQ+ folks” (B.2/2). The Kinship Sabbath School class was founded at La Sierra University “with the support of the La Sierra University Church pastors, Board of Directors and Members and Community” (B.3/12).

Southeastern California Conference Implications. The involvement of the LSU Church and its pastors directly implicates the Southeastern California Conference (SECC) because the LSU Church is a constituent church of the SECC, and the LSU Church lead and associate pastors are employed by the SECC (B.15-B.16).

2. EXHIBIT B.3 | 2018-2026 | LGBTQ Kinship Sabbath School

The LSU Church Kinship Sabbath School officially started in October 2018 (B.3/5). From its beginnings, it portrayed itself as an affirming, church-supported ministry, with the slogan “I am Affirmed - La Sierra University Church of Seventh-day Adventists - Kinship Sabbath School” (B.3/1). Through 2020, the class met in person and regularly promoted itself as “a group of LGBT+ and Allies that meets weekly on Sabbath at La Sierra University church. ... All LGBT+ and Allies are welcome” (B.3/2-4). At its first anniversary, it celebrated “a year of visibility ... a year of some of us coming out” (B.3/5-6). During COVID, meetings moved online and remain there today, with regular promotions featuring LSU Church pastors and theology graduates (B.3/7-10). In 2023, the class hosted and promoted an “SDA Kinship Kampmeeting Conference” at the LSU Church and chapel (B.3/11). In 2026, SDA Kinship International continues to promote the class as an “affirming, accepting and safe space for LGBT+” (B.3/12), while an LSU Church bulletin-board notice states that it provides “Bible study and spiritual growth” (B.3/13). The record therefore documents a sustained LSU Church LGBTQ-affirming ministry.

3. EXHIBITS B.4-B.8 | 2020-2026 | LGBTQ Lavender Graduations

Lavender Graduation with university administration, pastors and faculty (2026). On June 5, 2026, LSU held its sixth LGBTQ Lavender Graduation (B.7/1-3). Celebrants included “members of the LSU Church pastoral staff, LSU faculty and administration” (B.4/1). The university church “senior pastor Iki Taimi offered prayer” (B.4/3), as did associate pastor Raewyn Orlich, who also stated that “God, in your love you made a beautiful rainbow. Forgive us when we insist on living in black and white” (B.4/9). President Arthur addressed the graduates, while former president Wisbey, who “was an early supporter of Kinship Sabbath School’s ministry,” also presided (B.4/4,9). Further faculty and administration attendees, among others, were Provost Leslie Martin and Professor of Old Testament Wonil Kim (B.4/9).

Unique university administration presence (2026). Kinship Sabbath School founder noted the president’s participation, saying “President Arthur has been supportive since day one,” and that Arthur’s presence “buoyed graduates and university colleagues alike,” while Kim noted the “importance of seeing the university president and interim provost participating in the event,” adding that prior to 2026, “no senior university administrators had taken part” (B.4/4,9). President Arthur sees the lavender graduations as “our opportunity to celebrate and bless our LGBTQ+ students,” adding that “it is a beautiful and memorable ceremony where we bless, honor, celebrate, and worship,” that he “gladly participates” and says “unequivocally to our LGBTQ+ students ... that there is a home for them at La Sierra” (B.5-B.6).

Previous Lavender Graduations (2020-2025). La Sierra University Lavender Graduation event postings can be found for 2020, 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025 (B.8/1-5), all taking place at the La Sierra University Church. This record establishes that the 2026 event was not isolated, but continued a recurring and intentional LSU and LSU Church practice extending over multiple years.

4. EXHIBITS B.9-B.11 | 2026 | LGBTQ Commencement Speaker & Presidential Medallion Awardee

LGBTQ speaker and Presidential Medallion Recipient. In June 2026, LSU announced California State Senator Sabrina Cervantes as its 2026 Commencement speaker, identifying her as “vice chair of the LGBTQ+ Caucus” of openly LGBTQ California legislators (**B.9/1–3**). LSU also awarded Cervantes its Presidential Medallion because her “service reflects La Sierra University’s values” and “exemplifies what we stand for” (**B.9/4–8**). During the ceremony, LSU Board Chair Brad Newton, President of the Pacific Union Conference, was on the platform with LSU President Arthur (**B.9/9**). Arthur stated that he reserves the Presidential Medallion for persons whose distinguished service “reflects and represents the values of La Sierra University” (**B.9/10**). Provost Leslie Martin presented the award, accompanied by applause from Brad Newton and others, followed by Cervantes’ commencement speech (**B.9/11–13**). Since LSU’s founding in 1990, the Presidential Medallion had been awarded only four times before 2026 (**B.11**).

LGBTQ speaker and Presidential Medallion Recipient Background. Senator Sabrina Cervantes’ public record includes a long-standing personal and public identity as a “lesbian,” “proud member of the LGBTQ Caucus, as a proud, queer Latina,” references to “my wife and I,” being a “mother of triplets growing up in a same-sex family,” and “we are still visible lesbians” (**B.10/1**). She is an influential member of the California Legislative LGBTQ Caucus and was elected its vice chair in 2025 (**B.10/2**). She has been lead author or coauthor of numerous LGBTQ-related bills and resolutions, including annual Pride Month resolutions since 2018 and legislation concerning teachers, foster care, transgender care, schools, colleges, and the pending 2026 SB 934, which seeks to expand restrictions on LGBTQ conversion therapy (**B.10/3**). These aspects of her public record were longstanding and publicly accessible before LSU invited her as speaker and Medallion recipient.

5. EXHIBITS B.13-B.14 & B.16 | 2009-2026 | LGBTQ Legacy & Board Trustee Chris Oberg

Chris Oberg - Previous LSU Church lead pastor. Chris Oberg served as lead pastor of La Sierra University Church from 2009-2021 (**B.16**). During this period, the LSU Church developed its explicitly LGBTQ-affirming posture, including the 2012 “Seventh-Gay Adventists” screening, the 2018 affirming Sabbath School/Kinship Class, and the first documented LSU Lavender Graduation in 2020. Chris Oberg was substantially influential in forming the foundation for today’s LGBTQ-affirming position of both LSU and the LSU Church (**B.1/13-14**).

Chris Oberg - Officiating at the Kris Loewen gender transition rite. After leaving LSU Church in 2021, Chris Oberg officiated in the March 2022 “Rite of Transition” for former SECC Adventist pastor Kris Loewen, during which she performed the “anointing and renaming” ritual of Kris Loewen into Esther Loewen (**B.14**).

Chris Oberg - Voted into Board of Trustees. LSU voted Oberg onto its Board of Trustees in 2025. The report states that “she previously served for 13 years as lead pastor of La Sierra University Church. She joined the La Sierra Board of Trustees in 2025 ... where her background and expertise in the higher-ed church community have helped inform and advance the board’s work” (**B.13/4**).

6. CONCLUSIONS

Long-term pattern. The evidence documents sustained LGBTQ affirmation, not isolated events. Since 2018, LSU Church has maintained an explicitly LGBTQ-affirming Kinship Sabbath School, while recurring Lavender Graduations since 2020 document support involving LSU Church pastors and LSU administration and faculty.

Current institutional support. LSU President Arthur and senior administrators participated in the 2026 Lavender Graduation, with Arthur stating that LSU “celebrate[s] and bless[es] our LGBTQ+ students.” That same month, LSU awarded LGBTQ Caucus Vice Chair Sabrina Cervantes its rarely bestowed Presidential Medallion because her service “reflects La Sierra University’s values” and exemplifies “what we stand for.”

Continuity and accountability. LGBTQ affirmation developed at LSU Church during Chris Oberg’s tenure as lead pastor; after participating in a 2022 gender-transition rite, she joined LSU’s Board of Trustees in 2025. LSU Church is an SECC constituent church and its pastors are SECC employees (**B.16**). The actions therefore reach LSU administration (**B.12**), LSU Board of Trustees (**B.13**), SECC pastoral oversight of the LSU Church (**B.15**), and the LSU Church lead and associate pastors (**B.16**).

Taken together, this sustained, intentional, publicly documented pattern involving LSU and SECC conflicts with SDA biblical and voted standards, raises issues of institutional accountability, and affects member confidence and the Church’s public witness across the NAD, thus warranting submission to the NAD Executive Committee for formal consideration and action

This page intentionally blank (for double-sided printing).

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE EXHIBITS

Evidentiary Preservation Notice

All evidence exhibit screenshots are used solely for evidentiary and source-identification purposes, and are not used for commercial purposes, promotion, or as a substitute for the original sources. They are included solely for governance-related purposes of preserving publicly available sources as related to the specific matters, because live web links may not preserve the evidentiary record if source pages are later changed, moved, restricted, or removed. Each exhibit description line identifies the source and includes a live link to the original source, as valid at the time of the evidence gathering. Evidence exhibits therefore preserve text, photographs, captions, credits, copyright notices, dates or anything else fully as visible within the full or partial pages shown in the exhibits.

Annotation Notice

The evidence exhibit pages, where helpful, contain annotations such as underlinings in red, transparent boxes with either red/yellow borders, or text boxes with explanations or clarifications. Annotations have the sole purpose of helping the reader to quicker focus on relevant contents or to understand specific contexts. The annotations are not part of the original source materials and do not modify the underlying evidence.

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE EXHIBIT -- A
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE (SCC)

Public Documentation Concerning

LGBTQ Pastor, LGBTQ-Affirming Practices at Glendale City Church
and Southern California Conference Support

Occurrence

2004 – Present (2026)

EXHIBIT A.1/1: Career of LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale City Church.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (April 8, 2026)

Page 1

The Quiet Witness and Prodigious Career of Pioneering Gay Adventist Pastor Leif Lind - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/views/interviews/the-quiet-witness-and-prodigious-career-of-pioneering-gay-adventist-pastor-leif-lind>

SPECTRUM

Creating community through conversation
Seventh-day Adventist supported since 1969



VIEWS

The Quiet Witness and Prodigious Career of Pioneering Gay Adventist Pastor Leif Lind

Jonathan Monteiro | April 8, 2026 | Interviews | 28 min. read



As far as the Seventh-day Adventist Church hierarchy is concerned, Leif Lind's pastoral career should have ended in 1996. That year, after two decades of denominational service that he describes as "impeccable," Lind came out as gay. The institutional response was immediate: he was dismissed in less than an hour, without adequate compensation, denounced by local elders, and made a persona non grata by the leadership that previously called him a friend.

Instead, Lind's ministerial trajectory defied the typical script for out LGBTQ+ pastors in unwelcoming Christian denominations: He not only survived his ouster, but also experienced an exceedingly uncommon reintegration into Adventist ministry.

In this interview, Lind—born in Uganda to Norwegian missionaries considered "legends" within Adventism—details how he found refuge in California's Glendale City Church, a theologically progressive but liturgically traditional congregation in the Southern California Conference. There, protected by complex ecclesiastical diplomacy, he served as associate pastor for over 20 years until his retirement on February 1, 2025.

EXHIBIT A.1/2: Career of LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale City Church.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (April 8, 2026)

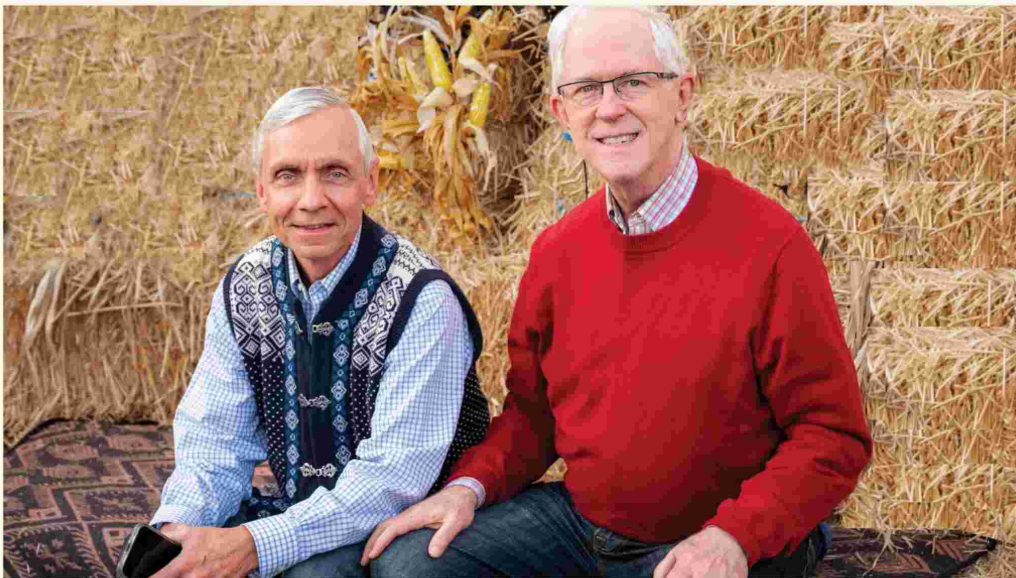
Page 2

The Quiet Witness and Prodigious Career of Pioneering Gay Adventist Pastor Leif Lind - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/views/interviews/the-quiet-witness-and-prodigious-career-of-pioneering-gay-adventist-pastor-leif...>

The conversation reveals the inner workings of church politics and chronicles the human cost of rigid dogma. Lind openly recounts his “lonely agony” and his frustrated attempts to alter his orientation through fasting and theological conservatism in his youth.

He also shares the story of his nearly three-decade relationship with musician Taylor Ruhl, a union that had to be celebrated on three different dates to keep up with evolving US marriage laws. All photos courtesy of Leif Lind.



Leif Lind and Taylor Ruhl at the Live Oak Canyon Pumpkin Patch in California, 2022.

A diplomat by nature and averse to the image of an “aggressive activist,” Leif offers a testimony of silent resistance. Reflecting on his legacy, he says he is honored to have been, possibly, the only openly gay Adventist pastor, living with his spouse, to maintain his active ministry for so long. An institutional anomaly that, according to him, proves that faith does not need all the answers to survive, but requires the practice of justice and mercy.

Jonathan Monteiro: How would you describe yourself to readers who are not yet familiar with your story?

Leif Lind: I grew up in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. I definitely consider myself a spiritual person, although I don’t necessarily feel comfortable with the direction the denomination has taken in recent years. I’ve increasingly realized that we humans don’t have all the answers to life, and that’s okay. I believe that’s why God gave us faith. We wouldn’t need faith if we had all the answers! Unfortunately, the Adventist Church often thinks it’s the only institution on Earth that has all the answers.

EXHIBIT A.1/3: Career of LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale City Church.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (April 8, 2026)

Page 3

The Quiet Witness and Prodigious Career of Pioneering Gay Adventist Pastor Leif Lind - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/views/interviews/the-quiet-witness-and-prodigious-career-of-pioneering-gay-adventist-pastor-leif-lind/>

I am also a kind, thoughtful, and respectful person towards others, very calm, but at the same time very determined when it comes to my own path in life. An unusual combination in that sense. I have goals in life that I will do my best to achieve. I consider myself a reliable and conscientious person.

I believe I am a very friendly person, even if a little shy and introverted. Others will probably see me as someone serious, but those who know me better know that I definitely have a mischievous and playful sense of humor.

I have an insatiable curiosity to learn about the world and the universe around me. I also feel an innate need to share this joy of learning with others—my “teacher role.” Furthermore, I believe it’s important to be well-informed before making decisions.

I am deeply moved by good music and have worked as a musician—pianist, organist, choir conductor—for many years.

I really like animals and nature in general.

I value others for who they are, regardless of their social, religious, educational, ethnic, or economic background.

What I find very difficult to accept are people who are extremely opinionated and egocentric. I also dislike people who are cruel to others or to animals.

I am a natural diplomat and a peacemaker in interpersonal relationships. However, I see my calm and “passive” nature as, at times, a personal weakness that can lead to procrastination and/or the need to please everyone. Even so, there’s no way to put too much pressure on me. I am very determined: If I believe in something, I don’t accept much resistance from others.

Given that I have always felt a spiritual interest and considering my empathy and natural desire to improve the lives of others, my calling to be a spiritual mentor—a pastor—has been strong for as long as I can remember. I don’t see the pastoral role as a mere job or profession.

Where were you born and raised? What was your family like?

I was born in western Uganda, the son of Norwegian missionaries **Magdalon and Kezia Lind** who spent 40 years in the mission field. I was raised in several countries. My father was a dynamic figure, a legend within Adventism, remembered by all who knew him.

EXHIBIT A.1/4: Career of LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale City Church.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (April 8, 2026)

Page 4

The Quiet Witness and Prodigious Career of Pioneering Gay Adventist Pastor Leif Lind - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/views/interviews/the-quiet-witness-and-prodigious-career-of-pioneering-gay-adventist-pastor-leif...>



Leif Lind, age one, with his father Magdalon, in Kampala, Uganda.

What was your childhood like? Was faith already a part of your daily life?

I had a very happy childhood. Good and loving parents. My father was a missionary, pastor, and church administrator. My mother was a wonderful homemaker. She had a degree in nursing and was a massage therapist; she was able to run a massage practice at home for many years.

I was born at an advanced age for my parents; my mother was 43 when I was born. My two sisters are 16 and 14 years older than me and were already in boarding schools abroad when I was born, so I practically grew up as an only child. The three of us were born in Uganda.

What are your most striking memories of your religious upbringing in your youth?

I grew up in an Adventist home and, with the exception of my first two years of school, I always attended church schools. My parents were religious, but they weren't particularly conservative Adventists. They ate meat, for example, and I only found out on my mother's 90th birthday that they drank wine on rare occasions. Apparently, they drank an occasional glass of wine during their years in the mission field; they must have had a bottle or two hidden in some remote cupboard. I have no idea how they managed to do that for years without being discovered.

EXHIBIT A.1/5: Career of LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale City Church.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (April 8, 2026)

Page 5

The Quiet Witness and Prodigious Career of Pioneering Gay Adventist Pastor Leif Lind - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/views/interviews/the-quiet-witness-and-prodigious-career-of-pioneering-gay-adventist-pastor-le...>



Lind at age three with his mother and father.

We rarely went to the cinema, although we did see some “innocent” films such as *Bambi* and *Sleeping Beauty*. And yet, my father was a denominational leader, holding positions ranging from local missionary to division president. His motto was always “moderation in all things.”

We went to church every Saturday. Sometimes it was in a local language I didn’t understand, other times in English. At school, we participated in all the traditional Adventist activities, including camps and Christmas plays.

My father was very into sports, something I had little interest in or skill for. He had been a professional football player as a child in Norway. The fact that I developed severe asthma in early childhood, after living in polluted London for five years, gave me a convenient excuse not to participate in all sports. I would have an asthma attack at night if I ran for even a minute during the day. My longest attack lasted six uninterrupted weeks, with severe shortness of breath, day and night, while I remained sitting up in bed. It was agony! Fortunately, I overcame this illness in my late teens.

I was very well-liked by my classmates and was never the target of jokes, except for normal, good-natured teasing. The fact that our religious school was small probably contributed to this. In the first year, we had about twelve students; in the last year, we had about 70. Our teacher was the best

EXHIBIT A.1/6: Career of LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale City Church.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](https://spectrummagazine.org/views/interviews/the-quiet-witness-and-prodigious-career-of-pioneering-gay-adventist-pastor-leif-lind) (April 8, 2026)

Page 6

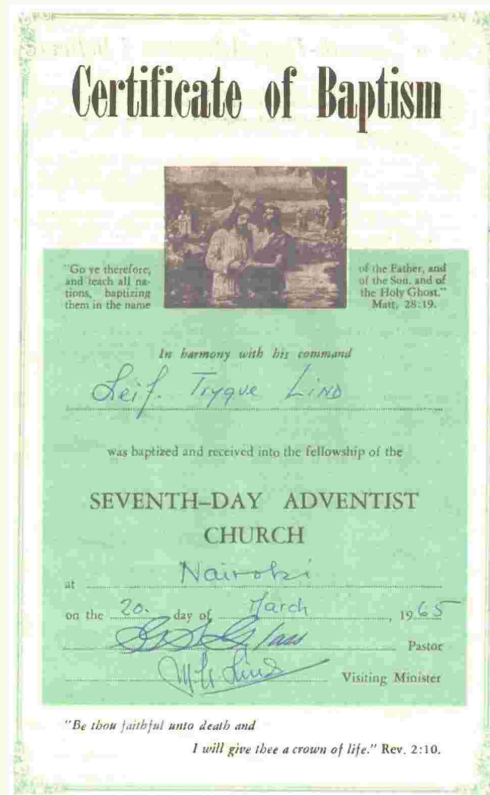
The Quiet Witness and Prodigious Career of Pioneering Gay Adventist Pastor Leif Lind - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/views/interviews/the-quiet-witness-and-prodigious-career-of-pioneering-gay-adventist-pastor-leif-lind>

I ever had. She made learning a joy. As I said, I had a very happy childhood.



Leif Lind as a young boy, dressed in school uniform, on the way to his first day of school in North London.



Baptismal certificate signed by his father.

My senior year of high school wasn't as enjoyable as it was now at a larger Adventist school with 300 to 400 students—and an older, rougher group. Plus, I was in a boarding school, 2,250 kilometers from our new home. But even so, I liked it there.

When did you start to realize that you were “different” from the other children?

That's a question I find difficult to answer. I think, in my case, it was a gradual and distressing awakening to the fact that I was different. I really had few opportunities to “see the big picture,” since nobody talked about it at the time, and certainly not in the mission field where I grew up.

I'm almost certain I knew I was gay before I married my ex-wife, but I probably thought marriage or God would change everything. But then again, I'm not 100 percent sure when I realized it all. It's always easier to look back and see things differently than when you're experiencing them.

Was there any dialogue about sexuality, or was the topic completely suppressed?

EXHIBIT A.1/7: Career of LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale City Church.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (April 8, 2026)

Page 7

The Quiet Witness and Prodigious Career of Pioneering Gay Adventist Pastor Leif Lind - Spectrum Magazine

[https://spectrummagazine.org/views/interviews/the-quiet-witness-and-prodigious-career-of-pioneering-gay-adventist-pastor-le...](https://spectrummagazine.org/views/interviews/the-quiet-witness-and-prodigious-career-of-pioneering-gay-adventist-pastor-leif...)

Basically, it was ignored. Almost no one in “polite society” ever talked about sex. I remember my father blushing when the word “sex” was mentioned during a family lunch one day when I was a teenager. And my father, an alpha male, never blushed at anything!

I’ve often wondered what would have happened if my father had known I was gay. I’m almost certain he wouldn’t have approved, although I don’t believe he would have ostracized me. I’d like to think he would have eventually accepted me as I am. I remember that sometimes, when I was a child, he would warn me not to be a sissy if I wasn’t as tough as he wanted. “Don’t cry,” he would tell me. He had little patience for what he considered weakness in men.

I told my mother when she was over 80 years old. She passed away at 102, and my father at 74. She was quite disturbed by the fact that I was gay, but for her it was a theological dilemma. She made it clear that she still loved me. When she lived in Norway and I in North America, I called her every week, and every time, without fail, at some point in the conversation, she would say, “But I’m so worried about your salvation.” Of course like many Adventists, she was also worried about her own salvation. I got tired of hearing her say that, but I never reprimanded her; I only asked her to trust in God’s love for each of us. I am happy to say that, in the last ten years of her life, she finally made it clear that she longed to see me and my husband Taylor in heaven!



Leif and Taylor celebrate the 90th birthday of Kezia Lind in 1999.

When did you feel the call to pastoral ministry?

EXHIBIT A.1/8: Career of LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale City Church.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (April 8, 2026)

Page 8

The Quiet Witness and Prodigious Career of Pioneering Gay Adventist Pastor Leif Lind - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/views/interviews/the-quiet-witness-and-prodigious-career-of-pioneering-gay-adventist-pastor-leif-lind>

It's something I've always felt called to do. And I think it's important to mention that, although my father was a very dominant figure in my life, he made it very clear on several occasions that I needed to make my own decisions about what to do with my life. He never told me what to do. I respect that.

Was there already, at that time, a conflict between your identity and Adventist doctrine?

This is an important question. I struggled for years with this particular spiritual issue, about how to deal with the scriptures. I knew I couldn't change; I had fasted, prayed, and pleaded with God over the years to change me, and I knew it wasn't going to happen. So, I spent a lot of time trying to find answers in the interpretation of the scriptures. I knew I wasn't a bad person, but I also knew what the scriptures seemed to say about me. And I wanted to be honest with the scriptures, not trying to make them say something just because I wanted them to, but being truly honest in my reading.

In my late teens and early twenties, I became very theologically conservative. I chose to become a strict vegetarian, the only one in my family. After graduating from theological seminary, I joined the ultraconservative branch of the church known as self-supporting work. Imagine living in a kibbutz-like school, following Ellen White's educational principles, with mandatory manual labor, no pay, and strict social, dietary, and dress codes. Although I didn't stay at that self-sustaining school for more than six months, its effects stayed with me and my then-future wife, whom I met there, for many years. This adherence to idealistic thinking was probably, at some unconscious level, part of my attempt to mask who I really was.

Middle East College

in affiliation with

Roma Linda University
California

This certifies that
Middle East College upon the
recommendation of the faculty and
the approval of the Board of Directors
has conferred upon

Leif Trygve Lind

The degree of
Bachelor of Arts
Major Field

Theology ~ English
with all the rights, privileges and distinctions
pertaining thereto.

In witness whereof we have subscribed our names
and affixed the seal of Middle East College.
Given at Beirut, Lebanon this 24th day
of **June** 1973

Carole J. King
President of the College

William H. Lind
Chairman of the Board

David J. Brown
Roma Linda University
Representative

كَلِيَّةُ الشَّرْقِ الْأَوْسَطِ

السَّابِعَةُ إِلَى

جَامِعَةِ رُومَا لِنْدَا

كَلْبُونِيَا

إِسْتَشْنَا إِلَى الْحَقِّ الْمُعْطَى لِكَلِيَّةِ الشَّرْقِ الْأَوْسَطِ
مِنْ مَجْلَسِ أُمْتَانَا وَنِيَّاسَةٍ عَلَى الْقَوْمِيَّةِ الْمَرْفُوعَةِ
مِنْ مَجْلَسِ أُمْتَانَا مَحْتَضَةً كَلْبُونِيَا

لَيْفُ تَرْكِي لِنْدَا

دَرَجَةِ

بَكْلَوْرُوسْ فِي الْأَرْابِ
فَتَحٍ

اللاهوت ~ اللغة والأدب الانكليزية
مَنْ مَابِلَانِي هَذِهِ الدَّرَجَةِ مِنْ شَرَفٍ وَحَقَّقِي
وَأَمْتِيَّاتٍ. وَأَقْلَرُكَ بِذَلِكَ فَدَخَلْتَ هَذِهِ الشَّهَادَةَ
بِحَقِّ كَلِيَّةِ الشَّرْقِ الْأَوْسَطِ وَوُقِعَتْ بِتَوْفِيقِ
الْمُسَوَّلِينَ.

بَيْرُوتَ، لُبْنَانُ، فِي الْيَوْمِ الرَّابِعِ وَالْعِشْرِينَ
مِنْ شَهْرِ حَزْرَانِ سَنَةِ أَلْفٍ وَتِسْعِ مِائَةٍ
وَتَلَاثٍ وَسَبْعِينَ



EXHIBIT A.1/9: Career of LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale City Church.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (April 8, 2026)

Page 9

The Quiet Witness and Prodigious Career of Pioneering Gay Adventist Pastor Leif Lind - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/views/interviews/the-quiet-witness-and-prodigious-career-of-pioneering-gay-adventist-pastor-le...>

Cum Laude in English

Lind's Middle East College diploma, marked June 24, 1973, in affiliation with Loma Linda University. Double majoring in Theology and English.

Ultimately—and this took many years, even after I came out as gay in 1996—I concluded that if I had been simplistic in my reading of Scripture on the gay issue, perhaps I was also being simplistic in several other areas of biblical interpretation. How should I understand the God of the Old Testament? How should I interpret some of the “strange stories” in Scripture, such as Jephthah’s daughter being killed, the indiscriminate massacre of Israel’s neighboring tribes, Uzzah being struck dead for trying to protect God’s ark of the covenant, the peculiar marriage customs in Scripture, among others. And how does this affect our own understanding of some doctrines and teachings of the church today? Aren’t we influenced, in our understanding of some of our teachings, by our own cultural origins? Haven’t God’s people done this throughout history? Is it really possible to dissociate our minds from our cultural and religious origins? What does God expect of us today? Do we have the right to judge others for not understanding spiritual matters in the same way we do?

What was the admission process like and what was your experience at the seminary like? Was there a welcoming space?

I was still very naive, even at the seminary level. In fact, I didn’t personally meet any gay people until years later. That was my naiveté and conservatism! I met some gay students at Andrews University, but I never became close friends with them or came out. I don’t think I would have had the courage to do that.

Andrews University

By virtue of the Authority Granted by the State of Michigan,
United States of America and on Recommendation of the Faculty,

Has Conferred upon

Leif Trygve Lind

who has satisfactorily completed the studies prescribed

The Degree of
Master of Arts

with all the Rights, Privileges and Honors

Thereunto Appertaining

Given at Berrien Springs, Michigan, this sixth day of June, 1976

EXHIBIT A.1/10: Career of LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale City Church.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (April 8, 2026)

Page 10

The Quiet Witness and Prodigious Career of Pioneering Gay Adventist Pastor Leif Lind - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/views/interviews/the-quiet-witness-and-prodigious-career-of-pioneering-gay-adventist-pastor-leif...>



Master of Arts diploma from Andrews University, June 6, 1976

Have you ever thought about giving up your profession because of your sexual orientation?

No, not until I was forced to abandon my calling. In the first few months after declaring my calling to my wife and children, I continued pastoring. One of my sisters was shocked and told me I was being dishonest by continuing to pastor, but I told her no, nothing had changed about who I was. Of course, as soon as the conference found out about this, there was an immediate demand for my resignation. And I naturally expected that.

How did your ministry in the Adventist Church begin?

My first year of pastoral service was voluntary as an intern; I received only room and board and a small allowance for personal expenses. Afterwards, I began my postgraduate studies, first at Newbold College in England, and completing them at Andrews University Seminary. At that time, Newbold offered only a part-time master's level program.



Bernadette and Leif Lind (right) with two other couples, on the occasion of Leif's 1980 pastoral ordination service in Bergen, Norway.

EXHIBIT A.1/11: Career of LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale City Church.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (April 8, 2026)

Page 11

The Quiet Witness and Prodigious Career of Pioneering Gay Adventist Pastor Leif Lind - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/views/interviews/the-quiet-witness-and-prodigious-career-of-pioneering-gay-adventist-pastor-leif-lind/>

Shortly after graduating from seminary, I married a Canadian woman I met in North America, and began my regular pastoral ministry in Norway. That would be the first of seven years of ministry there; I was ordained as a minister in 1980 in Bergen, Norway. I never lost my ministerial ordination, even after coming out as gay. What I lost after coming out were my ministerial credentials.

While pastoring in Norway and working in the conference as youth and Sabbath school director, my family was called to serve a mission in western Kenya, where I worked as a book editor at our denomination's large publishing house. I also held some pastoral positions in Kenya, visiting members and preaching sermons occasionally.

Have you lived in silence or with some degree of openness with people close to you?

I lived for years in solitary agony—spiritual and mental agony and fear. Fear of damnation, fear that someone would guess who I was. Nobody, absolutely nobody, knew about me until shortly before I came out years later. I tried to live correctly and never gave in to any of my impulses. To be honest, when I finally managed to see myself more objectively and understand who I was, it was probably because I didn't dare act on my desires. I remember, for example, driving past a gay bar in the small town in southern Norway where I was a pastor—about a year after my wedding—and thinking: "What would it be like to be in there?" But I never went in. This event was the first time, in retrospect, that I knew for sure that I was aware of my orientation. I probably knew before, but I can't identify any specific event or memory that indicates it.

At what times did you feel the greatest risk of being exposed or removed?

I was raised as a "good Adventist," and one of my biggest nightmares was being "unmasked" at the end of time simply for being gay, while denying it and losing my salvation for lying about it!

Generally speaking, I think I was lucky in that respect, since I didn't display any typical gay stereotypes in my body language or speech. I don't believe anyone guessed who I was before I came out. Sometimes we gay people learn our heterosexuality lessons very well—unconsciously—from the world we live in!

EXHIBIT A.1/12: Career of LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale City Church.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (April 8, 2026)

Page 12

The Quiet Witness and Prodigious Career of Pioneering Gay Adventist Pastor Leif Lind - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/views/interviews/the-quiet-witness-and-prodigious-career-of-pioneering-gay-adventist-pastor-le...>



Lind, front row, with the leaders of the Africa Herald Publishing House in Kendu Bay, Western Kenya.

How was it dealing with institutional persecution from some sectors of the global administration?

When I came out as gay in 1996, I remained a pastor for a few months until the conference found out. Then I was fired immediately—in less than an hour. The elder of the local church and his wife reported me to the conference, even though nothing had really changed in my life up to that point.

I remember the ministerial director of the conference, who always boasted of being our comrade, not our boss, and who refused to deal with me after hearing about me. Suddenly, he ceased to be a comrade.

The conference itself dismissed me without any compensation after 20 years of impeccable service to the denomination. This violated both church and government regulations. I appealed, and they then decided to pay me six weeks' compensation—again, much less than required by the regulations.

I completed my training as an English as a Second Language instructor at the University of Cambridge in Vancouver, Canada. However, after teaching for a few months, I decided to move to the US, where I had recently met my future husband, Taylor Ruhl, through the Seventh-day Adventist Kinship Kampmeeting.

This would be the beginning of many more stories like this one. We spent years together. While liv-

EXHIBIT A.1/13: Career of LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale City Church.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (April 8, 2026)

Page 13

The Quiet Witness and Prodigious Career of Pioneering Gay Adventist Pastor Leif Lind - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/views/interviews/the-quiet-witness-and-prodigious-career-of-pioneering-gay-adventist-pastor-le...>

ing in the Washington, DC area, we were accepted as members of the Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church, although we also faced some opposition from the church there.

It was in 2004 that I received a calling to serve as associate pastor at Glendale City Church in California. This was the beginning of an incredible 20-year period in which I was once again able to fulfill my calling as a minister alongside a welcoming congregation and a dedicated pastoral team.

Of course, even in California, there were challenges, especially at the beginning.



Glendale City Church pastoral staff in 2012. From Left: Arthur "Rudy" Torres, Todd Leonard, Cherise Gardner, and Leif Lind.

Could you tell us how the local administration enabled you to remain in your position until retirement?

For many years, the Southern California Conference allowed Glendale City Church to maintain its mission of providing a safe haven for the LGBTQ+ community, as long as Glendale City Church didn't overstep its bounds! The question has always been: What does that really mean?

I was called into the conference office early in my service in Glendale, and the president asked me point blank: "Are you an activist?" I think if I had answered yes, they would have asked me to step aside. As I've mentioned elsewhere, I am, by nature, a diplomat, for better or for worse. If I were a "radical" type of person, I would never have survived 20 years in this congregation.

EXHIBIT A.1/14: Career of LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale City Church.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (April 8, 2026)

Page 14

The Quiet Witness and Prodigious Career of Pioneering Gay Adventist Pastor Leif Lind - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/views/interviews/the-quiet-witness-and-prodigious-career-of-pioneering-gay-adventist-pastor-leif-lind/>

When I arrived at the church, I was very cautious about what I said and did, even with the congregation. I believe I am quite perceptive in reading how people see me, and I estimate that, although everyone was friendly towards me, probably only 90 to 95 percent of the congregation supported me on the gay issue. There were always those who perhaps liked me but disagreed theologically with who I was. And I know that the senior pastor at the time was very apprehensive about my presence and initially did not allow me to preach. However, he was diagnosed with brain cancer at that time—glioblastoma—and, in about a year, passed away. The other assistant pastor had recently been dismissed, and I was the only one left on the team. So, for about six months, until the conference found a new pastor, I was the only pastor of the church, whether the conference admitted it or not. And they didn't admit it in those words; they simply called me the "church administrator," which was also partially true, of course. I was taking care of everything at the church at that time.

Over the years, I developed a closer relationship even with some of those who had been the most reluctant members. It's a good feeling to know you have the support of practically everyone. This shows that often, simply knowing a gay person already contributes a lot to breaking down prejudices.

To be fair to the conference, they regularly have to respond to criticism from both local members and other congregations, as well as pressure from higher denominational bodies, such as the General Conference, for example. Some members of conservative neighboring churches used to pass by our church from time to time and, if they saw my name advertised on the church marquee, they would complain about me to the conference.

There was one particularly notorious church member; she was obsessed with all things sexual. She terrorized many people in the congregation—both heterosexual and homosexual—with what she considered moral matters, often entirely imaginary. She would disguise herself with a huge hat and hide in a corner of the church lobby, where she would approach and interrogate anyone who, in her opinion, was not living according to God's principles. She harassed everyone, even the pastors, with moral suspicions she had invented. The situation became so bad that, after several years of continuous harassment, the church board voted unanimously to ban her from attending church again. She was threatened with a police summons if she did so.

EXHIBIT A.1/15: Career of LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale City Church.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (April 8, 2026)

Page 15

The Quiet Witness and Prodigious Career of Pioneering Gay Adventist Pastor Leif Lind - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/views/interviews/the-quiet-witness-and-prodigious-career-of-pioneering-gay-adventist-pastor-le...>



The Glendale City Church administrative team in 2015. Front, from left: Leif Lind, Anthony Paschal and Arlene Chow, Children's Ministries leader Anji Arm. Back: Victoria Lucero, Todd Leonard, Rudy Torres.

I've never heard of any other Adventist member being threatened in this way, but she was particularly difficult and probably had mental health issues, despite being educated as a doctor. After being banned, she became a member first of one Adventist congregation and then another nearby, only to be banned by them as well. She still writes quite frequently on a far-right Adventist website.

Years later, the General Conference leadership also pressured the local conference, specifically naming me as someone who should never be a pastor. The conference refused to cooperate with the General Conference, but a few years later was finally forced to relent and, apologizing to me, requested my resignation. By this time, the conference was quite supportive of the Glendale Church, but its hands were tied. However, the Glendale Church once again came to my aid and created a payroll company whose sole purpose was to continue paying my salary.

Thus, despite opposition from various church entities and individuals, I was able to complete over 20 years of pastoral service at Glendale City Church, retiring in February, 2025. I had the privilege of serving under the leadership of five senior pastors during that time, including two years when I was the only pastor on the team. For that, I am very grateful.

Did you have allies within the church structure itself?

No, I didn't have allies before I came out. But how could I have had any, if I didn't dare talk about it with anyone? A pastor finds himself in a very difficult situation: He can't talk about it with the leadership, with other pastors, or with church members without being fired. So, no, I didn't have allies until I was willing to come out. After I did, I found that some church members were very sup-

EXHIBIT A.1/16: Career of LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale City Church.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (April 8, 2026)

Page 16

The Quiet Witness and Prodigious Career of Pioneering Gay Adventist Pastor Leif Lind - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/views/interviews/the-quiet-witness-and-prodigious-career-of-pioneering-gay-adventist-pastor-leif-lind/>

portive, while some leaders were insensitive and cruel. However, even some of those who supported me disapproved of my decision to come out and thought I was making a morally wrong decision. But they continued to love me, despite everything.

How did you meet your husband, Taylor Ruhl?

We met at Kampmeeting in 1997. We were both Adventist, married, had children, and were musicians. Even that week, we knew it would be a special relationship.

You and he have been married more than once due to changes in US law. What was that process like?

Well, that's interesting. We have three [significant] dates, all of them July 23rd. The first, July 23rd, 1997, was when we realized we were interested in each other. It was during our first week at camp, a few days after we met. That was the beginning of our relationship; we moved in together about five months later. The second date was July 23rd, 2000, when we had our civil union in Vermont, just three weeks after the state became the first to legalize civil unions. Civil unions would retroactively be considered equivalent to marriage in the US in 2000. And our third date was a de facto wedding, on July 23rd, 2008, when, for a few months, marriage was legal in California. That legality was later revoked by California Proposition 8, but finally reinstated as legal marriage and then codified in US federal law in 2022.



Taylor Ruhl and Leif Lind's 2008 wedding ceremony at the United Church of Christ, officiated by Adventist Pastor Rudy Torres (center).



After the 2008 wedding ceremony. From left: Liesl and Mike, Taylor and Leif, Sonja, Svend and Laurénie.

What did it mean to you to be able to celebrate this union both legally and religiously?

It was extremely meaningful for us to be considered a genuinely married couple. Obviously, for financial reasons, it was definitely advantageous, including tax, medical, and retirement benefits. It also lent credibility to our position, both in society at large and within our family and church.

How was it introducing your partner to your religious community and ministry colleagues?

EXHIBIT A.1/17: Career of LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale City Church.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (April 8, 2026)

Page 17

The Quiet Witness and Prodigious Career of Pioneering Gay Adventist Pastor Leif Lind - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/views/interviews/the-quiet-witness-and-prodigious-career-of-pioneering-gay-adventist-pastor-leif-lind/>

Well, thankfully our churches were very supportive of our relationship, so it was never a problem for us. At least it wasn't a problem with the churches we ended up attending. At Sligo Church we had some opposition from a few members; at Glendale City Church, however, we were fully accepted.

You both have children. What was the process of family acceptance like?

Yes, we both have children from our first marriages. I have two children: A daughter and a son. Taylor has a daughter.

Obviously, when we came out, it was a huge shock to the family. My children have always been very supportive of me and my husband.

How did your family of origin react to your sexuality and your marriage?

For many years, it wasn't a very good relationship. There was criticism and judgment from my two sisters, and even today there is harsh criticism from several of my nieces. My sisters resolved the issue and now support me. On Taylor's side, thankfully, his brother and family have always been very understanding.

Our parents accepted us in the best way possible. Some issues took years to be fully resolved, but it was clear that they loved us, even if they didn't always understand us or agree with us.



EXHIBIT A.1/18: Career of LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale City Church.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (April 8, 2026)

Page 18

The Quiet Witness and Prodigious Career of Pioneering Gay Adventist Pastor Leif Lind - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/views/interviews/the-quiet-witness-and-prodigious-career-of-pioneering-gay-adventist-pastor-leif-lind>

Family Photo in front of Glendale City Church, 2017. From Left: Svend and Laurénie, Taylor and Leif, Sonja and Hossein, Bernadette her sister Yvette.

And in the church, how did the members deal with your identity? Was there support, silence, resistance?

The typical response from many church members, in general, was to avoid the subject—at least, as far as we are concerned. The easiest answer is usually to pretend there's no problem at all. Of course, it's not easy to know what's said behind closed doors. Fortunately, we both attend a church where we are fully accepted, so this is no longer a problem for us.

What was community life like in your local church?

Most of the community activities I did with the church took place on weekends. This was true for most church members in Glendale, as the congregation is geographically very dispersed. For over 20 years, I drove from my home in Redlands to the church in Glendale—a 225-kilometer (140-mile) round trip. It wasn't pleasant, mainly because of Los Angeles' notorious traffic jams.

Initially I made the trip about three times a week. After COVID-19 arrived in 2020, I generally went only once a week, managing to do some of the work online or by phone. During all those 20 years, I think I hardly missed any Saturday morning services except for two weeks a year during the holidays. I taught a non-traditional Sabbath school class every week, in addition to other Saturday morning duties. I was always responsible for the Saturday morning schedule, such as selecting the hymns, sometimes preaching a sermon, always preparing the bulletin, asking someone to pray, and reading the scriptures.

Other community services offered by the church occasionally included interfaith services, community assistance projects such as helping people find jobs, food, midweek musical concerts, among others.

As I said, because many members took 30 to 60 minutes to get to church, most activities took place on Saturday mornings and afternoons. Only local members could participate in meaningful activities during the week.

The reason so many members were willing to travel long distances to attend this particular congregation, despite there being many other Adventist churches in most localities here, is the unique combination that makes up the congregation—theologically liberal/progressive, but liturgically traditional, with pipe organ, choir, and solo music every week. In fact, I believe the music in Glendale is probably of a higher standard than almost any other Adventist church.

And the members were willing to drive all the way there for that. You can find liberal theology with praise music elsewhere; or you can find conservative theology with traditional music, but you

EXHIBIT A.1/19: Career of LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale City Church.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (April 8, 2026)

Page 19

The Quiet Witness and Prodigious Career of Pioneering Gay Adventist Pastor Leif Lind - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/views/interviews/the-quiet-witness-and-prodigious-career-of-pioneering-gay-adventist-pastor-le...>

rarely find liberal theology and traditional music.

During your ministry, have you performed same-sex marriages or symbolic ceremonies?

Yes, I performed at least one same-sex marriage at Glendale City Church itself. The other pastors gave me permission, but they didn't dare, for conference-related reasons, to perform it themselves. And, of course, I performed several heterosexual and same-sex marriages at other locations during my time at Glendale City Church.

How did you deal with the fear of being fired?

Yes, there was real fear, both before I came out and after I was hired as a pastor in Glendale. There's not much to do besides continue living authentically and praying for God's support, no matter what happens. And, of course, God doesn't guarantee anything beyond love, support, and guidance. God doesn't necessarily promise miracles.

On a purely physical and emotional level, after my first job loss, as well as during other stressful times in life, I've found that trying to stay physically active—running or walking regularly—is a great help in coping with stress. Releasing endorphins really helps!



Southern California Adventists and past and present Glendale City Church members celebrate the church's 110th anniversary.

Have you ever been invited to events with global or regional leaders? What were those meetings like?

As I mentioned before, initially I didn't have good conversations with the leaders of the local congregations. Over time, this improved. In 2006, I was invited to speak at the Adventist Conference on Christianity and Homosexuality in California, where I shared my life story, which was later published in *SPECTRUM* magazine, as well as in the book *Christianity and Homosexuality: Some Seventh-day Adventist Perspectives*, also published in Portuguese.

In 2014, the president of the local conference asked me to share my life story with the organizing

EXHIBIT A.1/20: Career of LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale City Church.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (April 8, 2026)

Page 20

The Quiet Witness and Prodigious Career of Pioneering Gay Adventist Pastor Leif Lind - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/views/interviews/the-quiet-witness-and-prodigious-career-of-pioneering-gay-adventist-pastor-leif-lind>

committee and answer any questions they might have during a two-hour Q&A session. I had the freedom to approach the topic in whatever way I chose. This represented a major shift from the conference's previous stance!

In 2016, I was invited by the then senior pastor of Glendale to share **my life story** with the congregation on Saturday morning.

In 2019, I was invited to share my life story and address the topic of homosexuality with students in the Andrews University doctoral program in Ministry at Loma Linda University.

Interestingly, the local conference rarely invited me to participate in ministry meetings. It was almost as though sometimes they saw me as a colleague on the ministry team, and other times they didn't. I never understood why.

Have you seen prejudice in the Adventist Church as more subtle or more direct?

I think that often it's something more subtle. It's almost as if the leaders don't want to be seen as intolerant; but at the same time, they try to "maintain standards" for the large segment of the world church that is extremely conservative. It's an unsustainable situation, and I believe that sooner or later the church will have to decide whether the polarization is too great or whether a schism needs to happen. In reality, the schism is practically already underway.

What was the retirement process like? What emotions surfaced?

The process itself was relatively easy, except for the fact that my retirement date was pushed back several times over the past year or two. Initially, I expected to retire around age 70, but the senior pastor of Glendale, as well as the other associate pastor, were facing family challenges that made their tenures somewhat uncertain. Then, in August 2023, both pastors resigned suddenly and unexpectedly, within a few weeks of each other, leaving a void in the church. I didn't feel comfortable resigning as well and leaving the congregation without any support, so I agreed to continue working there until a suitable replacement for the senior pastor was found. It took 12 months to find the current senior pastor. When he arrived, he asked me to stay for a few more months to help him settle in with the congregation, so I finally retired in February 2025.

My feelings about retirement were mixed. While I love the congregation and the challenge of leading it, I was also tired of the 225-kilometer commute and longed for retirement. When my last Saturday finally arrived, I felt like crying. The Saturday morning service itself, prepared entirely by the new senior pastor, was very meaningful and consisted almost entirely of music and tributes from members and leaders of the Conference for my years of service. I was prepared to preach, but since the service was already very long—an hour and 45 minutes—I had to cut my sermon in half, which probably wasn't a bad idea.

EXHIBIT A.1/21: Career of LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale City Church.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (April 8, 2026)

Page 21

The Quiet Witness and Prodigious Career of Pioneering Gay Adventist Pastor Leif Lind - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/views/interviews/the-quiet-witness-and-prodigious-career-of-pioneering-gay-adventist-pastor-le...>

We intend to visit the congregation from time to time, but we are careful not to interfere with the new pastor's plans. I don't like it when pastors retire and then try to control the new pastor.

Do you feel you have fulfilled your mission within the church?

Of course, there's always more that could have been done, but overall, I'm satisfied with what I was able to accomplish at Glendale.

If you could start over, would you do anything differently?

I have few regrets in life, whether in my life in general or in the church in Glendale. The only thing is that I should have come out sooner, even knowing that I probably wouldn't have been able to, for various reasons. The culture and understanding of that time didn't make things easy for any of us. I regret the pain I caused my family when I came out.

How do you see the church today, compared to when you started your ministry?

I have mixed feelings. When I look at the denomination as a whole, I feel quite pessimistic; more optimistic when I observe the local leadership. We'll see what the new leadership of the General Conference will do. Generally speaking, I can say that there is a much better understanding of sexuality and gender identity than there was a few years ago. That, at least, is good.

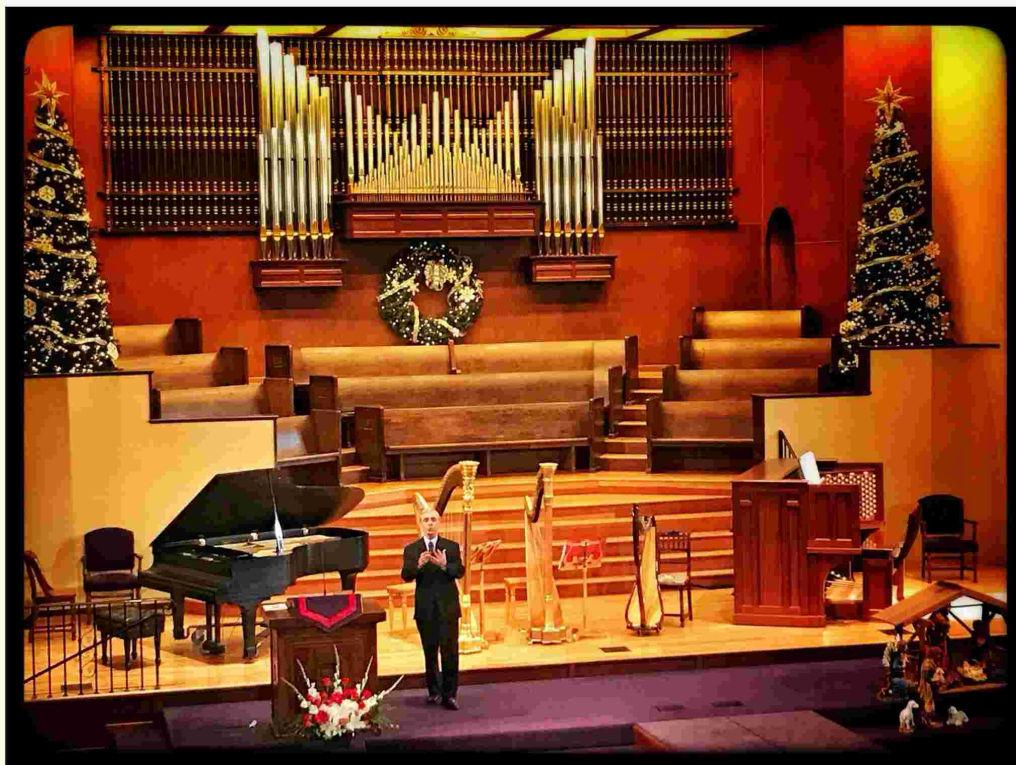


EXHIBIT A.1/22: Career of LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale City Church.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (April 8, 2026)

Page 22

The Quiet Witness and Prodigious Career of Pioneering Gay Adventist Pastor Leif Lind - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/views/interviews/the-quiet-witness-and-prodigious-career-of-pioneering-gay-adventist-pastor-leif-lind/>

Leif Lind preaching at the Glendale City Church, December 2018.

What is your relationship with spirituality today?

Spirituality is as important to me today as it has always been. However, I approach the issue in a very different way. Now, it's not so much about being a member of a church or not—we still are—but rather about how I see God and the big questions of life: What is the meaning of life? How do I imagine God? What do I hope life after death will be like—We have almost no idea! Where does faith fit into this story when I, as a “good” Seventh-day Adventist, don't have all the answers?

Are you still actively involved in ministries, social projects, or community initiatives?

We still attend weekly services, either in person or, more frequently, online. I continue to perform certain ministry duties, such as calling some church members who know me well, or officiating at weddings or funerals for those who know me better. Obviously, I do this carefully, making sure the other pastors know and approve before agreeing to help. I have preached a sermon or two, including a recent one at my Episcopal church, where I am the music minister every Sunday. It's good that the Episcopal church trusts me as an Adventist minister!

I am looking for ways to contribute to the local community through volunteer work. At the moment, I am also quite busy caring for my husband, who faces serious health and mobility challenges.

How do you see the future of the Adventist Church in relation to the LGBTQ+ population?

I'm trying to be cautiously optimistic. A few years ago, under Jan Paulsen's leadership, things were a little better. If any change happens, it will happen first at the grassroots level. I think the issue of women's ordination will also need to be resolved first. In a way, LGBTI+ equality and women's ordination are related issues, depending on how you interpret the scriptures.

Do you believe that a new generation of leaders can promote more significant internal changes?

We hope that the younger generation will be better informed and have a more open mind about this issue.

What reforms or concrete measures should the institution take to be more inclusive?

It would be helpful if leadership were at least willing to listen to us. In the early 2000s, for example, they had shown a willingness to do so; but in recent years there has been little effort to try to understand us, at least from those who hold the highest leadership positions.

What advice would you give to young LGBTQ+ people who feel called to ministry?

EXHIBIT A.1/23: Career of LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale City Church.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (April 8, 2026)

Page 23

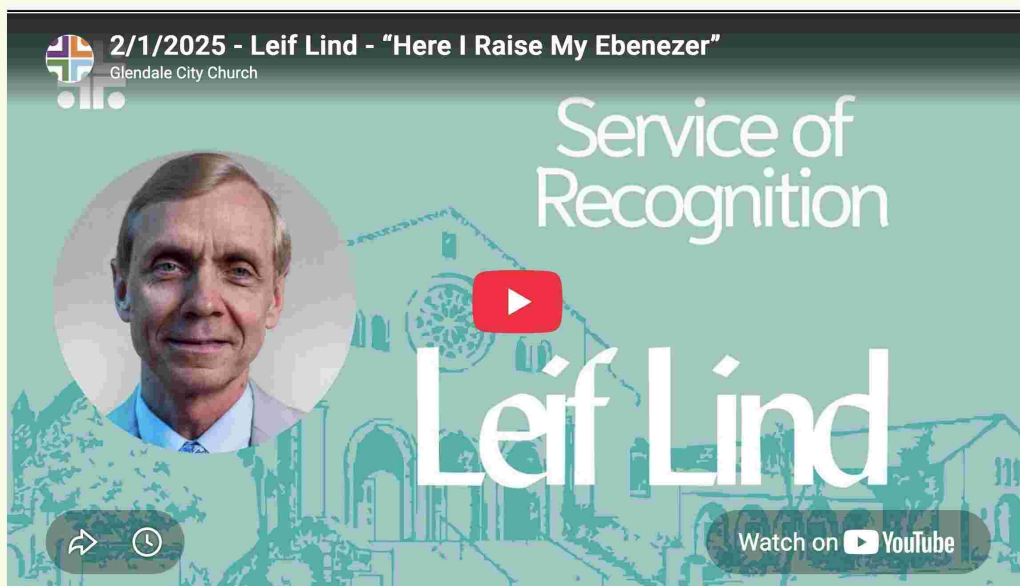
The Quiet Witness and Prodigious Career of Pioneering Gay Adventist Pastor Leif Lind - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/views/interviews/the-quiet-witness-and-prodigious-career-of-pioneering-gay-adventist-pastor-le...>

If you feel God's calling, be aware that you may or may not be able to fulfill it in the church, at least not through traditional channels. Change is always possible, but as with women pastors, many have been trained, though many have not yet been able to fulfill that calling.

What message would you offer religious leaders who still see diversity as a threat?

Get informed. There is a lot of quality material available showing that LGBTQ+ people are, in most respects, the same as "normal" people. Fear of the unknown stems from a lack of information.



How would you like to be remembered in church history?

I think it's fair to say that I feel honored to have been the only openly gay Adventist pastor—living with my spouse—who was able to continue serving my congregation for these 20 years. I look back with personal satisfaction and immense gratitude for having been able to encourage others who are also seeking a closer relationship with God.

What is the charge you would like to give the Adventist faith, the LGBTQ+ community, and the world?

Never give up. Change in the church is always possible. We, LGBTQ+ Adventists, need to remember that by being visible, we can have hope of making a difference. By distancing ourselves from the church, we cannot expect much change. Even when we disagree with the church, whether regarding its teachings or its practices, we are still part of the family of faith.

So, after everything we have talked about, who is Leif Lind?

EXHIBIT A.1/24: Career of LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale City Church.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (April 8, 2026)

Page 24

The Quiet Witness and Prodigious Career of Pioneering Gay Adventist Pastor Leif Lind - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/views/interviews/the-quiet-witness-and-prodigious-career-of-pioneering-gay-adventist-pastor-leif-lind/>

I see myself as someone who takes life's challenges seriously, but with a sense of humor. I often reflect on the question of life and its meaning, and I believe that the command in Micah 6:8 is as true today as it was when it was written: "What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?" I believe in the call to love one another and to help make someone's life a little brighter. If we do this, our lives will not have been in vain.



About the author

Jonathan Monteiro is a Brazilian journalist who graduated from the Federal Rural University of Rio de Janeiro with academic experience at the University of Cape Verde. He is currently pursuing a master's degree in Communication at the State University of Rio de Janeiro. He conducts research in the areas of communication, religion, gender, and sexuality. [More from Jonathan Monteiro.](#)

EXHIBIT A.2/1: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Female Pastor Ordination of Cherise Gardner (April 27, 2013)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 02:18)



EXHIBIT A.2/2: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Female Pastor Ordination of Cherise Gardner (April 27, 2013)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 21:26) / [PUC Photo Archive](#)

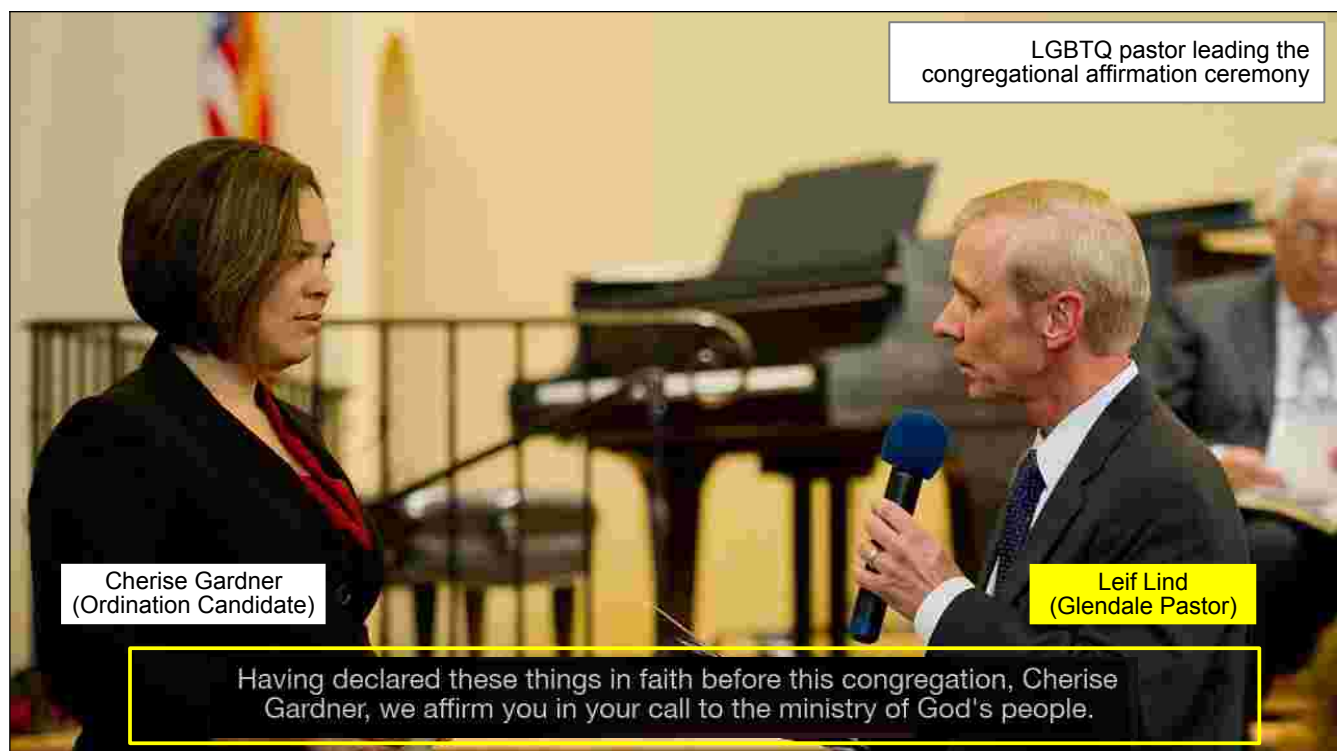


EXHIBIT A.2/3: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Female Pastor Ordination of Cherise Gardner (April 27, 2013)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 10:30) / [PUC Photo Archive](#)



EXHIBIT A.2/4: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Female Pastor Ordination of Cherise Gardner (April 27, 2013)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 33:03) / [PUC Photo Archive](#)



EXHIBIT A.2/5: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Female Pastor Ordination of Cherise Gardner (April 27, 2013)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 1:06:27)

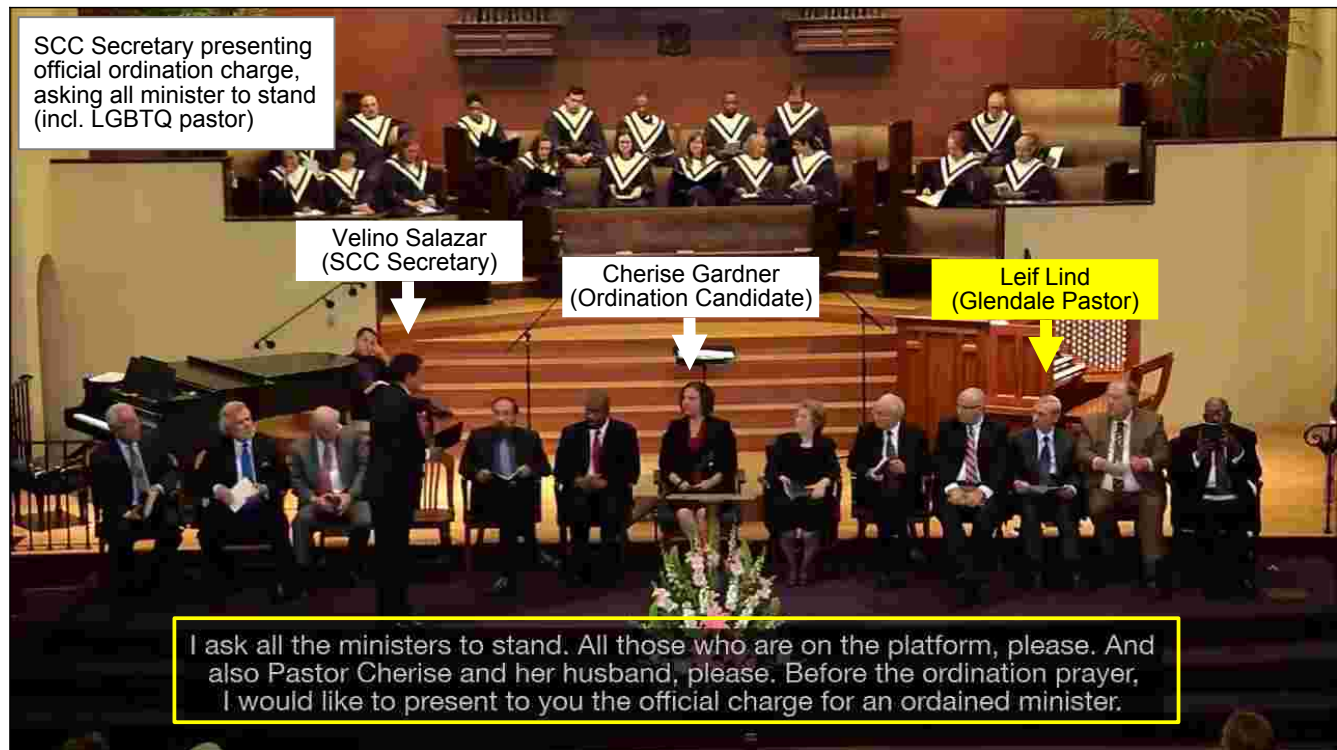


EXHIBIT A.2/6: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Female Pastor Ordination of Cherise Gardner (April 27, 2013)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 1:06:48)

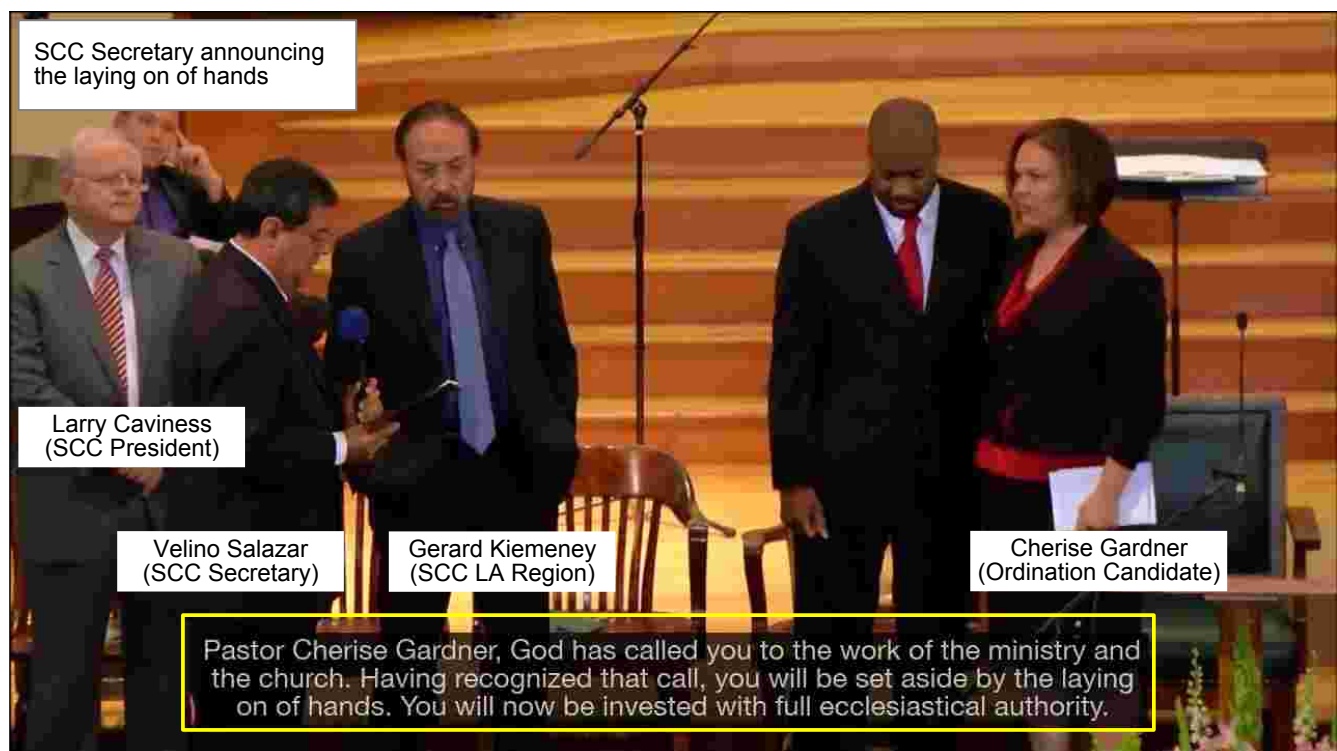


EXHIBIT A.2/7: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Female Pastor Ordination of Cherise Gardner (April 27, 2013)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 1:12:52) / [PUC Photo Archive](#)



EXHIBIT A.2/8: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Female Pastor Ordination of Cherise Gardner (April 27, 2013)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 1:29:13)

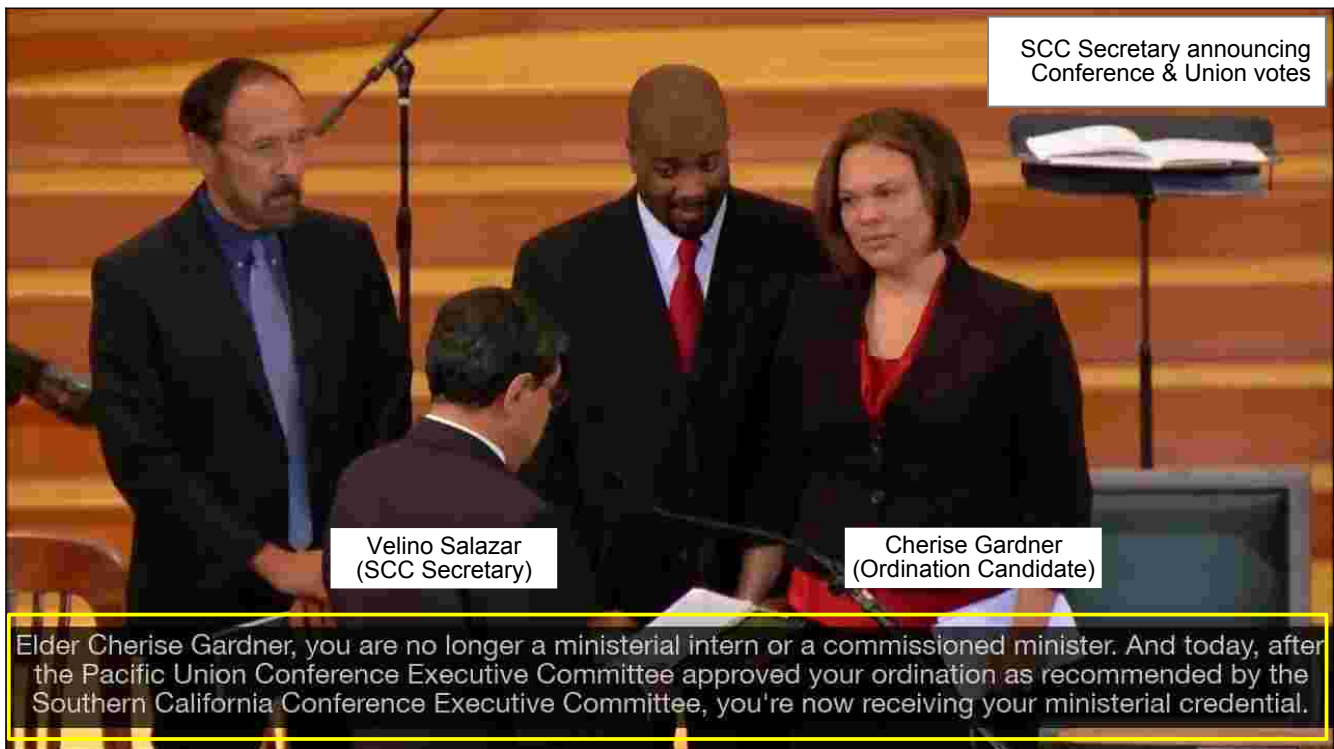


EXHIBIT A.2/9: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Female Pastor Ordination of Cherise Gardner (April 27, 2013)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 1:30:41) / [PUC Photo Archive](#)



SCC Secretary handing over
Certificate of Ordination

EXHIBIT A.3/1: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by SCC President (June 6, 2015)
 Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 27:55)



FULL TRANSCRIPT

Prayer of Blessing with Laying on of Hands on SCC President Velino Salazar

Salazar was elected as conference president about a month before this event.
 He had been executive secretary in the same conference for the 15 prior years (2003-2015).

LEIF LIND

Glendale Pastor

“Dear Lord, We continue this morning to uplift Brother Salazar in prayer to you. We have seen throughout Scripture and throughout history how your spirit has led men and women to become leaders, to become prophets, to become guides within your church. We think all the time from Aaron and Moses up through the Scriptures, yes, even to the time of Martin Luther, yes, even to the time of the leaders of Ellen and James White as they led out in the starting of this denomination.

And we believe that your spirit will continue to be with us and especially with Pastor Salazar as he leads out in this conference. We are reminded from Scripture this morning that we can pray for the spirit of wisdom and revelation to guide Elder Salazar and to guide this church as a whole. Help us, Lord, to realize it is not through our own might and wisdom but it is through your spirit that we can expect truly great things.

And so at this time, Lord, in faith and conviction because you have promised, we claim that you will now be with us and guide us each and guide our leadership within the conference. For we claim this through the name and the power of your Son Jesus Christ. Amen.”

EXHIBIT A.3/2: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by SCC President (June 6, 2015)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 29:56)



FULL TRANSCRIPT

Response to Prayer of Blessing

Salazar got elected as conference president about a month before this event.
He had been executive secretary in the same conference for the 15 prior years (2003-2015).

VELINO SALAZAR

President, Southern California Conference

"Thank you very much. I am, I am overwhelmed by this expression of love, support, understanding, and unity as we move in our mission. And thank you, Pastor Todd, for your invitation, for sharing this pulpit."

EXHIBIT A.4/1: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale 110-Year Anniversary Speech by SCC President (Jan. 23, 2016)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 20:04)

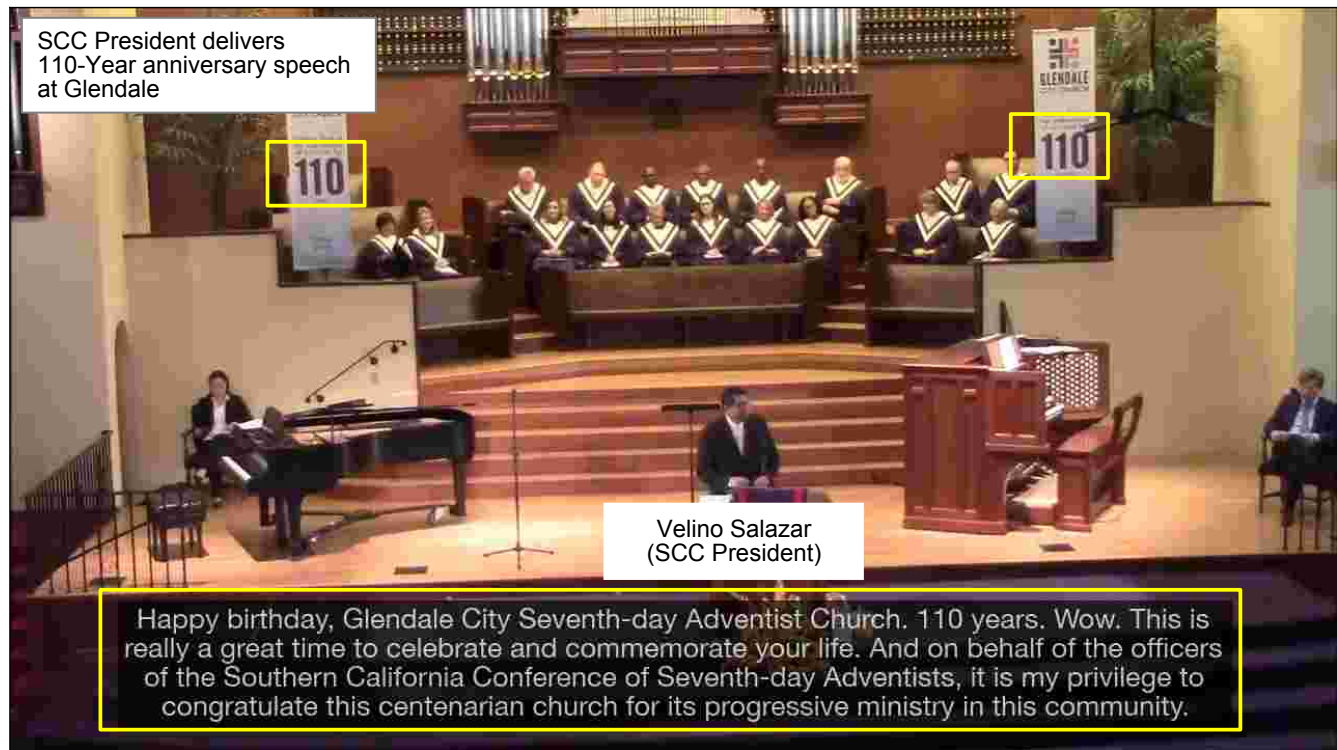


EXHIBIT A.4/2: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale 110-Year Anniversary Speech by SCC President (Jan. 23, 2016)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 27:39) / Leif Lind speaking

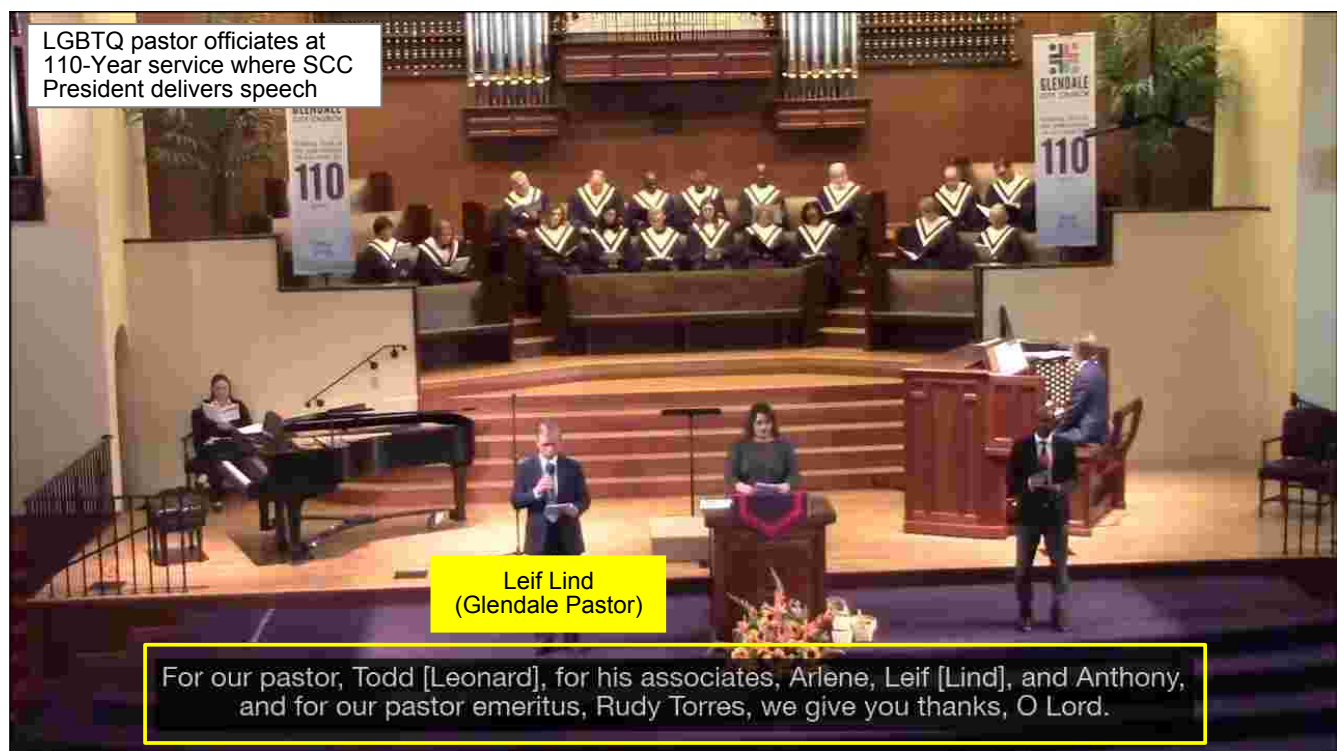


EXHIBIT A.4/3: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale 110-Year Anniversary Speech by SCC President (Jan. 23, 2016)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 1:35:02)

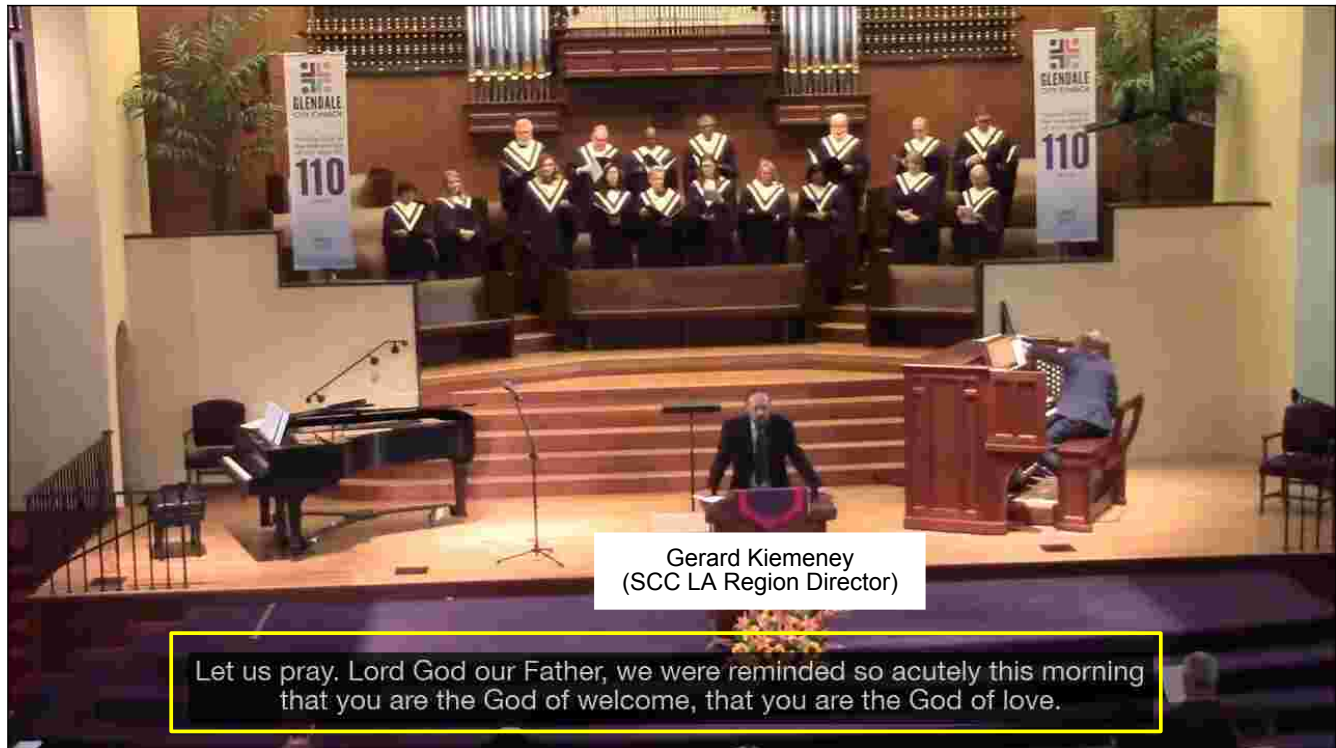


EXHIBIT A.5/1: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by SCC Secretary (October 15, 2016)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 07:31)

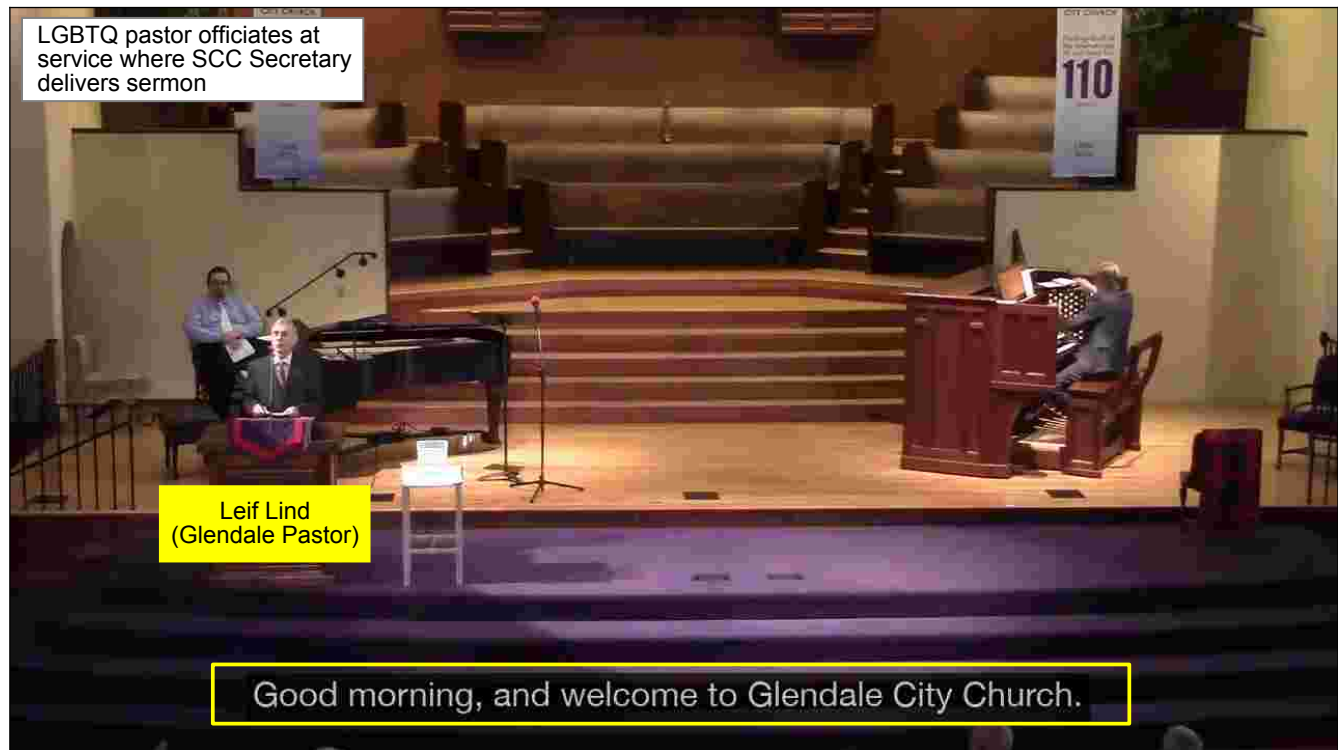


EXHIBIT A.5/2: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by SCC Secretary (October 15, 2016)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 29:32)

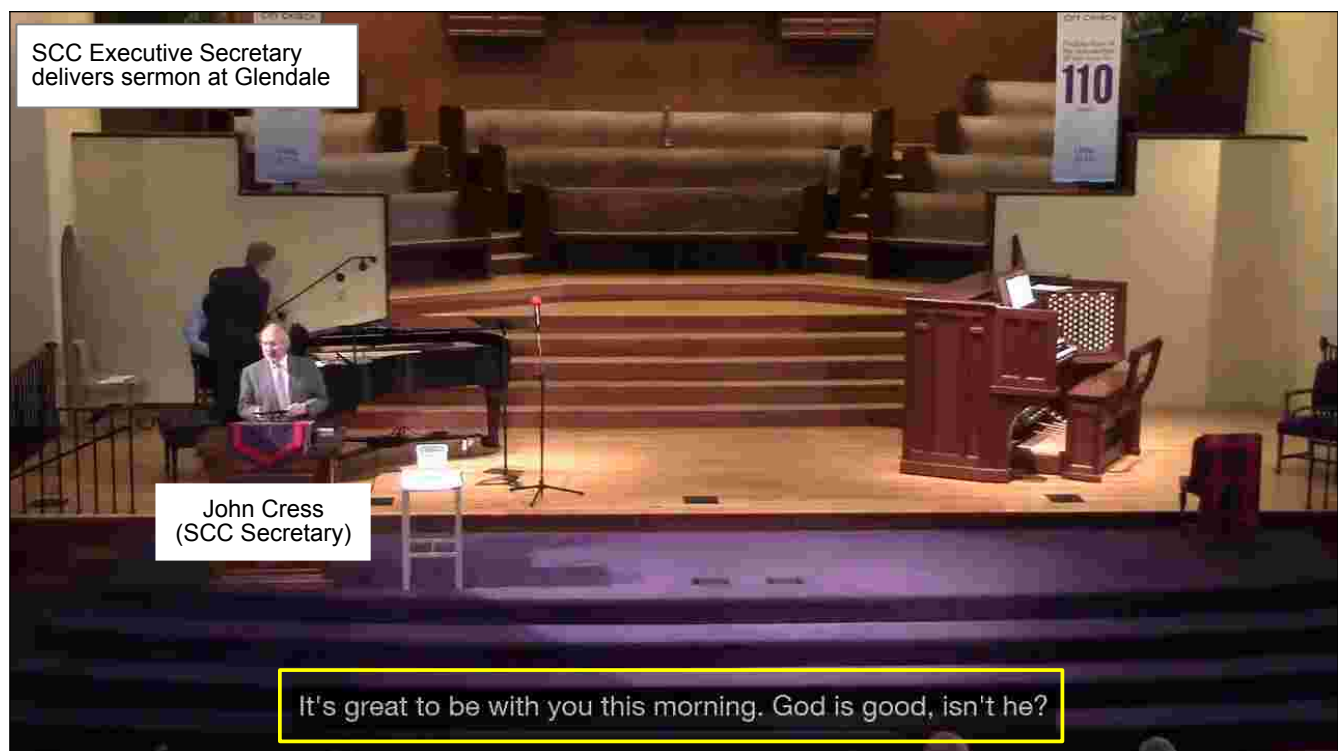


EXHIBIT A.6/1: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by SCC President (August 5, 2017)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 11:01)

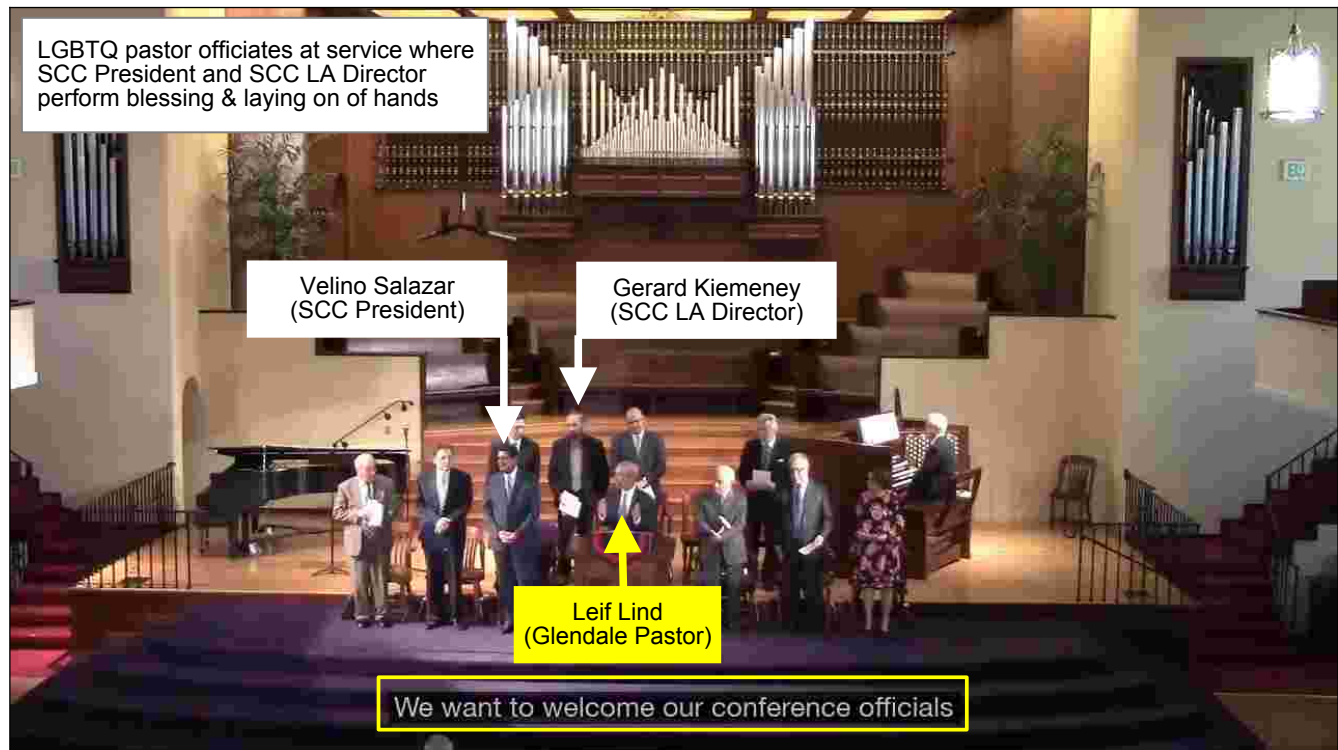


EXHIBIT A.6/2: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by SCC President (August 5, 2017)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 01:49:51)

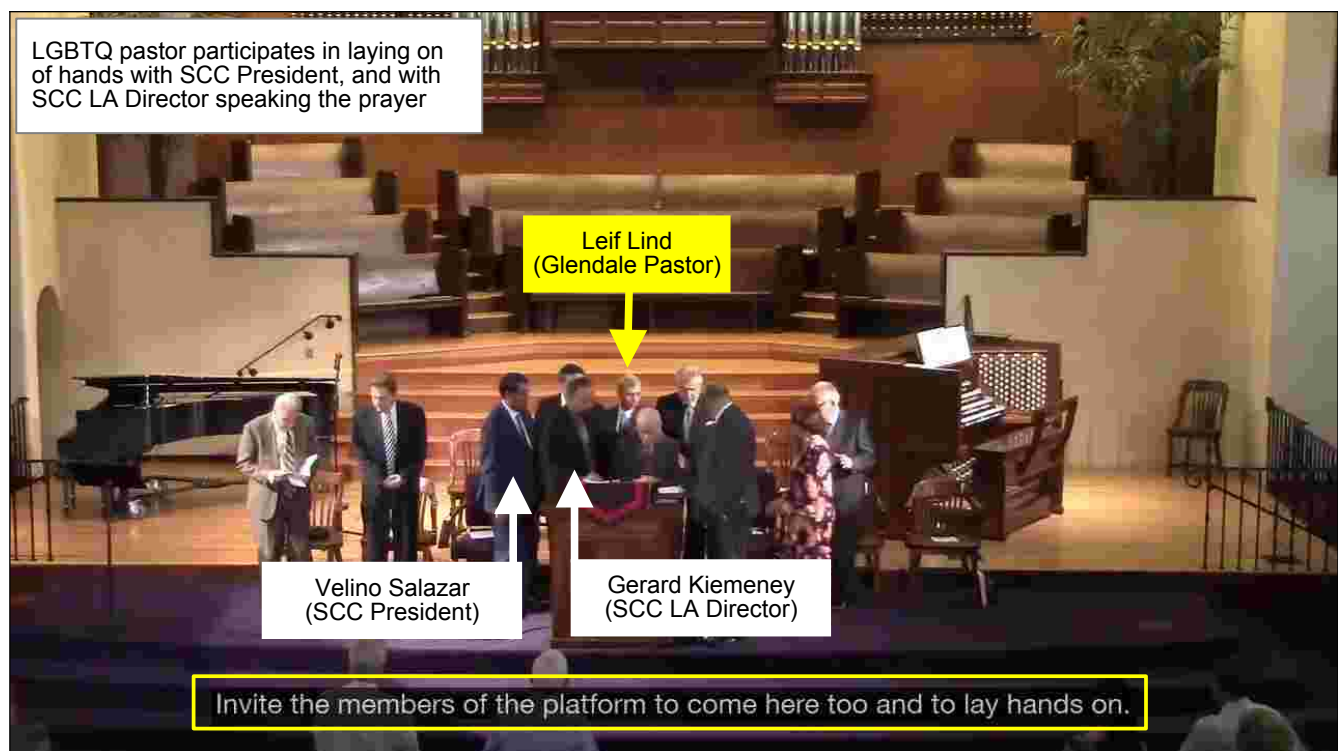


EXHIBIT A.7/1: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by SCC Secretary (May 14, 2022)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 06:43)

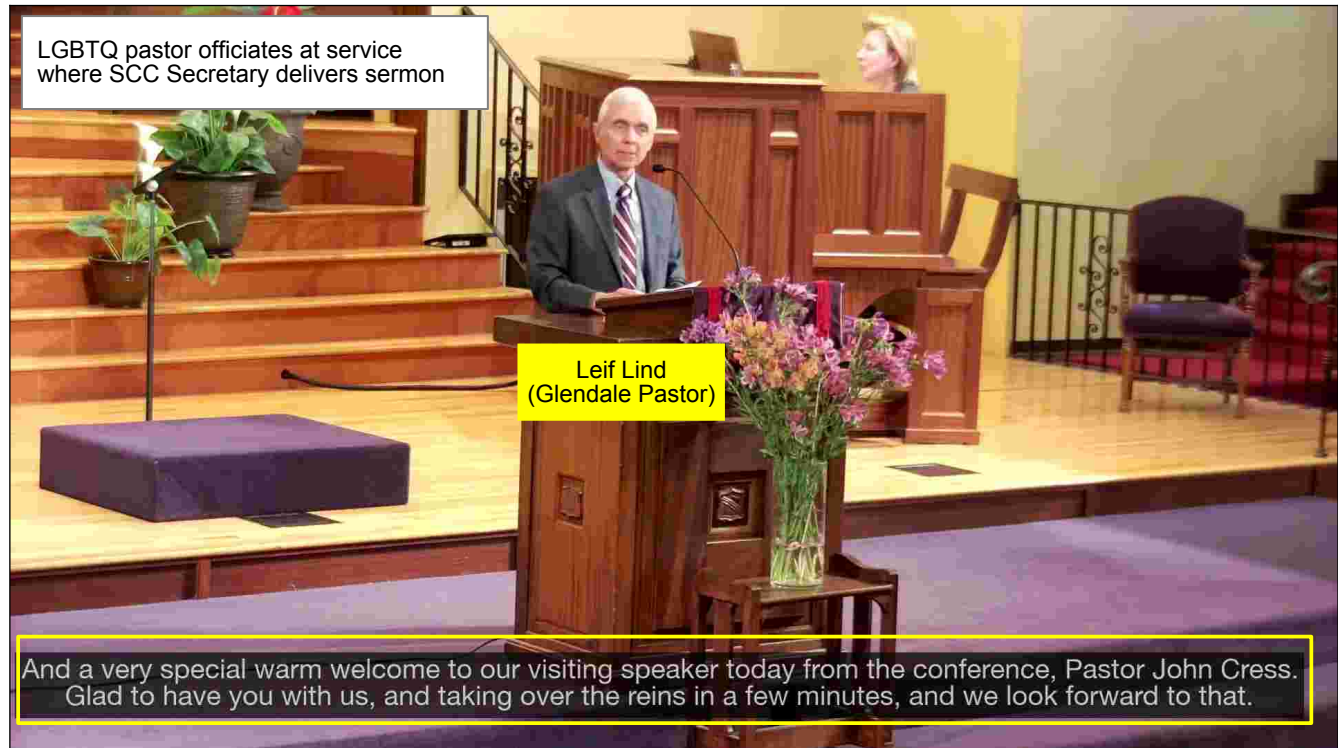


EXHIBIT A.7/2: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by SCC Secretary (May 14, 2022)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 21:41)

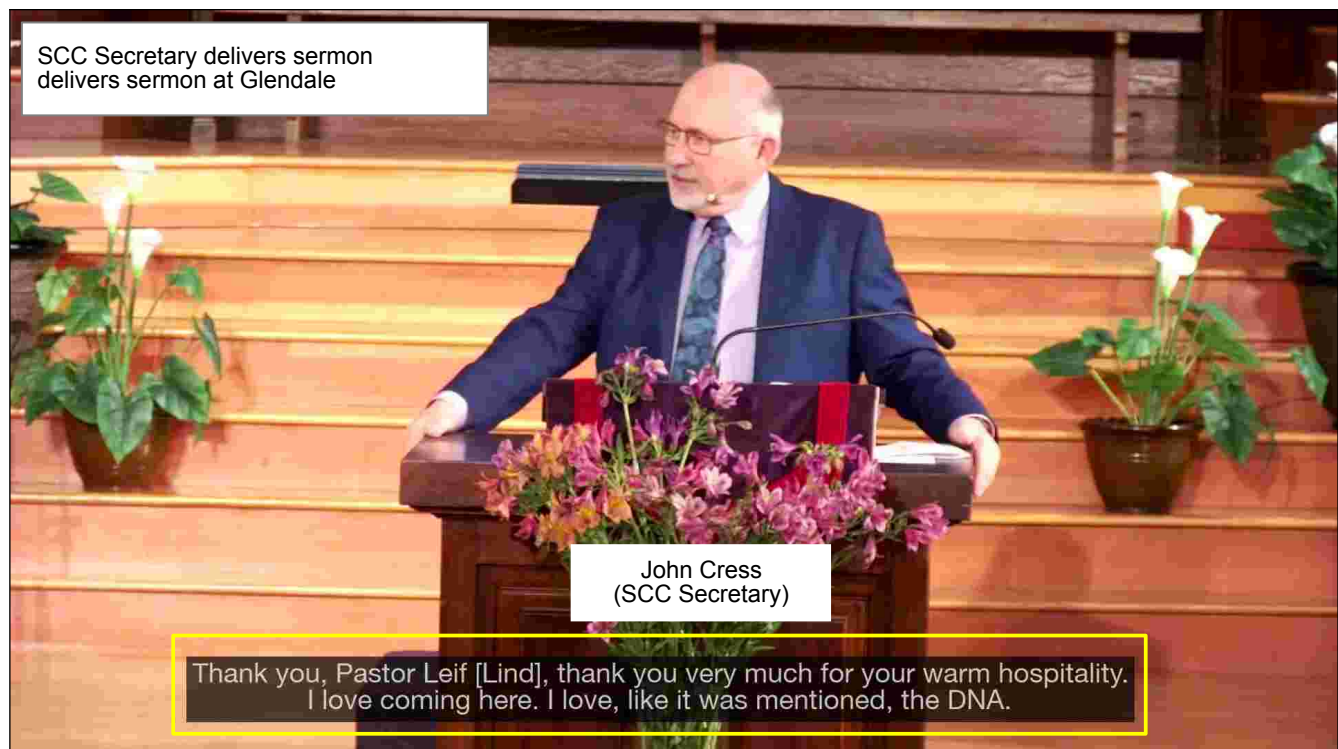


EXHIBIT A.8/1: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by Alicia Johnston (July 16, 2022)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 37:03)



EXHIBIT A.8/2: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by Alicia Johnston (July 16, 2022)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 37:55)



EXHIBIT A.8/3: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by Alicia Johnston (July 16, 2022)

Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 38:19)

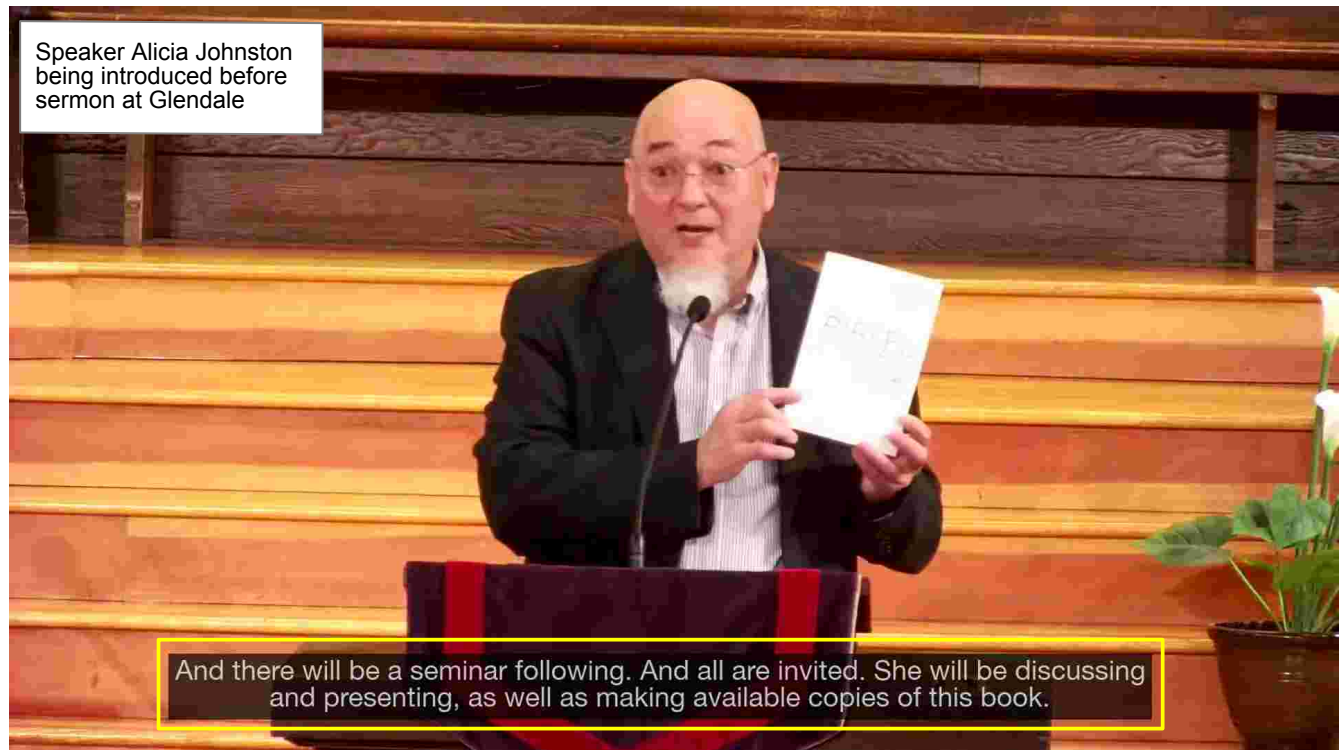


EXHIBIT A.8/4: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by Alicia Johnston (July 16, 2022)

Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 1:08:26)



EXHIBIT A.8/5: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by Alicia Johnston (July 16, 2022)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 1:20:10)



EXHIBIT A.8/6: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by Alicia Johnston (July 16, 2022)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 1:20:10)

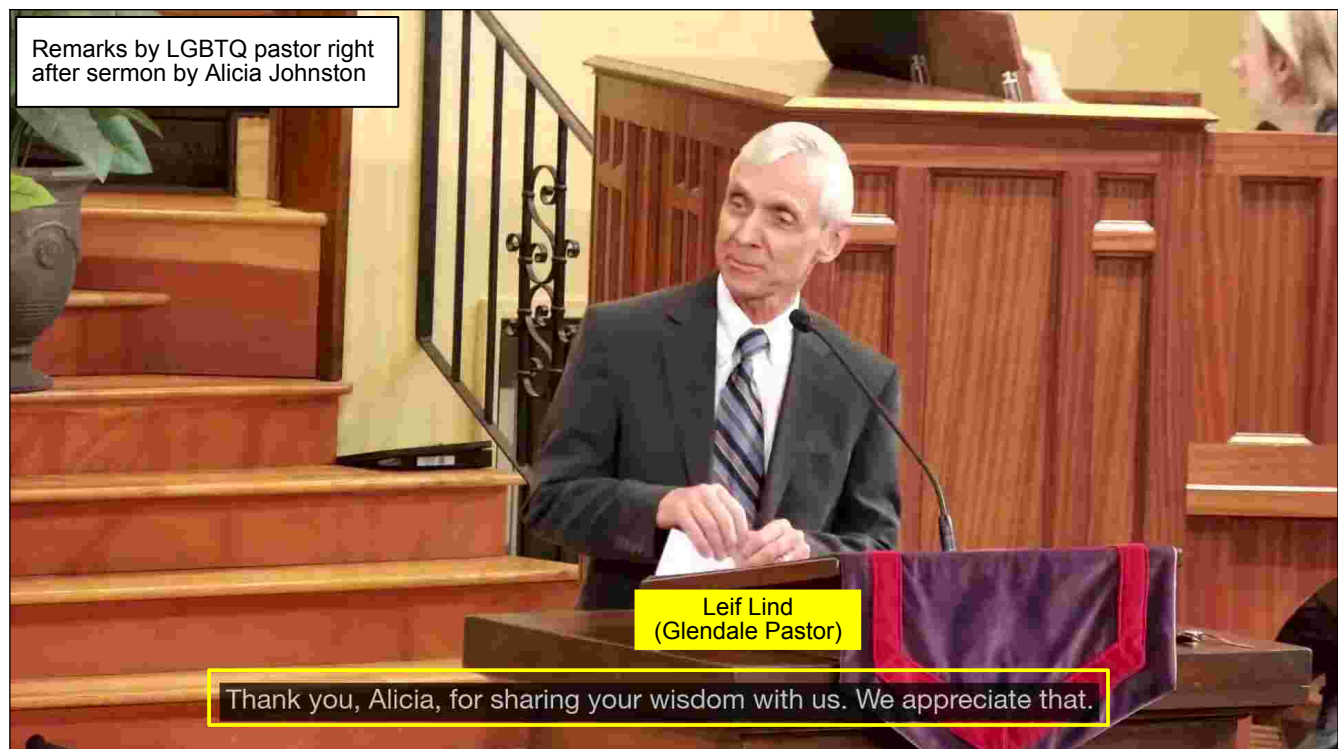


EXHIBIT A.8/7: Alicia Johnston's book on LGBTQ (Published January 2022)
Source: [Alicia Johnston Homepage](#)

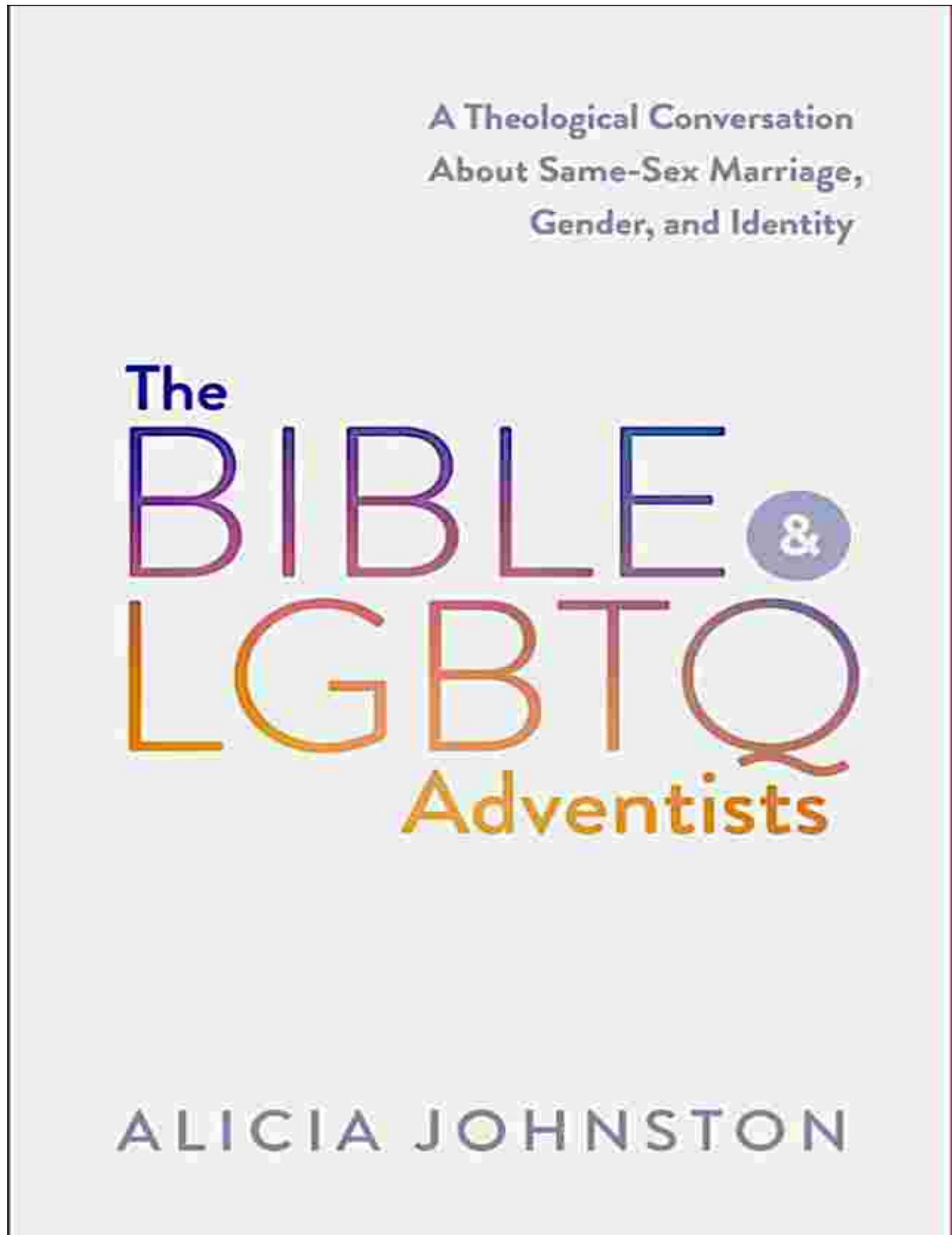


EXHIBIT A.9/1: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Speech by SDA Kinship President Floyd Poenitz (Feb. 4, 2023)
Source: [Glendale City Church Facebook](#) (January 31, 2023)

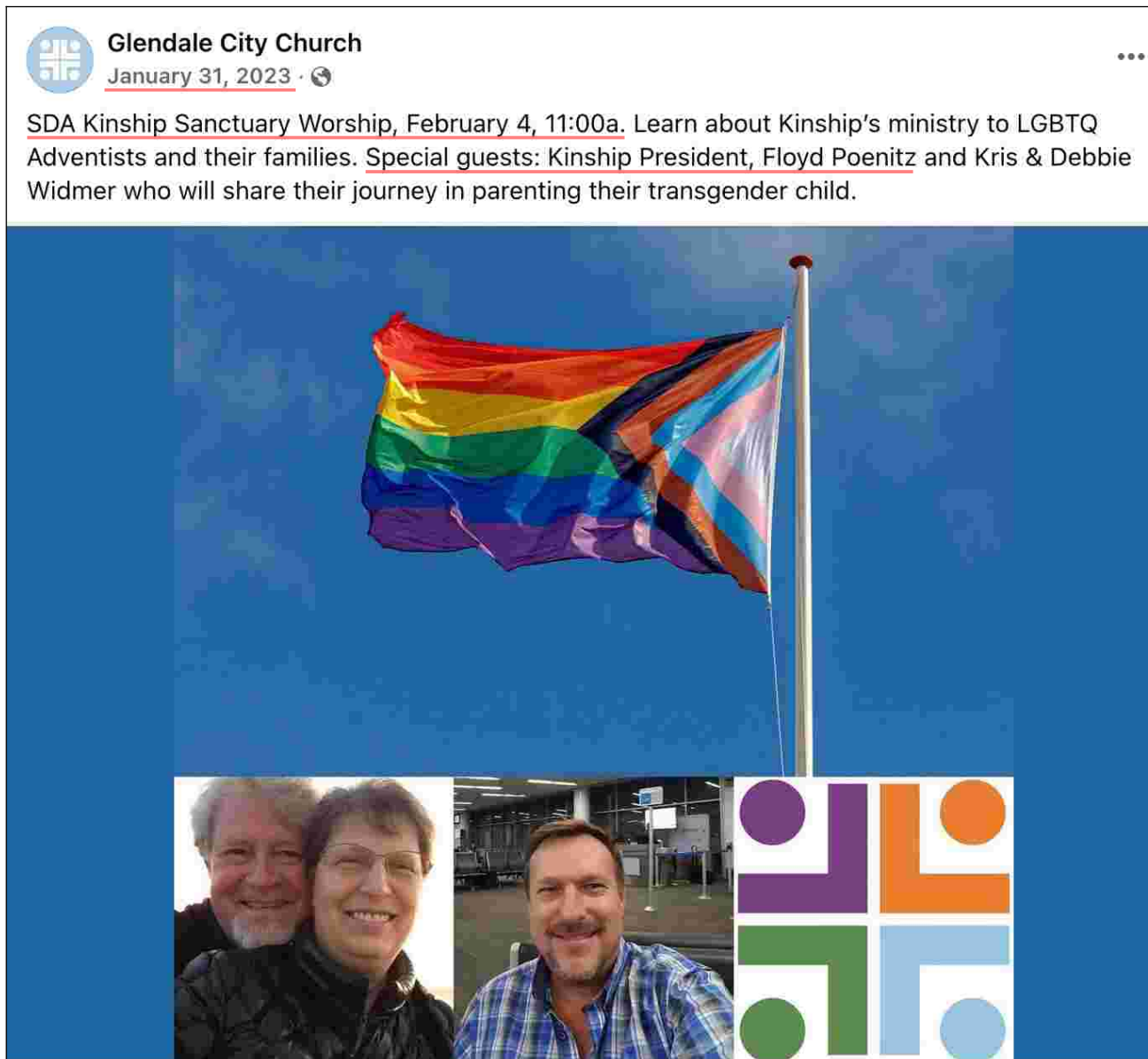


EXHIBIT A.9/2: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Speech by SDA Kinship President Floyd Poenitz (Feb. 4, 2023)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 36:32)

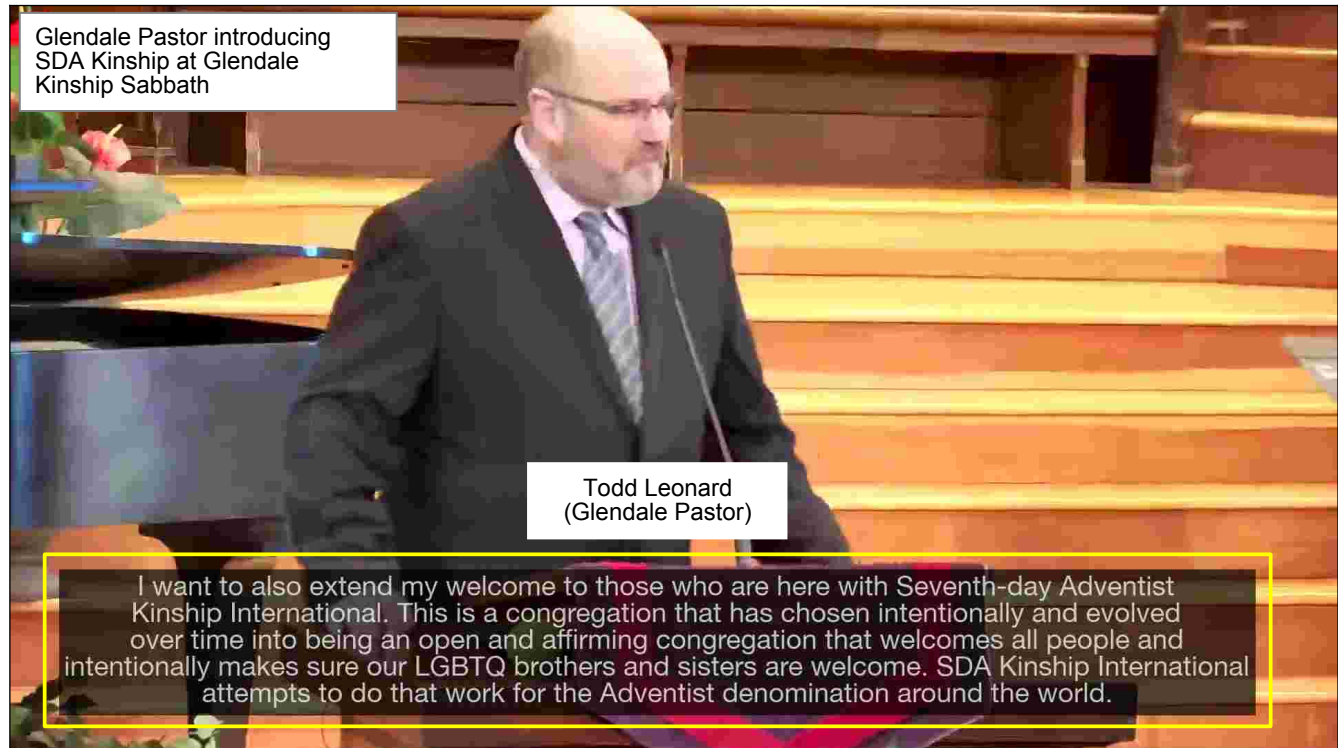


EXHIBIT A.9/3: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Speech by SDA Kinship President Floyd Poenitz (Feb. 4, 2023)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 1:50:30)

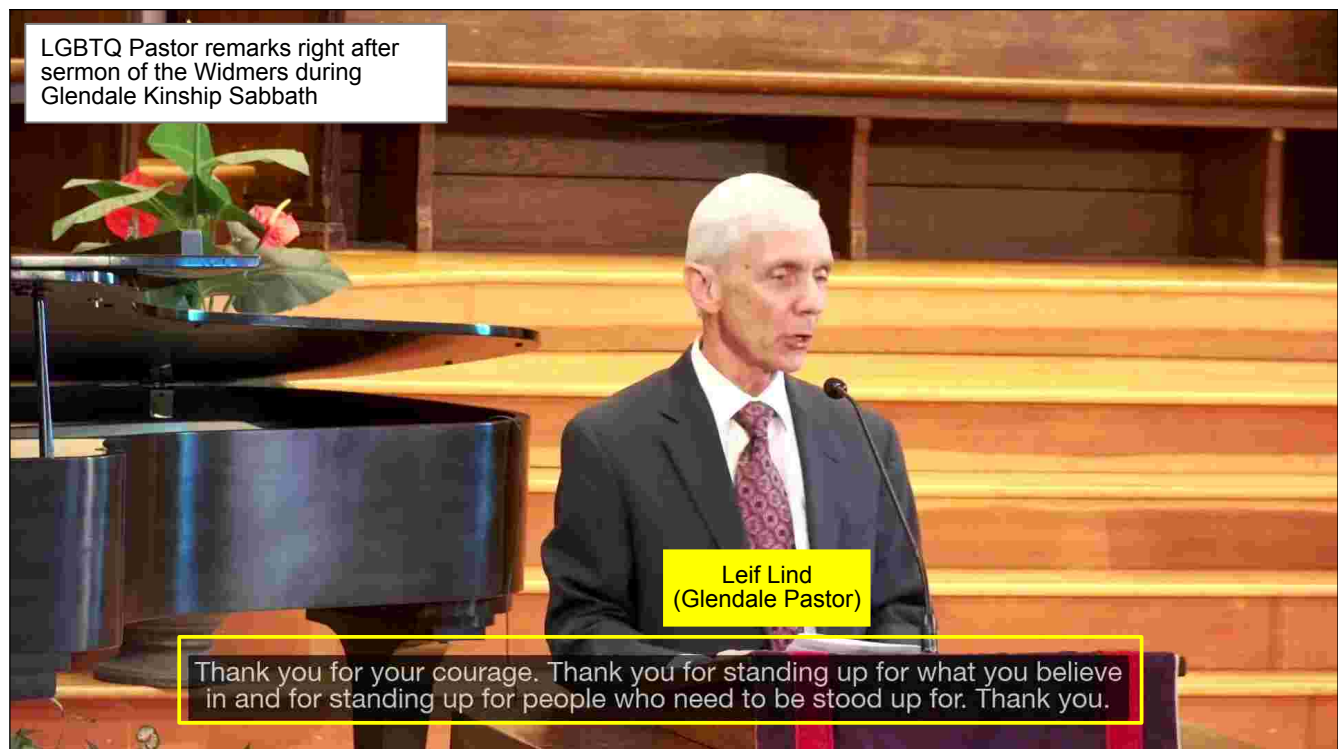


EXHIBIT A.9/4: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Speech by SDA Kinship President Floyd Poenitz (Feb. 4, 2023)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 53:38)



SPEECH BY FLOYD POENITZ
President, SDA Kinship International

Full speech duration is about 15 minutes.
Timestamp 51:28 ([go there](#)) - 1:03:16

SPEECH TRANSCRIPT EXCERPT

Timestamp: 54:01 ([go there](#)) - 55:06

“So yes, my name is Floyd Poenitz and I’m president of Seventh Day Adventist Kinship International. And some of you may ask, what is SDA Kinship? Back in the 1970s, a young gay Adventist in New York City put an ad in an international gay news magazine called The Advocate. And it read something like this. It was just a short little ad in the back. It says, I’m a gay Adventist. Are there any others? That is the common feeling growing up and realizing that you’re gay or lesbian or bisexual or intersex or trans and feeling that surely you must be the only one in the whole world that feels like this. The cause is mainly because historically no one in the church talked about feelings, about sex, about orientation. And if it was talked about or mentioned in the sermon, it was only in a negative way. Surprisingly, this person received dozens of responses. Soon there were two other ads placed with similar responses. And that was the beginning of Seventh Day Adventist Kinship International.”

Timestamp: 56:50 ([go there](#)) – 57:10

“Dialogue, sharing stories, must start with members of the local congregation like you and expand like ripples on a lake. If you aren’t already a part of SDA Kinship, I invite you to go to our website, stakinship.org, and sign up there. It doesn’t matter if you’re a queer member, a family member of an LGBTQIA+ member, or just an ally who loves people and believes that God loves all of his children equally.”

EXHIBIT A.10/1: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by Aaron Van Voorhis (June 24, 2023).
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 31:55)

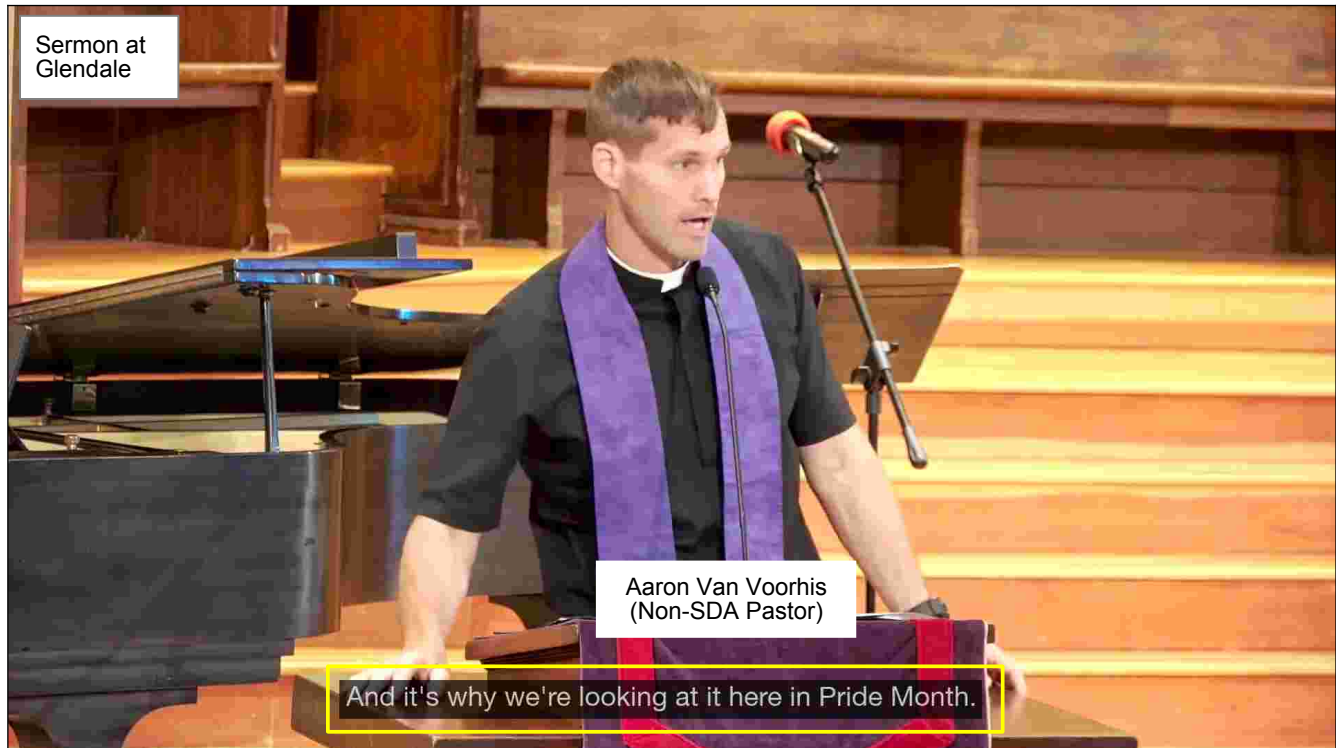


EXHIBIT A.10/2: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by Aaron Van Voorhis (June 24, 2023).
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 40:48)



EXHIBIT A.10/3: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by Aaron Van Voorhis (June 24, 2023).
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 41:55)



EXHIBIT A.10/4: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by Aaron Van Voorhis (June 24, 2023).
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 42:39)



EXHIBIT A.11/1: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by SCC LA Director (October 7, 2023)

Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)



FINDING GOD AT THE INTERSECTION OF OUR LIVES

October 7, 2023

ON CAMPUS TODAY AT GLENDALE CITY CHURCH, OCTOBER 7:

- 9:00 a.m.: **Courtyard Café.** Enjoy simple breakfast foods & beverages in our courtyard.
- 9:30 a.m.: **Grace Sabbath School class** with Pastor Leif, both live in the Fellowship Hall and on Zoom, meeting ID 818-244-7241. Book study: "Do I Stay Christian? — A Guide for the Doubters, the Disappointed, and the Disillusioned" by Brian McLaren.
- 9:30 a.m.: **The Living Project Support Group** meets weekly in the Council Room. "Telling my story. Listening to your story. Living our story."
- 11:00 a.m.: **Sanctuary worship service** with Dr. Daniel Chan. Also available online, <https://YouTube.com/c/GlendaleCityChurch>. Worship next Sabbath, Oct 14: Sanctuary Worship service and **Communion** with Greg Nelson.
- 11:00 a.m.: **City Kids Children's Praise**, Room 2. By 11:15 a.m.: • **Tiny Tots** (0-3 years old, together with a parent or guardian) go to Classroom 2; • **Godly Play** (4-12 years) go to Classroom 1. Noon pickup.

OPEN TABLE WORSHIP:

- 12:15 p.m.: Informal worship gathering in the Chapel with music, story-sharing and interpersonal connections. All are welcome!

THIS WEEK AT GLENDALE CITY CHURCH:

- 7:00 p.m. **Social Jesus Heartgroup** by Herb Montgomery, each Wednesday at <https://Zoom.us/j/8182447241>, discussing Jesus' call to bringing justice and equality to all. Study guide or podcast: <https://RenewedHeartMinistries.com>.

EXHIBIT A.11/2: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by SCC LA Director (October 7, 2023)
Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)

SATURDAY WORSHIP – 11:00 A.M. (PLEASE SILENCE YOUR ELECTRONIC DEVICES)

We welcome you as you worship with us online today. Please feel free to contact any of our pastoral staff if you have a question, want a visit, or need help:

- <https://glendalecitychurch.org>
- <https://facebook.com/glendalecitychurch>
- phone 818-244-7241

Prelude

"Carillon"
Kemp Smeal, *organ*

Herbert Murrill

Call to Worship

Leif Lind

From God comes the wonder of Creation
We will worship God the Creator
From God comes healing for our brokenness
We will worship God our Redeemer
From God comes the strength to face each new day
We will worship God our Sustainer

Opening Hymn

"Lord of All Being, Throned Afar"

No. 17

- (1) Lord of all being, throned afar, thy glory flames from sun and star;
Center and soul of every sphere, yet to each loving heart how near! [x 2]
- (2) Sun of our life, thy quickening ray sheds on our path the glow of day;
Star of our hope, thy softened light cheers the long watches of the night. [x 2]
- (3) Our midnight is thy smile withdrawn; our noontide is thy gracious dawn;
Our rainbow arch, thy mercy's sign; all, save the clouds of sin are thine. [x 2]
- (4) Lord of all life, below, above, whose light is truth, whose warmth is love,
Before thy ever-blazing throne we ask no luster of our own. [x 2]
- (5) Grant us thy truth to make us free, and kindling hearts that burn for thee;
Till all thy living altars claim one holy light, one heavenly flame! [x 2]

Greetings & Prayers of the Congregation

(Please remain standing for prayer)

Leif Lind

Anthem

"My Jesus, I Love Thee"
Clarissa Shan, *choral director*; Lyndon Taylor, *violin*

arr. Paul Sjolund

EXHIBIT A.11/3: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by SCC LA Director (October 7, 2023)Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)**Scripture Reading****Isaiah 58:6**

Ken Webber

"Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen:
to loose the chains of injustice
and untie the cords of the yoke,
to set the oppressed free
and break every yoke?"

Anthem

"I Am Thine, O Lord"
Clarissa Shan, *Choral Director*

*arr. Joan J. Pinkston***Sermon****"The Church's Biggest Expense"**

Danny Chan

Reflection in Song/Offertory

"We Sing to Him"
Ben Lin, *bass*

Henry Purcell, 1688

*We sing to him, whose wisdom form'd the ear, our songs, let him who gave us voices hear;
We joy in God, who is the Spring of mirth, who loves the harmony of Heav'n and Earth;
Our humble sonnets shall that praise rehearse, who is the music of the Universe.
And whilst we sing, we consecrate our art, and offer up with ev'ry tongue a heart;*

(Deacons will collect the offering as we meditate on the message in song. Please give as you're able — unless otherwise marked, loose offering goes to local church expense.)

Hymn of Response**"When the Church of Jesus"**

No. 581

(1) When the church of Jesus shuts its outer door,
Lest the roar of traffic drown the voice of prayer:
May our prayers, Lord, make us ten times more aware
That the world we banish is our Christian care.

(2) If our hearts are lifted where devotion soars
High above this hungry suffering world of ours:
Lest our hymns should drug us to forget its needs,
Forge our Christian worship into Christian deeds.

(3) Lest the gifts we offer, money, talents, time,
Serve to salve our conscience to our secret shame:
Lord, reprove, inspire us by the way you give;
Teach us, dying Savior, how true Christians live.

Benediction

Danny Chan

Choral Benediction**"On Eagle's Wings"****Postlude**

"Sinfonia from Solomon"
Kemp Smeal, *organ*

George Friedrich Handel

EXHIBIT A.11/4: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by SCC LA Director (October 7, 2023)Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)

Keep Up With City Church!

- Get your copy of *Intersections*, our quarterly magazine, mailed to subscribers. To subscribe, email the office at 610ecalifornia@gmail.com
- Visit our website & sign up for our weekly e-newsletter: <https://GlendaleCityChurch.org>
- Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram
- Download our "Glendale City Church" app at your App Store

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

A+ ADVENTIST CHILDREN'S CENTER CLOSING AFTER 42 YEARS: Conference officials met recently with A+ School leaders, informing them that due to continued low enrollment and the resulting financial challenges, the school will be closing on November 3. While the news is not totally unexpected, we are deeply saddened for Malisa Smith and school staff, as well as for the loss of a mutual relationship with Glendale City Church, spanning four decades.

Our prayers and sincere condolences to **Claudia Dahlsten** after her husband **Robert White** passed away recently. Also our prayers are with **Ron Matusea's family** after his mother, **Non Matusea**, died recently. Her viewing will be Oct. 19, 5–9 p.m. at Forest Lawn Covina Hills; her funeral on Oct. 20, 10 a.m. at the Indonesian American Adventist Church; and the interment the same day at 1:30 p.m., Forest Lawn Covina Hills.

We wish a very **warm welcome** to this morning's speaker, **Pastor Danny Chan**, L.A. Metro Region Director for the Southern California Conference!

Preaching schedule:

- | | |
|--|--|
| • Oct. 14 Greg Nelson, Communion | • Oct. 28 Greg Nelson |
| • Oct. 21 Greg Nelson | • Nov. 4 Leif Lind, Day of Remembrance |

Pastoral search committee members include: *Danny Chan (S. C. Conference), Leif Lind (pastor/board chair), Elizabeth Johnston Taylor (head elder), Mark Azali, Ruth Counts, Allan McDonald, Didi Mumford, Mindi Rüb, Doug Schultz, Jerry Wahagheghe.*

November 4 is our annual Day of Remembrance. Please contact the church office (610ecalifornia@gmail.com or phone 818-244-7241); or inform Pastor Leif if you want to have your loved ones remembered on this annual special day.

Help Us Host "Home Again LA" as we help first-time homeless families get back on their feet! The week of **Oct. 29–Nov. 4** we will be lodging four families in our classrooms as part of HALA's temporary shelter program. We are looking for volunteers to provide a hot supper and a sack breakfast for 12 people each night; as well as seven pairs of chaperones — one male, one female — to sleep on site each night (beds will be provided). If you can help as a chef or as a chaperone one or more nights of this week, please contact our church office (610ecalifornia@gmail.com or 818-244-7241).

Disaster Response Training by Charlene Sargent, Sunday, October 8, 9 a.m. at the Southern California Conference committee room. Registration at 8:30 a.m., fee of \$15. Lunch is provided. To pre-register, email: bhart@sccsda.org. (Check to "Southern California Conference" or cash only.)

Glendale Noon Concert, October 18: Internationally recognized oboist Catherine Del Russo will perform solo works by Cyril Plante, Benjamin Britten, and Los Angeles composer Jeremy Gilien. All are welcome to attend this free concert! Further details at <http://glendalenoonconcerts.blogspot.com>.

Volunteers for serving lunch, Sunday, Oct. 22: The First Methodist Church in Glendale is looking for 3 or 4 volunteers to help serve lunch at their church on October 22. No food is needed, just volunteers. Their congregation has helped us in the past, so it would be a nice one-time gesture to help them now. Please let Pastor Leif (909-557-5230) know if you can assist — thank you!

A+ Fall Festival/Pasta Dinner with auction, Thursday, Oct 19, 5:45–8:00 p.m. (dinner at 5:45). Tickets: \$10/adult, \$5/child. A+ is taking donations of **new** items for the auctions; donations will receive a tax letter at the end of the year. Thanks for helping to support our A+ school! *(This event will still take place, even as A+ is closing.)*

610 East California Avenue, Glendale, CA 91206 • 818-244-7241 • glendalecitychurch.org

"Revealing Christ, affirming all"

EXHIBIT A.11/5: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by SCC LA Director (October 7, 2023)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 9:15)

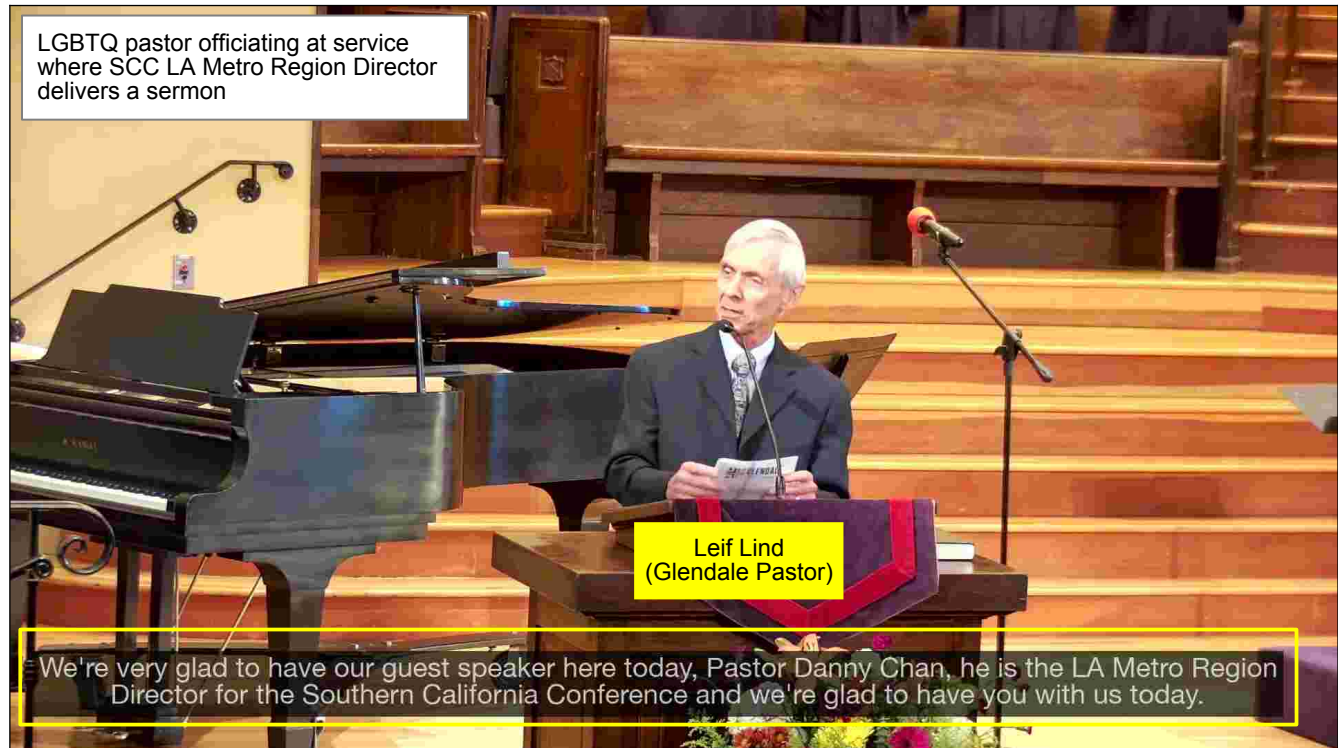


EXHIBIT A.11/6: LGBTQ Pastor at Glendale Sermon by SCC LA Director (October 7, 2023)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 30:19)



EXHIBIT A.12/1: LGBTQ Pastor Farewell Service at Glendale City Church (February 1, 2025).
Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)



FINDING GOD AT THE INTERSECTION OF OUR LIVES

February 1, 2025

ON CAMPUS TODAY AT GLENDALE CITY CHURCH:

- 9:00 a.m.: **Courtyard Café.** Enjoy simple breakfast foods & beverages in our Fellowship Hall lobby.

- 9:30 a.m.: **Grace Sabbath School** class with Pastor Leif, both live in the Fellowship Hall and on Zoom, meeting ID 818-244-7241. Join in our lively book study: *The Sin of Certainty: Why God Desires Our Trust More Than Our "Correct" Beliefs* by Peter Enns.

- 9:30 a.m.: **The Living Project Support Group** meets weekly in the Council Room. "Telling my story. Listening to your story. Living our story."

- 11:00 a.m.: **Worship** and service of recognition and closure for Leif Lind, followed by church potluck; service also available online, <https://YouTube.com/c/GlendaleCityChurch>.

- 11:00 a.m.: **City Kids Children's Praise with Music**, Classroom 2
- 11:15 a.m.: **Tiny Tots** (0-4 years old, together with a guardian) go to Classroom 2
Children's Sabbath School (5-12 years) go to Classroom 1. Noon pickup.

OPEN TABLE WORSHIP:

Open Table will join the church potluck today as we celebrate Leif Lind's ministry to our community!

EXHIBIT A.12/2: LGBTQ Pastor Farewell Service at Glendale City Church (February 1, 2025).
Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)

Service of Recognition



Today, we celebrate Pastor Leif Lind's remarkable and dedicated ministry to the Glendale City Church as well as the broader Seventh-day Adventist body. During the service, we will hold a special recognition and closure ceremony to honor his years of faithful service.

We are especially grateful to have Leif's family with us— his husband, Taylor Ruhl; Sonja and Hossein; Leisl and Mike; and their twins—as we recognize this significant moment together. Welcome, and thank you for joining us in this meaningful celebration.

The Ministry of Leif Lind

1973-1974: Ministerial intern, Sandnes and Bergen, Norway.

1976-1982: Pastor, Mandal, Flekkefjord, Bergen, Ålesund, and Tromsø, Norway. While in Tromsø, served as the North Norway Conference Youth & Sabbath School leader.

1982-1990: Book Editor, African Herald Publishing House.

1990-1996: Pastor, Nanaimo and Port Alberni, Vancouver Island, BC, Canada.

2004-2025: Associate Pastor, Glendale City Church, Glendale, CA



EXHIBIT A.12/3: LGBTQ Pastor Farewell Service at Glendale City Church (February 1, 2025).
Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)

SATURDAY WORSHIP – 11:00 A.M.

Prelude Psalm Prelude, Opus 32, No.1 Kemp Smeal, organ
Herbert Howells

Call to Worship Glenda Mendizabal

God who has led this congregation for over a century
We come to you.
God who has led us through change and growth,
We bless you.
God who has made this congregation safe for all to worship and serve you,
We thank you.
God who has sent us Pastor Leif Lind to be our shepherd and friend,
We honor you.
God who has been our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
We worship you.

Opening Hymn "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" No. 100

Greetings & Prayers of the Congregation John Nielsen
(Please remain standing for prayer)

Anthem "A Good and Faithful Servant of the Lord" David Lantz III
Clarissa Shan, choral director

Service of Recognition and Closure

Honoring the Call: Pastor Leif's Story Beth Johnston Taylor

Testimonials

I. Southern California Conference of
Seventh-day Adventists
II. Todd Leonard
III. Doug Schultz

Meditation in Song "How Beautiful Are The Feet" Clarissa Shan, soprano
by G.F. Handel

EXHIBIT A.12/4: LGBTQ Pastor Farewell Service at Glendale City Church (February 1, 2025).
Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)

Leave-taking Ceremony

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Uriel Herinirina

Leader: Join me in the prayer of thanksgiving for the gift of Leif's life and ministry.
For all that has been in these full years of ministry we say thank you.

All: Thank you God who holds us gently.
For all funerals led, people visited, lives mourned,
For all new lives welcomed, thanksgivings and baptisms celebrated,
For all new relationships blessed and marriages marked,
For new members welcomed, elders ordained, churches and communities sustained,
For all sermons and prayers written, songs and hymns chosen, liturgies crafted, connections
with news and everyday life woven together,
For all communities and organizations supported, stories listened to and held with care and
confidence, for kingdom work unnoticed and hard to measure,

Leif Lind: I give thanks.

People: We give thanks.

Leader: For cross words, unspoken grudges and power play, for forgetting and failures, for
all that is left undone and incomplete we say sorry, let go of and set down saying thanks to
God trusting in the work of others.

Leif Lind: I ask forgiveness and I let them go.

People: We ask forgiveness and we water seeds of ministry work planted.

Leader: For all faith companions who have inspired and nurtured Pastor Leif.

All: We give thanks.

Leader: For all who have been ministered to, with and alongside we say thank you to God
who continues to call us in Jesus to share Good News.

All: We hear the call of Jesus to be and share Good News.

Return of the Church Key

Leader: Pastor Leif, as a symbol of your leave-taking from the role of Associate Pastor
and Administrator, which you performed with profound grace and unwavering
dedication, we appreciatively accept your return of the keys

All: Amen!

EXHIBIT A.12/5: LGBTQ Pastor Farewell Service at Glendale City Church (February 1, 2025).

Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)

Presentation of Honors

Deidre Mumford & Doug Schultz

Prayer of Blessing

Brett Poynter, LA Metro Region Director

(All elders are invited to come to the front and join in the prayer of blessing)

Anthem

"Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing"
Clarissa Shan, choral director

Arr. by Mack Wilberg

Scripture Reading

Sonja Lind

1 Samuel 7:2-12 (Selected verses)

Then all the people of Israel turned back to the Lord. So Samuel said to all the Israelites, "If you are returning to the Lord with all your hearts, then rid yourselves of the foreign gods ... and commit yourselves to the Lord and serve him only, and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines." So the Israelites put away their [idols] ... and served the Lord only. Then Samuel said, "Assemble all Israel at Mizpah, and I will intercede with the Lord for you." When they had assembled at Mizpah ... they fasted and there they confessed, "We have sinned against the Lord." Now Samuel was serving as leader of Israel at Mizpah.

When the Philistines heard that Israel had assembled at Mizpah, the rulers of the Philistines came up to attack them. When the Israelites heard of it, they were afraid because of the Philistines. They said to Samuel, "Do not stop crying out to the Lord our God for us, that he may rescue us from the hand of the Philistines." Then Samuel ... cried out to the Lord on Israel's behalf, and the Lord answered him.

While Samuel was sacrificing [a] burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to engage Israel in battle. But that day the Lord thundered with loud thunder against the Philistines and threw them into such a panic that they were routed before the Israelites. The men of Israel rushed out of Mizpah and pursued the Philistines, slaughtering them along the way to a point below Beth Kar.

Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen. He named it Ebenezer ["stone of help"], saying, "Thus far the Lord has helped us." So the Philistines were subdued and they stopped invading Israel's territory.

EXHIBIT A.12/6: LGBTQ Pastor Farewell Service at Glendale City Church (February 1, 2025).

Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)

Sermon

"Here I Raise My Ebenezer"

Leif Lind

Choral Benediction

"Old Irish Blessing"
Clarissa Shan, choral director

Denes Agay

Closing Hymn No. 334

(1) Come, thou Fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me ever to adore thee, may I still thy goodness prove,
While the hope of endless glory fills my heart with joy and love.

(2) Here I raise my Ebenezer, hither by thy help I've come,
And I hope by thy good pleasure safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger, wandering from the fold of God;
He to rescue me from danger, interposed his precious blood.

(3) O, to grace how great a debtor, daily I'm constrained to be!
Let thy goodness, like a fetter, bind me closer still to thee.
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart — O, take and seal it; seal it for thy courts above.

Benediction

Leif Lind

Postlude

"Praise the Lord with Drums and Cymbals"
Kemp Smeal, organ

Sigfrid Karg-Elert



EXHIBIT A.12/7: LGBTQ Pastor Farewell Service at Glendale City Church (February 1, 2025).

Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)

*This is where your life has arrived,
After all the years of effort and toil;
Look back with graciousness and thanks
on all your great and quiet achievements.*

*You stand on the shore of new invitation
To open your life to what is left undone;
Let your heart enjoy a different rhythm
When drawn to the wonder of other horizons.*

*Have the courage for a new approach to time;
Allow it to slow until you find freedom
To draw alongside the mystery you hold
And befriend your own beauty of soul.*

*Now is the time to enjoy your heart's desire,
To live the dreams you've waited for,
To awaken the depths beyond your work
And enter into your infinite source.*

John O'Donohue



Glendale City Church welcomes people of all backgrounds into our church community. We do not discriminate based on gender, sexual orientation, race, culture, wealth, education, or religious background.

If you are learning to love God and others, you belong here.
God excludes no one. Neither do we.

EXHIBIT A.12/8: LGBTQ Pastor Farewell Service at Glendale City Church (February 1, 2025).
Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)

Preaching Schedule & Announcements:

Feb 8 & Feb 15 - Pastor Uriel Herinirina is speaking.

Glendale Noon Concert, Feb. 5: Violinists Samuel Fischer and Sakura Tsai, with pianist Jennie Jung, will perform works for violin duo by Jessie Montgomery, Dimitri Shostakovich, and Pablo de Sarasate See <http://glendalenoonconcerts.blogspot.com>.

Open House: Glendale Adventist Academy (700 Kimlin Drive), Thursday, Feb. 6 from 5:30-7:00p.m, allowing visitors to see the facilities and meet faculty and administration.

Church Office Hours

Anji: Wednesdays–Saturdays 9 a.m.–1 p.m.

Pastor Uriel: Office Time Tuesdays & Thursdays
9 a.m–1 p.m; Wednesdays 12–5 p.m.

We continue to pray for all who have been affected by the recent **tragic wildfires**, particularly members whose houses have been destroyed. Free fire-related counseling is available by texting 310-402-4906; a therapist will respond within 30 minutes.

*Housing Assistance: got to <https://211la.org/>. Once there, search for "Emergency Housing Assistance for Wildfire Survivors."

*FEMA resources: [FEMA.gov/disaster/4856](https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4856). To apply and get answers to your questions, call: 1-800-621-3362

*Another organization trying to help is the Harmony Project (info@harmony-project.org).

Let's also continue to remember the **family of Liz Wenz** and her brother Herman Wenz, after Liz's death and ongoing health challenges for the family. We will update church members when there is information about a memorial service for Liz.

Keep Up With City Church!

FOLLOW US @glendalecitychurch or
<https://GlendaleCityChurch.org>!



• Facebook, Instagram, and X:
[@glendalecitychurch](#)



• YouTube: @glendalecitychurch
for sermons and concerts



• GCC App: Download our free app for easy access to our bulletin, audio Bible, events, & more!



• Giving is easy, scan this QR code to go to our website

610 East California Avenue, Glendale, CA 91206 • 818-244-7241 • glendalecitychurch.org
"Revealing Christ, affirming all"

EXHIBIT A.12/9: LGBTQ Pastor Farewell Service at Glendale City Church (February 1, 2025).
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 14:56)

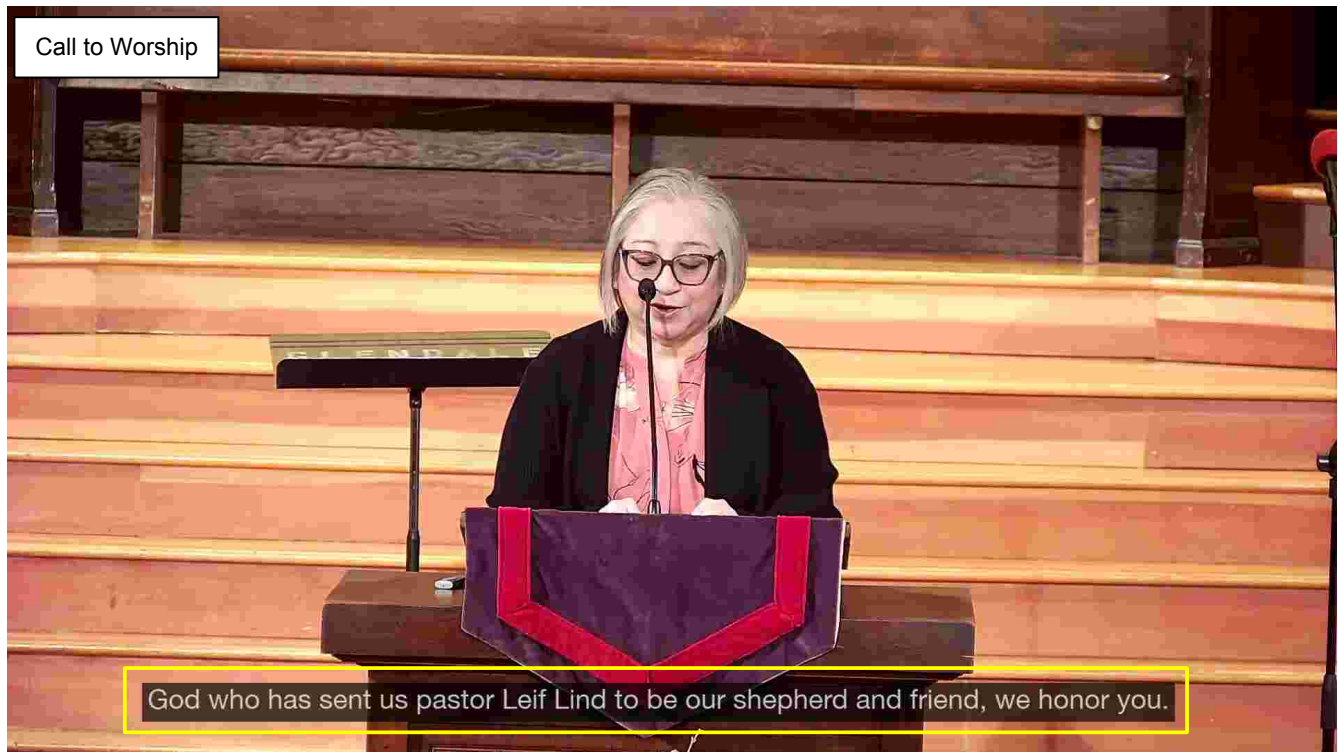
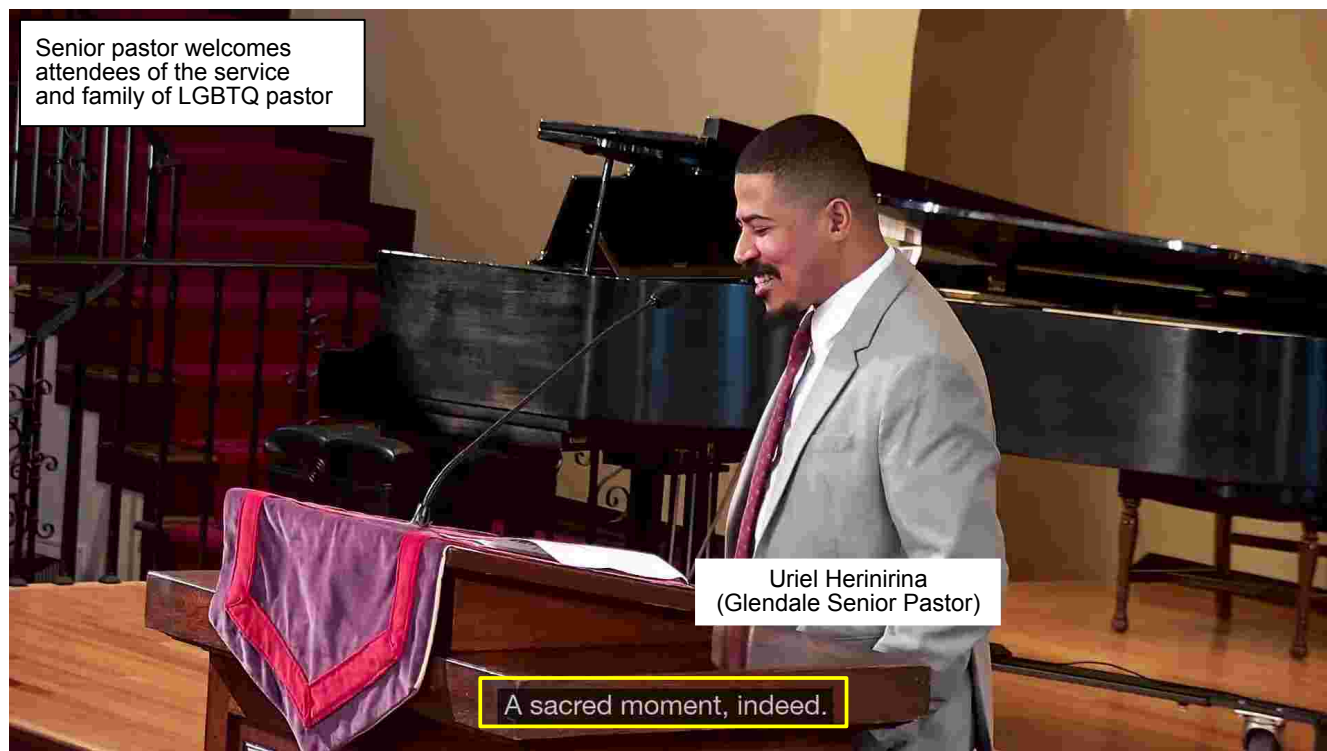


EXHIBIT A.12/10: LGBTQ Pastor Farewell Service at Glendale City Church (February 1, 2025).Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 28:15)**FULL TRANSCRIPT****URIEL HERINIRINA****Current Senior Pastor, Glendale City Church**

Glendale Senior Pastor: 2024 – Present

Note: Bolded transcript sentences correspond to the video captions shown in the screenshot above.

“Good morning, church. Good morning, everyone. My task today is to be one that facilitates the words of others, but I will take a little bit of time to share a few words myself on this beautiful and bittersweet day. **A sacred moment, indeed.**

But I'd like to extend a welcome to, a special welcome to Leif's family before I begin. Yes, let's give them a round of applause. Taylor, welcome again. It's good to see you. Leif's companion, you can't do this work without someone strong by your side. And as we honor Leif today, we honor you also. Sonia and Hussein, thank you for being here. Thank you for joining us in this beautiful celebration. Liesl and Mike also, it's our first time meeting, so I'm excited to hear more about your lives in a bit. But I wanted to acknowledge you guys for being here from the pulpit, as well as Emery and Elise. This is your playground. Do with it what you want.

But welcome, welcome to our lovely community on this special day. A day where we honor the journey of a faithful servant. That's really what we're doing. Leif, I think, has been a testament of what faithfulness to something sacred, what that looks like over a course of most of your life, really, isn't it? But we're here to look back in gratitude, to look back in affirmation of a legacy of impact.

Many people here can speak of Leif's impact in your own lives. I'll let you share that with him personally later. But also a legacy of dedication and a legacy of deep care. I'll spend a little bit of time with that last one here, deep care.

[continued on next page]

EXHIBIT A.12/10: Continued from previous page.

Leif, thank you for teaching us how to care deeply for people. Thank you for teaching us how to care deeply for words. From the first time we've met, from our first emails and phone call, it was clear to me that you are someone that does not take the world of words lightly, and that you've committed yourself to understanding them and to using words in a way that creates life in this world with grace and beauty. And a deep care for all things sacred. And so today we thank God for calling and anointing Pastor Leif into the work of ministry, the caring of souls, the curing of souls.

But also we thank God for bringing him into our community here for the past 20 years. This is a celebration of your ministry, but selfishly it's also for us, for the 20 years that you spent here. And yeah, it is a beautiful, as I said, but bittersweet day.

I can speak from a personal perspective that these few months that I started here would look very different without your grace and your wise, your guidance in my life and making my work here a lot easier than it could have been. Thank you so much for staying an extra few months. If you don't notice, he was ready to leave as I was coming in and he decided to stay a little longer, and I'm so appreciative of that.

And again, welcome to the family, but also thank you for sharing Leif with us. I'm a pastor's child myself. Sometimes it's difficult. Sometimes it's unfair. Sometimes, you know, the pastor has to take time away from important family matters to attend to other family matters. And so, you know, we honor you guys as well as we honor Leif today.

Thank you for sharing your father with us, your [Taylor's] husband with us. I will now invite Beth, and I will shut up, and let Beth share a little bit more about Leif's wonderful history and call to ministry.

Thank you for being here."

EXHIBIT A.12/11: LGBTQ Pastor Farewell Service at Glendale City Church (February 1, 2025).

Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 32:53)



EXHIBIT A.12/12: LGBTQ Pastor Farewell Service at Glendale City Church (February 1, 2025).

Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) YouTube Video (Timestamp: 41:57)



EXHIBIT A.12/13: LGBTQ Pastor Farewell Service at Glendale City Church (February 1, 2025).Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 44:58)**FULL TRANSCRIPT****DANNY CHAN****Current Executive Secretary, Southern California Conference**

SCC Executive Secretary: 2024 - Present

SCC LA Director: 2019 - 2024

(Delivered via video message on church screen)

"Good morning, Glendale City Church, my name is Danny Chan. It was my privilege for five years to be the LA Metro Region Director, and as a director, I had the tremendous privilege of collaborating with churches and supporting church leaders, Glendale City being one of them. During that time, it was my sincere privilege and honor to collaborate with the pastors and leaders, including Leif Lind, who today we have the bittersweet opportunity to to send off into retirement.

Leif, unfortunately I had commitments to be at another place today, but today I just wanted to wish you from the bottom of our hearts tremendous gratitude for all the ways that you have served the Glendale City Church community and beyond. For almost 21 years you have served the Glendale City community and thank you so much for all the love, the care, the support, all of the administration, all the different ways that you poured into people's lives. It is such a testament to God's grace to see that grace being demonstrated in your life as you've poured into so many lives throughout all those years.

Thank you, thank you, thank you from all of us here at Southern California Conference for all the ways that you poured into ministry and we wish you all of God's blessings as you step into a new chapter in your life.

Thank you so much."

EXHIBIT A.12/14: LGBTQ Pastor Farewell Service at Glendale City Church (February 1, 2025).

Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 46:38)



FULL TRANSCRIPT

JOHN CRESS

Current President, Southern California Conference

SCC President: 2024 - Present

SCC Executive Secretary: 2016 – 2024

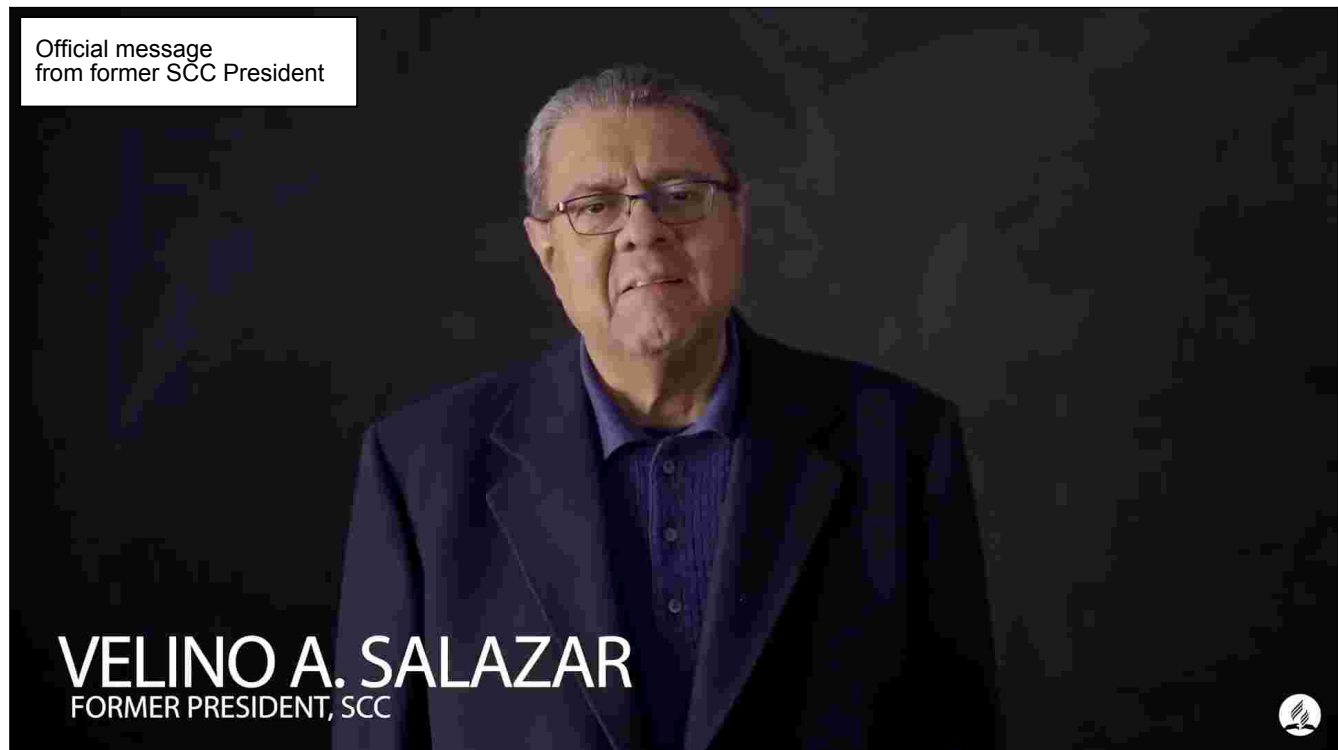
(Delivered via video message on church screen)

"[Leif] Lind, I just wanted to take this moment to give you my heartfelt gratitude for your nearly 21 years of ministry there at the City Church. Your compassion and empathy and unwavering heart for both your members and the community has been a real reflection of Christ's love and his heart. Thank you for walking alongside of them, sharing their joys, their struggles with wisdom and kindness and care.

Your ministry has made a lasting impact. I appreciate you so much. May God bless you abundantly as you move into this next chapter of your life."

EXHIBIT A.12/15: LGBTQ Pastor Farewell Service at Glendale City Church (February 1, 2025).

Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 47:32)



FULL TRANSCRIPT

VELINO SALAZAR

Former President, Southern California Conference

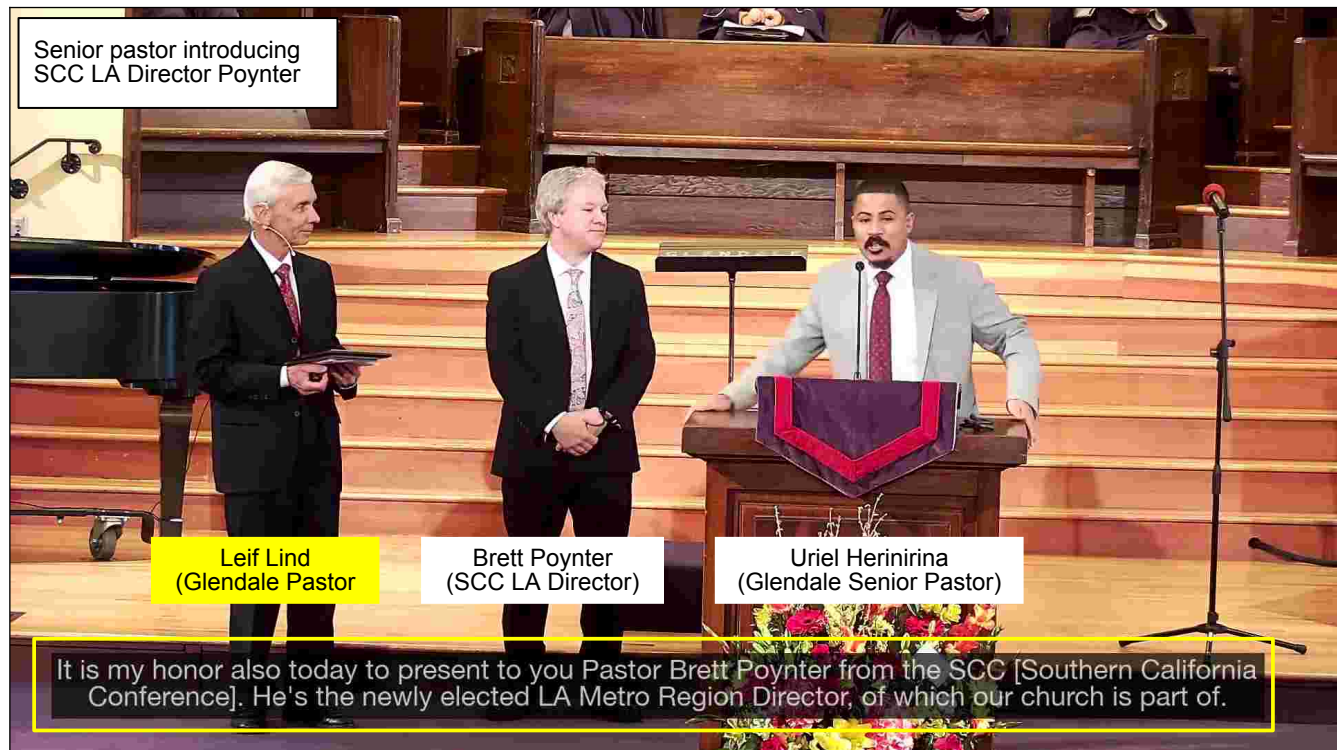
SCC President: 2015 - 2024

SCC Executive Secretary: 2003 - 2015

(Delivered via video message on church screen)

"Thank you for the opportunity to express appreciation for the ministry that Leif Lind has done at the Glendale City Church. Actually, the ministry that he has done from that church has gone to all the community related to that church far and near. His affable personality, his compassionate spirit, and his passionate pastoral care made his ministry impactful in the life of so many people that only in heaven we will know the impact of his ministry over the years."

Also, I want to take the opportunity to welcome him into the retirement team after so many years of ministry, and I wish the Lord continue blessing you and your life and your ministry, because once we are in this service to God, we'll never stop doing this. God bless you, my friend, and I wish you the best."

EXHIBIT A.12/16: LGBTQ Pastor Farewell Service at Glendale City Church (February 1, 2025).Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 1:06:52)**FULL TRANSCRIPT****URIE HERINIRINA****Current Senior Pastor, Glendale City Church**

Glendale Senior Pastor: 2024 - Present

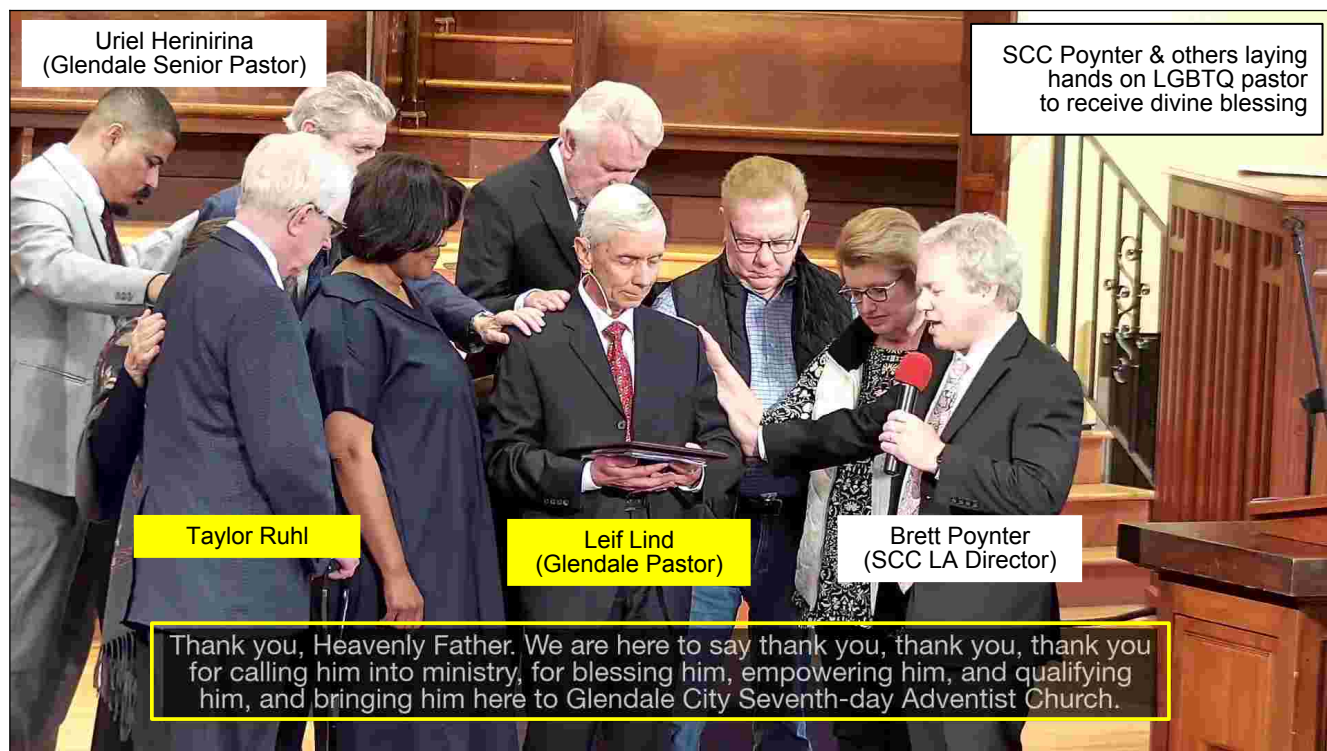
Note: Bolded transcript sentences correspond to the video captions shown in the screenshot above.

"Can I invite Pastor Brett Poynter at this moment? And Taylor, you want to come up as well, please, for the prayer of blessing?"

It is my honor also today to present to you Pastor Brett Poynter from the SCC [Southern California Conference]. He's the newly elected LA Metro Region Director, of which our church is part of.

And this is his first visit to our community, and so we're so grateful that you'd be here today on such a special occasion, and joining in some of the unique features of our community. Thank you for being here, and thank you for your word of prayer for this wonderful minister of our conference.

May I also invite all the elders to come here at present, and we will lay our hands on Leif here for the prayer."

EXHIBIT A.12/17: LGBTQ Pastor Farewell Service at Glendale City Church (February 1, 2025).Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 1:08:09)**FULL TRANSCRIPT****BRETT POYNTER****Current LA Metro Region Director, Southern California Conference**

SCC LA Metro Region Director: 2024 – Present

Note: Bolded transcript sentences correspond to the video captions shown in the screenshot above.

Brett Poynter speaks the prayer of blessing as he and all others lay hands upon Leif Lind.

"Pastor Leif, as I'm new to this position, you are seasoned and wise, and I wish I could see you in ministry here longer to learn from you. And I know as this church finds your replacement, as you are enjoying your leave and extra time, it will probably take two or three individuals to fill your spot. One of my new roles is assessing churches for health, and I see, it's my observation, that this church you are leaving healthier than it was when you came. God is working through you. Let's now have a prayer blessing for your newfound freedom, change in life.

Heavenly Father, we are here united as a church family to adore you and say thank you from the bottom of our hearts for blessing us with Pastor Leif.

You came into his life when he was so young and melted his heart because of the gospel. So thank you for doing that. Thank you for empowering him, and thank you, Pastor Leif, for accepting Jesus as your Savior.

Thank you, Heavenly Father. We are here to say thank you, thank you, thank you for calling him into ministry, for blessing him, empowering him, and qualifying him, and bringing him here to Glendale City Seventh-day Adventist Church. And so as he takes his leave, we see his godly character.

[continued on next page]

EXHIBIT A.12/17: Continued from previous page.

We see his steadfast love and long suffering as he emulates Jesus Christ, as he loves everyone, accepts, consoles, counsels, equips, mentors, teaches, and preaches the word so faithfully. Thank you for empowering him this way. And so as he takes his leave and finds a newfound freedom, we pray that it's blessed with no restrictions, no hindrance, so he can develop new relationships and continue fostering those that he has with family and friends.

We know his pastoral heart will never stop, and so we ask that as you have done in the past and up to today and blessed his ministry, continue to bless him in this new era and new chapter in his life. May he continue to find avenues to lead people to Jesus through loving them, meeting their needs, and winning their hearts to our Heavenly Father.

And Father, as we close this prayer of blessing, not only bless his new life, but bless this church to carry on faithfully in his legacy by loving everyone, meeting their needs without prejudice or discrimination, and leading them to Jesus until you return.

So help us together to follow in his footsteps so we can finish this work and you can return. And now, as you have in the past, as Pastor Leif will be preaching in just a few moments, speak through him through the power of your Holy Spirit as he leads us to Jesus. Yet again, we pray, bless him, bless us.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

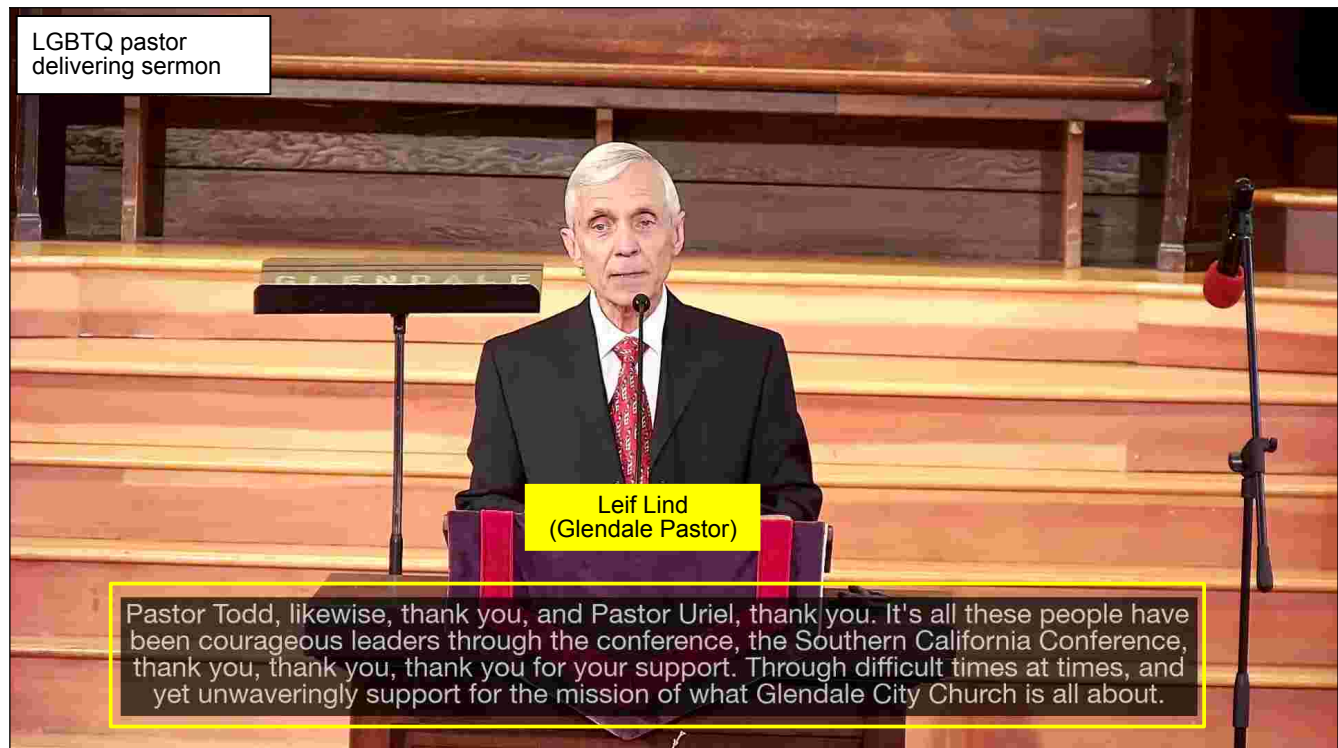
EXHIBIT A.12/18: LGBTQ Pastor Farewell Service at Glendale City Church (February 1, 2025).
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 1:25:51)

EXHIBIT A.13/1: LGBTQ Pastor & Glendale Sermon by SCC LA Metro Region Director (January 10, 2026)
Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)



GLENDALE CITY CHURCH of Seventh-day Adventists

Celebrating 120 Years of Ministry - January, 2026



January 10, 2026

EXHIBIT A.13/2: LGBTQ Pastor & Glendale Sermon by SCC LA Metro Region Director (January 10, 2026)
Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)

WORSHIP SERVICE

Scripture Reading

John 13:34-35

Jazmin Wong

I give you a new commandment, that you love one another.
Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.

Worship in Song

King of my Life
by James Stipech

Glendale Adventist
Academy Chorale

Sermon

Just As I Have Loved You

Brett Poynter

Offertory

My Jesus I Love Thee
by Jeff Anderson

Glendale Adventist
Academy Brass Sextet

Hymn of Response

Amazing Grace

No. 23

Benediction

Brett Poynter

Postlude

Fanfare
by Nicolas Jacques Lemmens

Kemp Smeal



EXHIBIT A.13/3: LGBTQ Pastor & Glendale Sermon by SCC LA Metro Region Director (January 10, 2026)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 22:52)



EXHIBIT A.14/1: LGBTQ Inclusion & 120-Year Anniversary at Glendale City Church (January 31, 2026)
Source: [Adventist Today Article](#) (January 23, 2026)

Page 1

Glendale City Church Celebrates 120 years Through Weekend-Long Event – Adventist Today
<https://atoday.org/glendale-city-church-celebrates-120-years-through-weekend-long-event/>

AdventistToday.org



23
JANUARY
2026

Glendale City Church Celebrates 120 years Through Weekend-Long Event

NEWS

23 January 2026 |

Since 1906, Glendale City Church has been a refuge and a resource to the community in Southern California. On January 30-31, the church will be celebrating 120 years of their history and their service to their neighbors. The weekend will include "...music, poetry readings, visual art, and a curated church history gallery with photographs, archival materials, and stories tracing the congregation's journey across twelve decades."

The event will open on Friday night with a Contemporary Worship Night at the GCC Chapel with Pastor Andy Palomares. Saturday will continue the celebration with a courtyard breakfast, before a lecture on the history of Glendale City Church, worship service, lunch, and closing the day with an organ recital and refreshments.

Their impact has extended beyond their congregation and into the community through artistic outreach and inclusion; therefore, the weekend-long event will be open to the public allowing all to enjoy the program. The desire to open the celebration to the rest of the community is an active fulfillment of the church's mission statement:

NEWSLETTER

Enjoy Adventist Today?

Sign up for a weekly
newsletter of our best
content.

* Email

First Name

By submitting this form, you are
consenting to receive marketing
emails from: Adventist Today, PO Box
683, Milton Freewater, OR, 97862,
US, <http://atoday.org>. You can revoke
your consent to receive emails at any
time by using the [SafeUnsubscribe@](#)
link, found at the bottom of every
email. [Emails are serviced by
Constant Contact.](#)

Sign up!

**Discover the innovative
spirit shaping
Adventism today. Our
one-minute videos
celebrate new ideas and
encourage forward-
thinking approaches.
Subscribe to
AdventInnovate!**

EXHIBIT A.14/2: LGBTQ Inclusion & 120-Year Anniversary at Glendale City Church (January 31, 2026)
Source: [Adventist Today Article](#) (January 23, 2026)

Page 2

Glendale City Church Celebrates 120 years Through Weekend-Long Event – Adventist Today
<https://atoday.org/glendale-city-church-celebrates-120-years-through-weekend-long-event/>

“Our mission is to reveal the love of Christ in all its tenderness and grandeur to the community in which we live. We desire to embrace the wonder of humanity in its complexity, diversity, and beauty—and to do so without precondition. In short, we yearn to reveal the splendor of Christ and to affirm the worth of all people.”

 AdventInnovate

Glendale City Church has proudly anchored itself in God’s call to minister to all people regardless of background or identity, and takes pride in being an affirming church to the LGBTQ+ community and female leadership. Their advocacy has been a bedrock of the church’s community for decades, existing as the first peace church in the Adventist Peace Fellowship, and even had a “Pink Pew” in the 80s where queer guests could sit and listen to the gospel with their church community.

On their website, the genesis of their ideology is not to keep in step with cultural movements, but to affirm the Christ-curious that “If you are learning to love God and others, you belong here. God excludes no one. Neither do we.” The church logo, depicting four figures with their arms outstretched to create a cross, “represents our belief that robust spirituality develops when a broad diversity of people come together in community,” fulfilling the logo’s tagline: *Finding God at the Intersection of Our Lives*

Their legacy has left an indelible mark on community members who might feel hesitant to engage with Christianity, fostering a place where their faith can exist in daily life. The upcoming celebration is an opportunity for the church to celebrate not only its history and impact, but also to open its arms to the congregants and community it serves through art and worship.

To see all the events of GCC’s anniversary weekend, click [here](#).

EXHIBIT A.15/1: LGBTQ Pastor & SCC Officers at 120-Year Anniversary of Glendale (January 31, 2026).
Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)

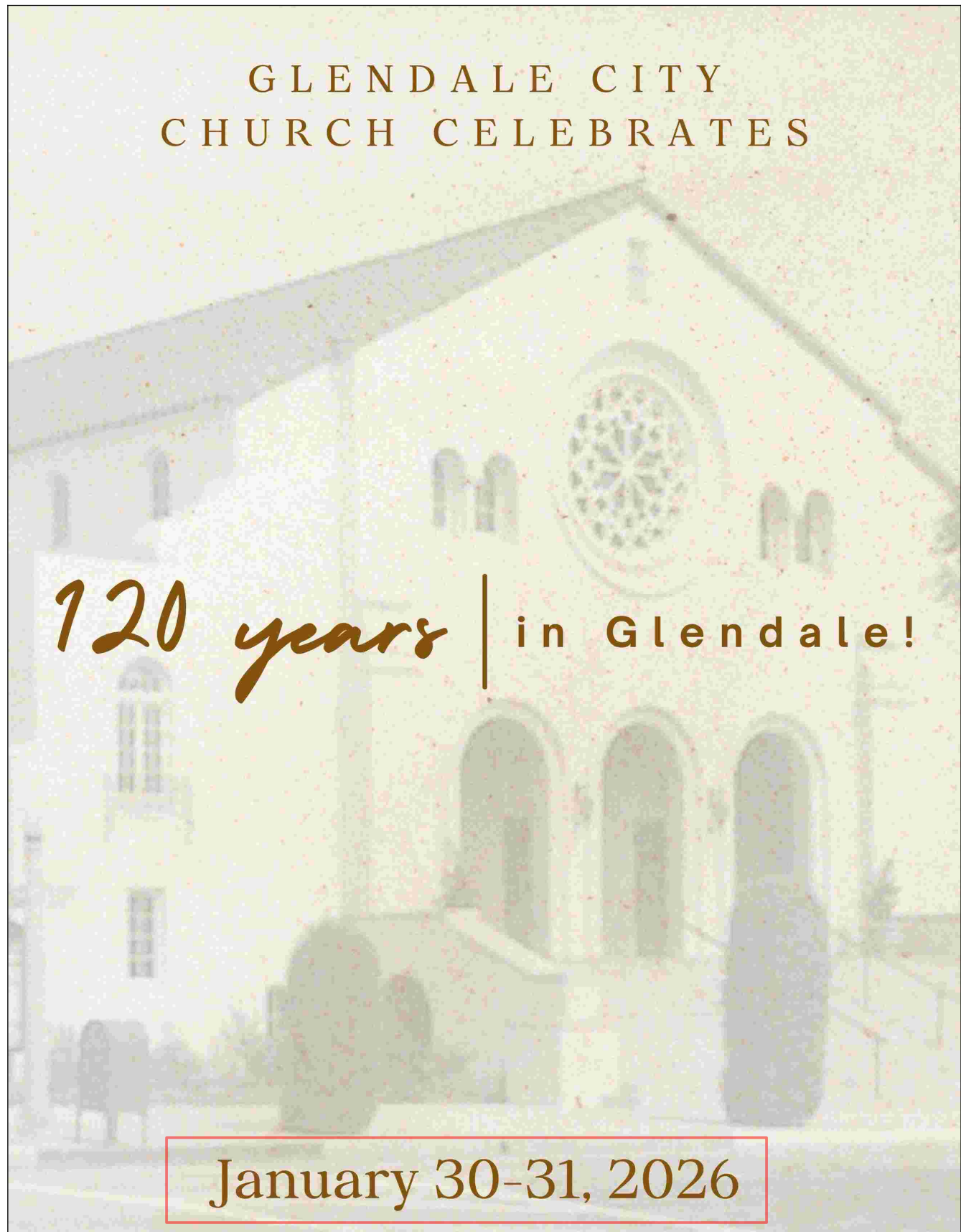


EXHIBIT A.15/2: LGBTQ Pastor & SCC Officers at 120-Year Anniversary of Glendale (January 31, 2026).
Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)

LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

The Way the Lord Has Led Us

"We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history" (LS, 196).

This well-known excerpt, once the theme of GCC's Jubilee celebration, feels especially fitting as we now give thanks for 120 years of being a church.

We do not know exactly who thought of it first, but even before the City of Glendale was incorporated, a handful of faithful souls dared to imagine a place for their faith in the midst of apricot orchards, orange groves, and fields of barley. It must have taken great effort, but the vision became a reality, and in January 1906, the first Glendale Adventist Church was organized.

I'm not sure what kind of community they imagined we would become. I suspect that some of the ways God has led us over the years - the questions we've asked, the people we've welcomed, the paths we've chosen - might have unsettled or even worried those early founders. And yet, what is clear is this: they trusted God enough to place the life of this church in God's hands, allowing the story to unfold beyond their control. Today I am convinced it is this trust that has shaped the church we are today.

We do not know what the future of Glendale City Church will be, or what this place may look like thirty years from now. But we have nothing to fear.

This church - this holy place where questions are welcomed, where difference is honored, and where faith can be lived honestly and held gently - is led by God. This is what we celebrate today. We do so humbly and gratefully, giving thanks to the God who has led us thus far.

Friends, look at where God has led you today. Look at the people God has led to you - and those God has led toward you. Look at the path God has traced for your church. Take stock, give thanks, and find joy in the way the Lord has led us.

-Uriel Herinirina

EXHIBIT A.15/3: LGBTQ Pastor & SCC Officers at 120-Year Anniversary of Glendale (January 31, 2026).
Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)

JAN | 31

Main Service

Prelude **The Church's One Foundation** Kemp L. Smeal
arr. Kemp L. Smeal

Welcome & Announcements Pastor Rebecca Barceló
Associate Pastor

Call to Worship & Opening Prayer Pastor Mike Quishenberry
Former GCC Associate Pastor

We gather, looking back to see the paths taken,
Looking forward to see our path.
We honor those who have gone before us,
Learning from their successes and failures.
We celebrate who we are today,
And welcome the possibilities and opportunities before us.
We gather to worship God,
the God of yesterday, today and tomorrow.

Hymn of Praise **Praise to the Lord, the Almighty** No. 01

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!
O my soul, praise Him, for He is thy health and salvation!
All ye who hear,
Now to His temple draw near;
Join ye in glad adoration!

Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things so wondrously
reigneth,
Shieldeth thee under His wings, yea, so gently sustaineth!
Hast thou not seen
How thy desires e'er have been
Granted in what He ordaineth?

Praise to the Lord, who doth prosper thy work and defend
thee;
Surely His goodness and mercy here daily attend thee.
Ponder anew
What the Almighty can do
If with His love He befriend thee.

EXHIBIT A.15/4: LGBTQ Pastor & SCC Officers at 120-Year Anniversary of Glendale (January 31, 2026).
Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)

Greetings & Litany of Thanks

Pastor Leif Lind
Former GCC Associate Pastor

O Lord our God, for the vision of those who planned for this congregation, and for the commitment and dedication of all who served together at the time of origin,

We give you thanks, O Lord.

For those who have served so faithfully in leadership positions as Pastors, Elders, Deacons, and Staff Members,

We give you thanks, O Lord.

For those who have willingly given of their efforts to teach, encourage, counsel and sponsor,

We give you thanks, O Lord.

For those who have been such a part of our fellowship for so many years, and who will one day serve you in the church triumphant in heaven.

We give you thanks, O Lord.

For the ways in which we have been able to care for one another, support one another on the journey of life, and give strength to one another,

We give you thanks, O Lord.

For baptisms we've celebrated, professions of faith we have heard, and answers to prayer that we have experienced,

We give you thanks, O Lord.

For a congregation that has always desired to worship you faithfully and vibrantly, hearing your Word, singing your praise, and seeking your strength,

We give you thanks, O Lord.

For a commitment to remain true to your Word in a world of confusing and conflicting voices,

We give you thanks, O Lord.

For generosity that has enabled us to reach far beyond this community with the word and witness of the Gospel,

We give you thanks, O Lord.

For hundreds of children and youth who have been here as they were trained in the ways of the Lord and now serve him around the world,

We give you thanks, O Lord.

And for a prospered land that has given us opportunity to thrive and worship and serve for the sake of your Kingdom,

We give you thanks, O Lord.

Anthem I

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing
Arr. by Mack Wilberg

GCC Choir

Professing God's Faithfulness

Anna Greathouse

Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all the generations.

You, O Lord, have been a dwelling place for us and our children.

Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

You, O Lord, have been with us for these 120 years!

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.

You, O Lord, have been our refuge and our strength!

The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

You, O Lord, are the eternal One and we have trusted you.

EXHIBIT A.15/5: LGBTQ Pastor & SCC Officers at 120-Year Anniversary of Glendale (January 31, 2026).
Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)

Anthem II

The Majesty and Glory of Your Name

GCC Choir

Arr. by Tom Fetke

Video Reflections

Pastors Uriel Herinirina & Rebecca Barceló
Senior & Associate Pastor

Words of Blessing from the Wider Church

Elder John Cress,
President of Southern
California Conference and Officers

Anthem III

I Choose Jesus
Arr. Robert Sterling

GCC Choir
Soloist, Jesse Martin

Call to Offering

Doug Schultz
Chair, Board of Elders

Offertory

In the Bleak Midwinter
by Gustav Holst
Arr. by Nicole Chamberlain

Kathy Marsh, Flutist

Glendale City Church is proud to partner with the Noon Concert Series, held in our sanctuary on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month. Coordinated by Jacqueline Suzuki, the series offers high-quality lunch break concerts for the community. Joining us today from the Noon Concert Series is flutist Kathy Marsh.

Scripture Reading

Pastor Anthony Paschal
Former GCC Associate Pastor

Deuteronomy 30:15-20

"See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the Lord your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. But if your heart turns away and you do not hear but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, I declare to you today that you shall certainly perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him, for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the Lord swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob."

EXHIBIT A.15/6: LGBTQ Pastor & SCC Officers at 120-Year Anniversary of Glendale (January 31, 2026).
Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)

Sermon

Pastor Uriel Herinirina
Senior Pastor

A Prayer of Application

Elizabeth Johnston Taylor
Head Elder

Praise be to the Lord, who has given words of life to God's people, just as promised.
Praise be to you, O Lord, for you have given us words of life.

Not one word has failed of all the good promises you have spoken.
Praise be to you, O Lord, for your faithfulness.

And now, O Lord,
we pray for all who are present here today—
the young and the old—
that grounded in your truth, today, once again, we may choose life,
And be formed by your will.
O Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for the children yet to be born,
who will sit in these pews in the years to come,
that they may carry your kingdom into future generations.
O Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for parents, caregivers, and all who nurture the young,
that they may faithfully tell each new generation
of your mercies and your saving love.
O Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for leaders, pastors, and staff,
that their leadership may remain true to your Word
and faithful to your calling.
O Lord, hear our prayer.

And we pray, O Lord, that you would bless our witness,
sending us into our community and into the world,
so that in places of need, your love may be known
and your grace encountered.
O Lord, hear our prayer. Amen.

EXHIBIT A.15/7: LGBTQ Pastor & SCC Officers at 120-Year Anniversary of Glendale (January 31, 2026).
Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)

Closing Hymn

God, When You Called Our Church by Grace

by Carolyn

(To the tune of "My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less")

Winfrey Gillette

God, when you called our church by grace,
This land was such a different place.
Yet what you spoke remains the same:
"I'll be with you! Go in my name!"

Your promise is for everyone:
You call us here; your word is true!
We'll be a faithful church for you!

Lord Jesus Christ, our cornerstone,
You meet us here; we're not alone!
Through times of joy, through tears long-wept,
You are God's love, God's promise kept.

Your promise is for everyone:
You love us all, you make us new!
We'll be a loving church for you!

O Holy Spirit, wind and flame,
You send us out in Jesus' name.
You give us gifts that we may share
God's love and justice everywhere.

Your promise is for everyone:
You give us gifts, and work to do!
We'll be a serving church for you!

Benediction

Pastor Uriel Herinirina
Senior Pastor

Choral Benediction

On Eagle's Wings

GCC Choir

Postlude

The Solid Rock
arr. Kemp L Smeal

Kemp L. Smeal

We invite everyone to proceed to the sanctuary's front steps **immediately after the postlude** for the 120th Anniversary group photo. All are then welcome to join us for a shared meal in the Fellowship Hall. Thank you!

EXHIBIT A.15/8: LGBTQ Pastor & SCC Officers at 120-Year Anniversary of Glendale (January 31, 2026).
Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)

Mission & Inclusivity Statement

Our mission at Glendale City Church is to reveal the love of Christ in all its tenderness and grandeur to the community in which we live.

We desire to embrace the wonder of humanity in its complexity, diversity, and beauty—and to do so without precondition. In short, we yearn to reveal the splendor of Christ and to affirm the worth of all people.

We do not discriminate based on gender, race, culture, wealth, education, religious background or sexual orientation. If you are learning to love God and others, you belong here. God excludes no one. Neither do we.

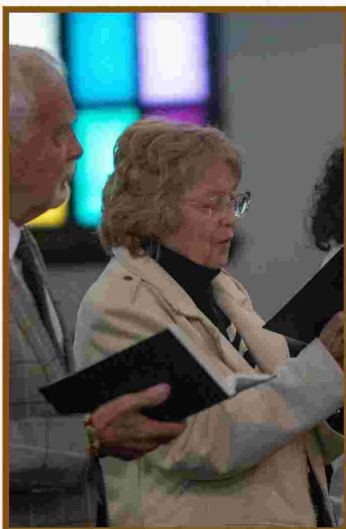


EXHIBIT A.15/9: LGBTQ Pastor & SCC Officers at 120-Year Anniversary of Glendale (January 31, 2026).
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 00:27)

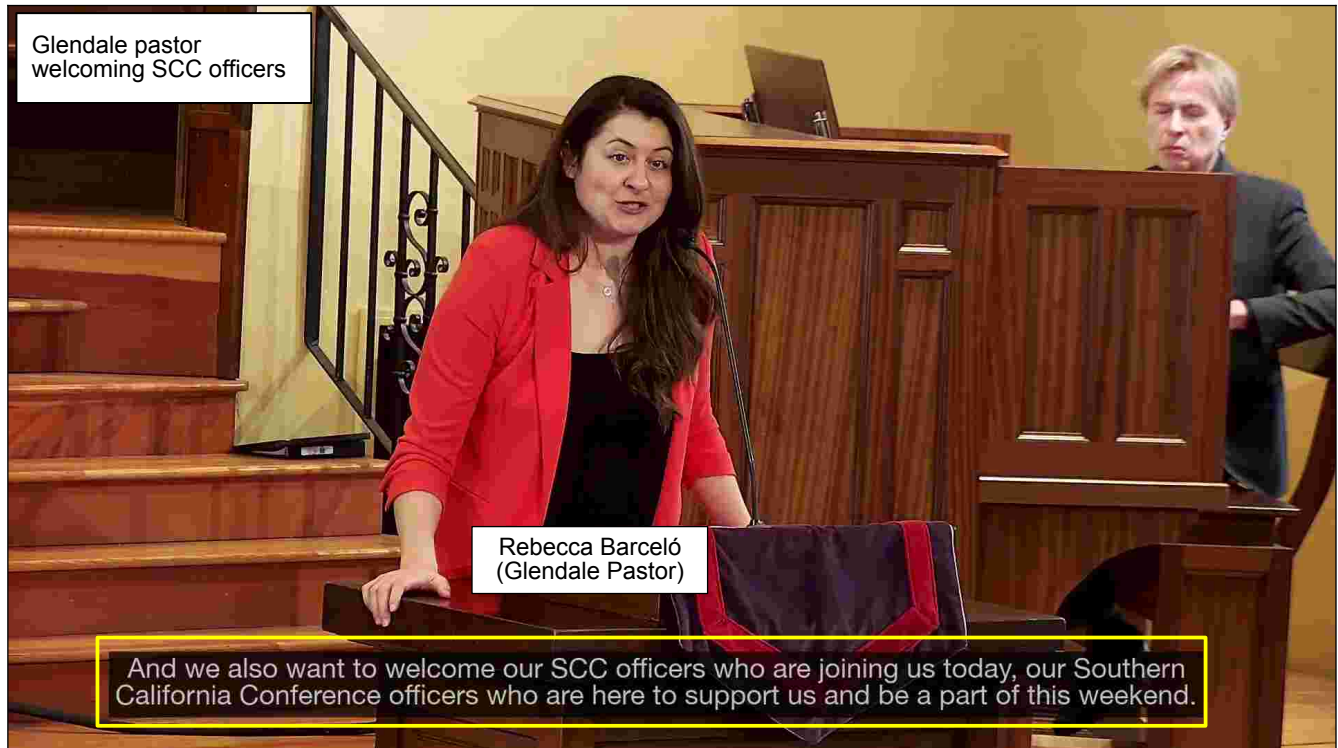


EXHIBIT A.15/10: LGBTQ Pastor & SCC Officers at 120-Year Anniversary of Glendale (January 31, 2026).
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 07:07)

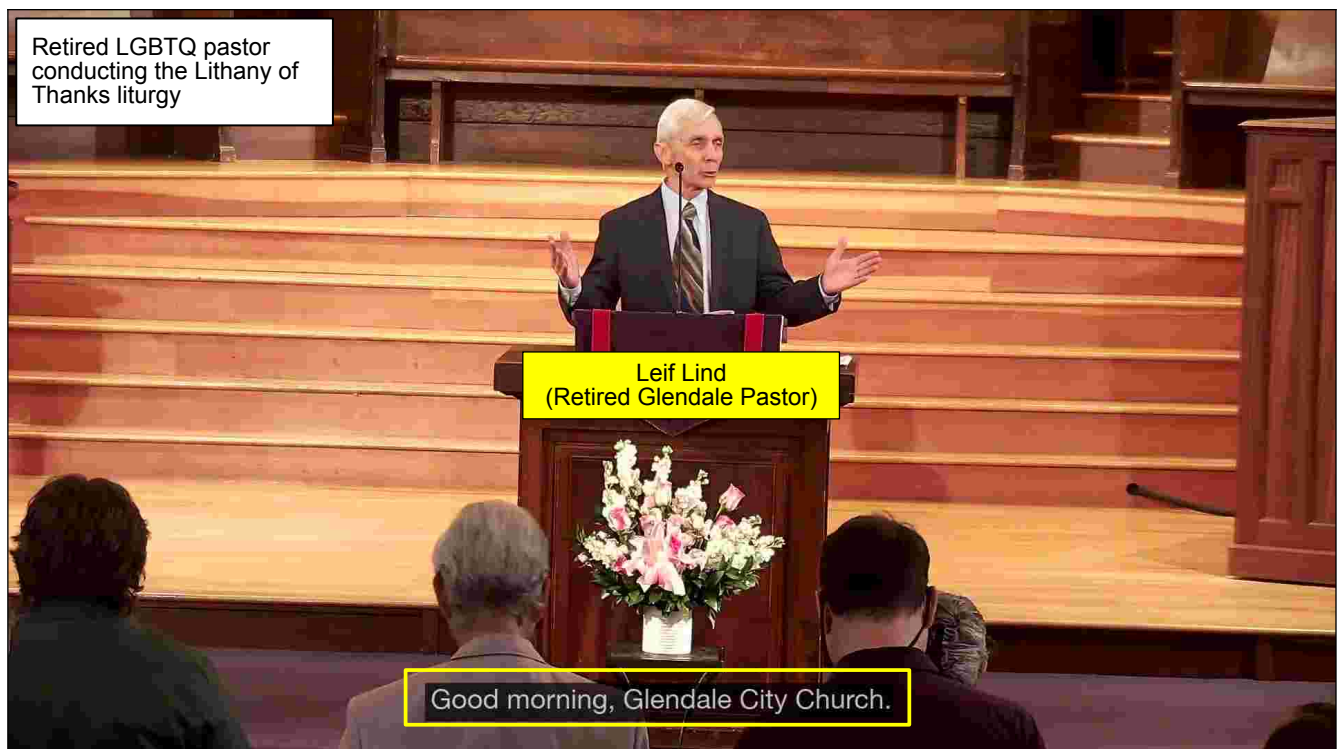


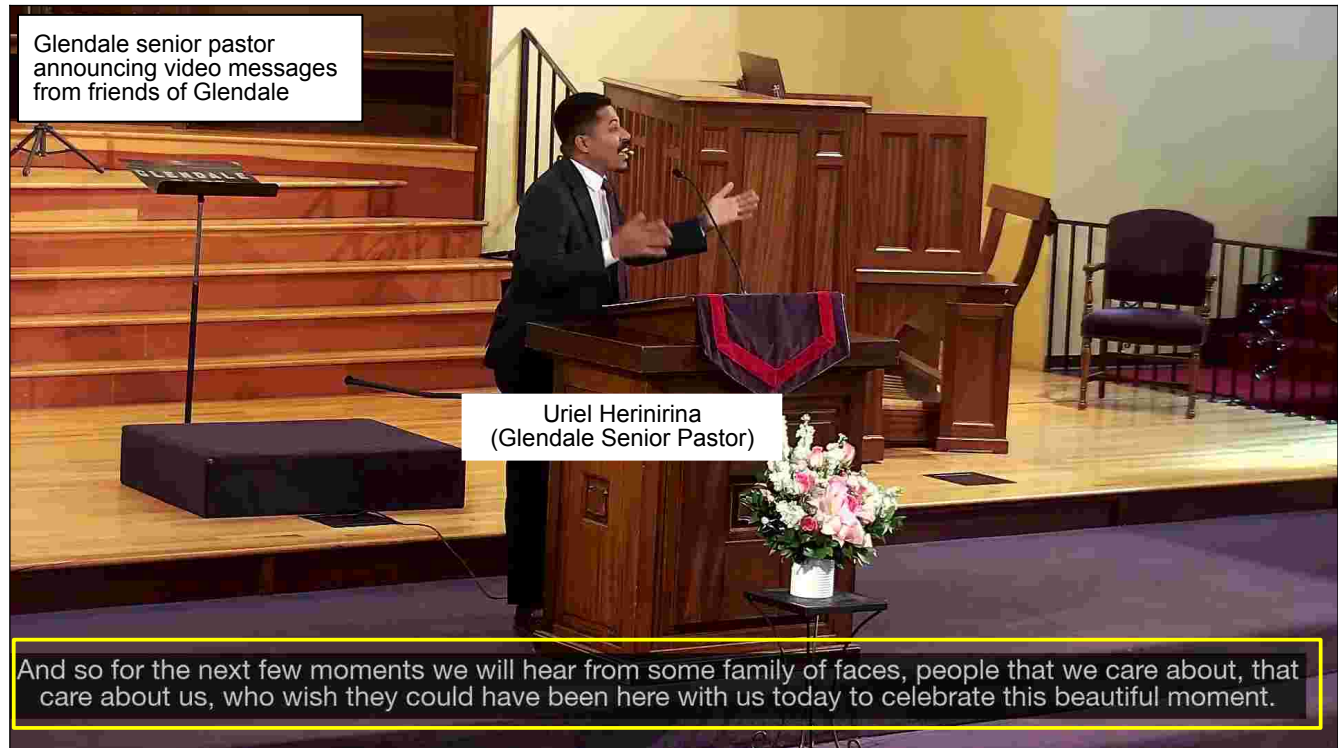
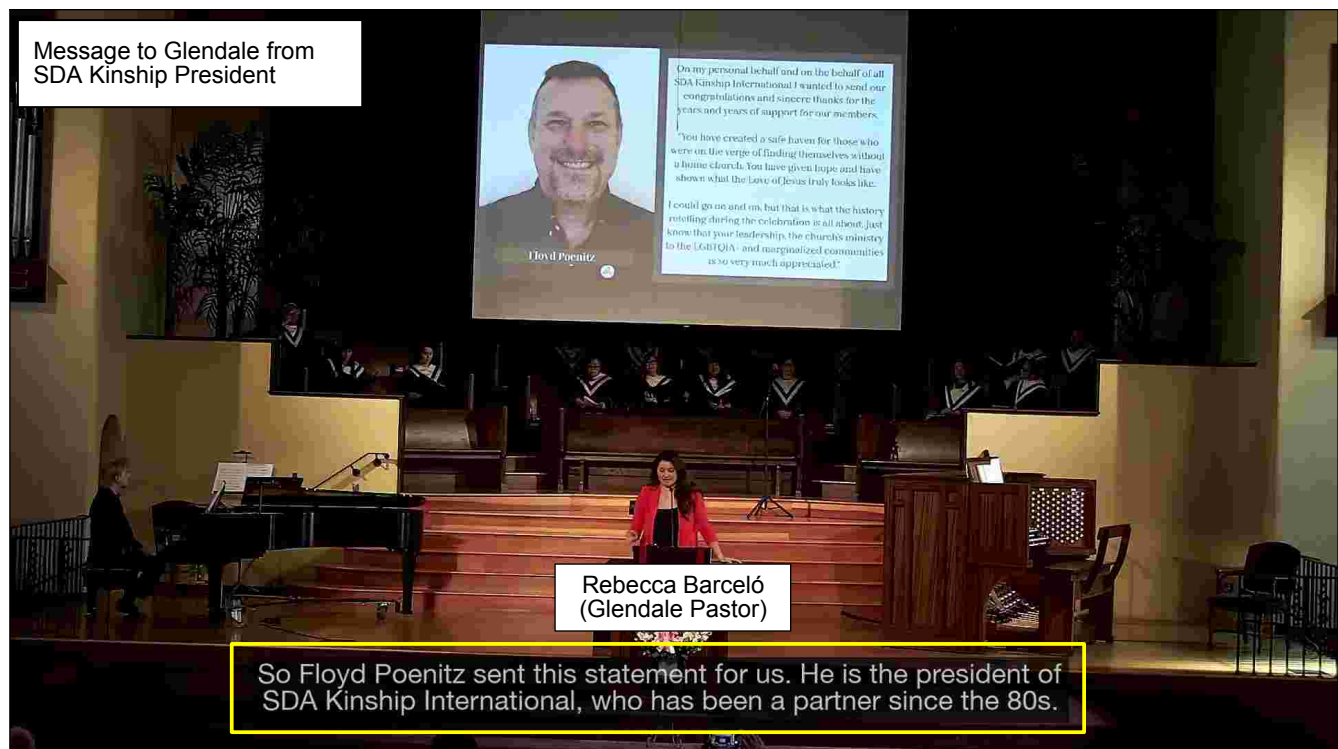
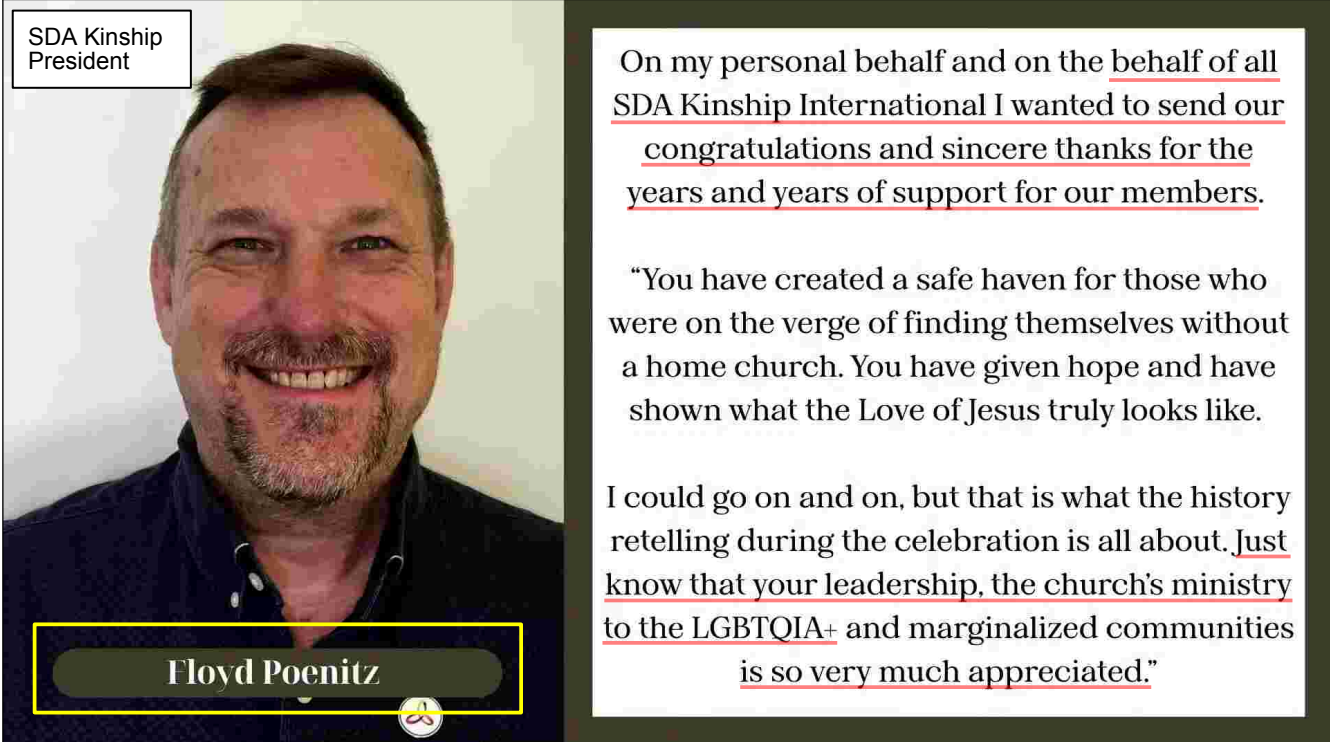
EXHIBIT A.15/11: LGBTQ Pastor & SCC Officers at 120-Year Anniversary of Glendale (January 31, 2026).Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 26:28)**EXHIBIT A.15/12:** LGBTQ Pastor & SCC Officers at 120-Year Anniversary of Glendale (January 31, 2026).Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 32:57)

EXHIBIT A.15/13: LGBTQ Pastor & SCC Officers at 120-Year Anniversary of Glendale (January 31, 2026).
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 32:57) / Image below shown on screen.



SDA Kinship President

On my personal behalf and on the behalf of all SDA Kinship International I wanted to send our congratulations and sincere thanks for the years and years of support for our members.

“You have created a safe haven for those who were on the verge of finding themselves without a home church. You have given hope and have shown what the Love of Jesus truly looks like.

I could go on and on, but that is what the history retelling during the celebration is all about. Just know that your leadership, the church’s ministry to the LGBTQIA+ and marginalized communities is so very much appreciated.”

Floyd Poenitz

EXHIBIT A.15/14: LGBTQ Pastor & SCC Officers at 120-Year Anniversary of Glendale (January 31, 2026).
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 36:33)



Introducing SCC Officers

Rebecca Barceló
(Glendale Pastor)

Now, I would like to welcome our Southern California Conference officers, Pastors Cress, Chan, and Poynter, who are here with their families today. We are so honored to have them.

EXHIBIT A.15/15: LGBTQ Pastor & SCC Officers at 120-Year Anniversary of Glendale (January 31, 2026).
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 36:59)

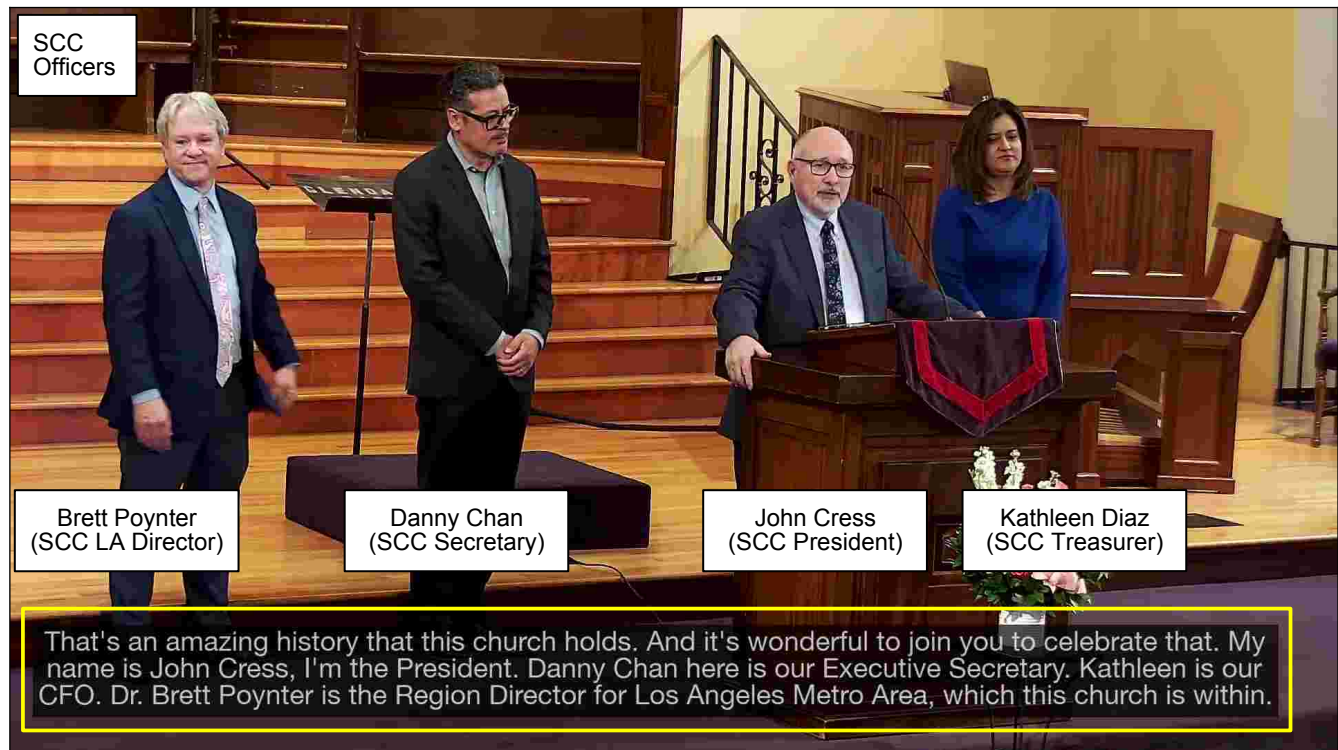


EXHIBIT A.15/16: LGBTQ Pastor & SCC Officers at 120-Year Anniversary of Glendale (January 31, 2026).
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 38:10)

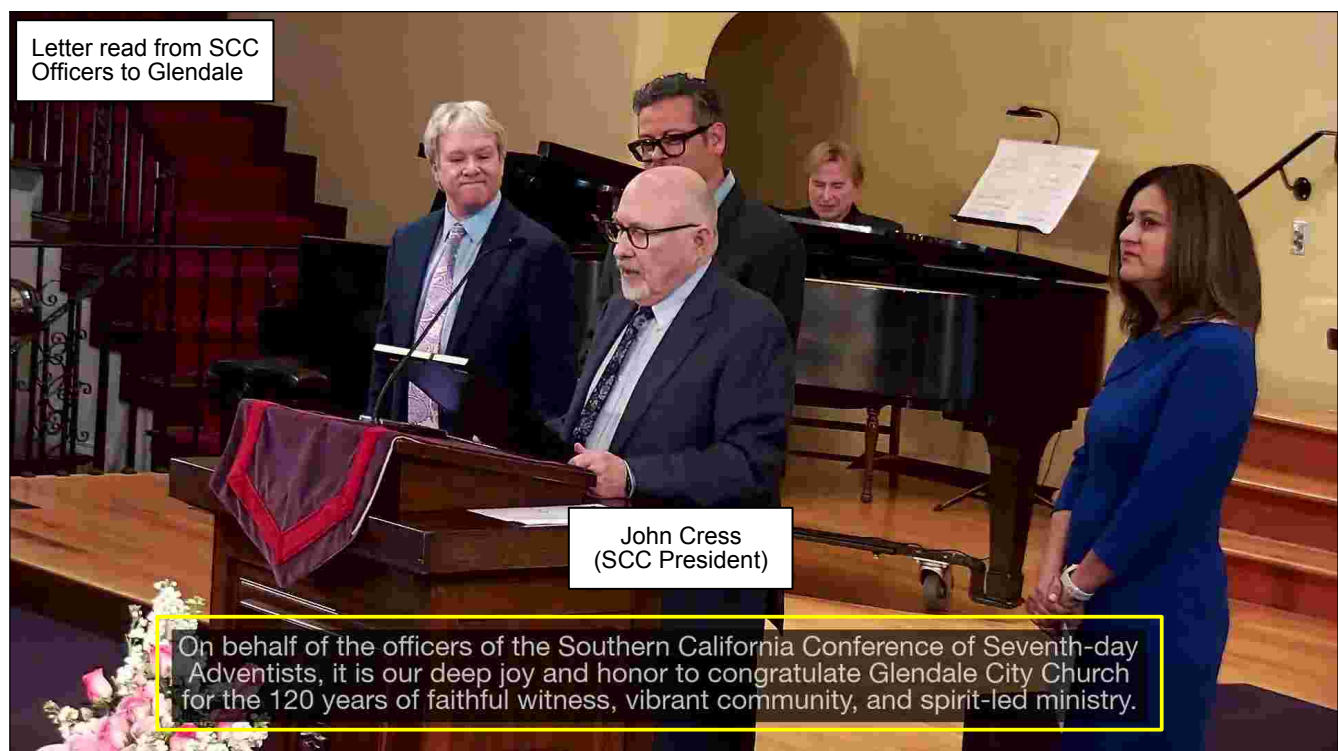


EXHIBIT A.15/16: Continued from previous page.

FULL TRANSCRIPT

FRAMED CONGRATULATION LETTER

FROM SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE

TO GLENDALE CITY CHURCH

Read by JOHN CRESS

Current President, Southern California Conference Officers to the Glendale City Church

January 31, 2026

"On behalf of the officers of the Southern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, it is our deep joy and honor to congratulate Glendale City Church for the 120 years of faithful witness, vibrant community, and spirit-led ministry."

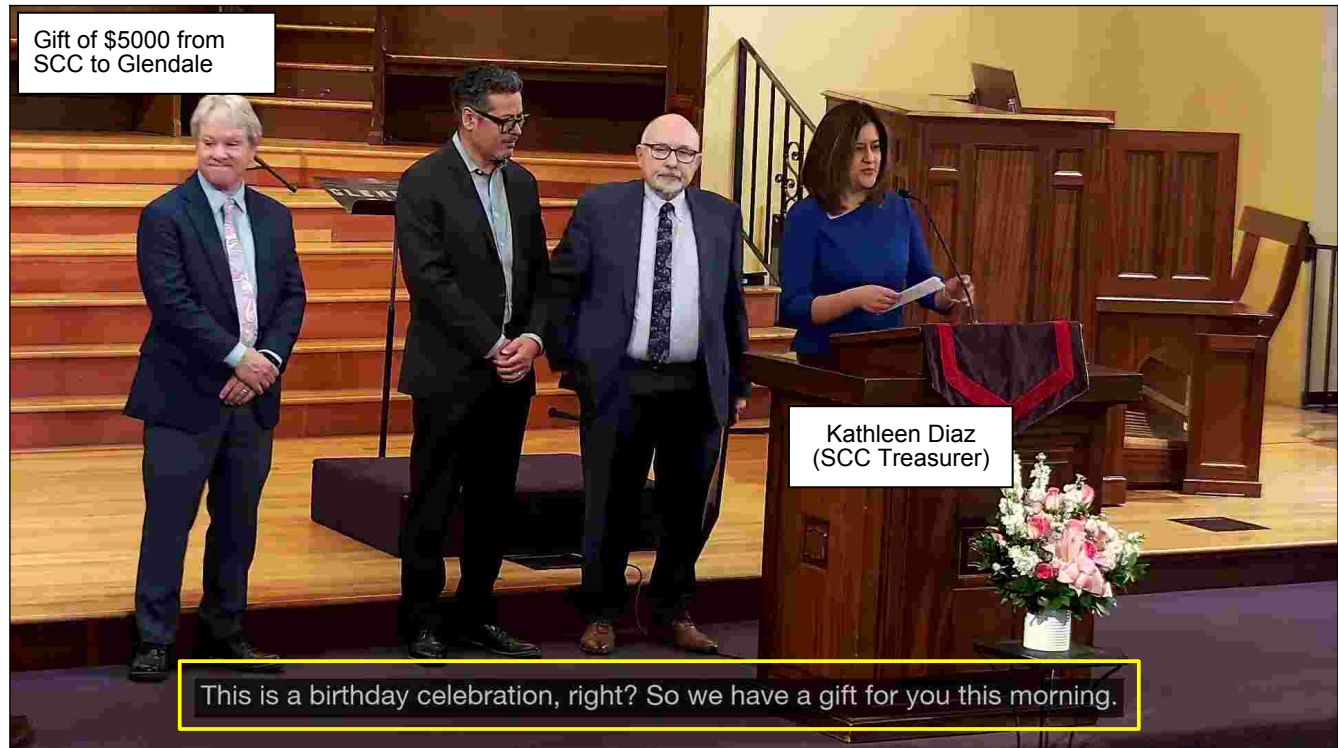
Since your organization in the early 20th century, within just five years of the founding of the Southern California Conference itself, Glendale City Church has stood as one of the earliest enduring progressive expressions of Adventist faith in this region. Over 12 decades, you have embodied the spirit of welcome and compassion and justice that reflects the heart of Christ. Your congregation's commitment to do justice, love mercy, walk humbly has shaped the way you worship, serve, and engage the broader Glendale community.

From providing mercy and practical care through food assistance, prayer support, outreach partnerships, to courageous and compassionate ministry that embraces neighbors from all backgrounds, your church truly lives out the gospel in action. Glendale City Church has been and continues to be a community where all are welcome and known, where God excludes no one and neither do you. This Christ-centered community invites individuals and families to discover belonging, grow spiritually, and find purpose in life-giving relationships rooted in God's love.

Throughout your history, this congregation has served as a place of worship and spiritual formation, where generations have gathered for Sabbath worship, prayer, and music that glorifies God. It's a hub of the community engagement, participating in collaborative efforts to bring peace, justice, and tangible care to individuals and families across Glendale. A source of encouragement and connection, helping people grow in faith, serve with compassion, and pursue justice in the city and beyond.

As one of the earliest churches in our conference, your enduring legacy testifies of God's faithfulness and the stewardship of countless leaders, volunteers, pastors, and members who have invested their lives in this congregation. We give thanks to God for your vibrant community that embodies what it means to be living relational expression of Jesus' love in a diverse urban context. Congratulations on 120 years of ministry.

May the Lord continue to richly bless your worship, your witness, and your work in loving God and your neighbors. Congratulations. Congratulations."

EXHIBIT A.15/17: LGBTQ Pastor & SCC Officers at 120-Year Anniversary of Glendale (January 31, 2026).Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 41:31)**FULL TRANSCRIPT****BIRTHDAY GIFT MESSAGE****FROM SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE
TO GLENDALE CITY CHURCH****Read by KATHLEEN DIAZ****Current Treasurer, Southern California Conference****January 31, 2026**

Dear church family, it is truly a privilege to be with you this morning as we celebrate 120th anniversary of the Glendale City Church.

For more than a century, this church has been a light in this community, and that faithfulness has not gone unnoticed. Throughout the years, you have embraced the mission of loving your community, welcoming others, and sharing the hope and love of Jesus. Each member has taken the mission personally, and today we honor that dedication and service.

Because of your continued commitment to ministry and outreach, the Southern California Conference would like to express its support by presenting a gift of \$5,000 to help your ministries continue to grow and reach even more lives until Jesus comes back. And if the Lord has not yet returned, we look forward to gathering and giving again another praise to God celebrating 125th anniversary of this church, 120 years of proclaiming that Jesus loves all people, that he welcomes everyone, and that he is coming again soon.

On behalf of the Southern California Conference, thank you for your faithfulness, your service, and your powerful witness in this community. May God continue to bless this church and its ministry. Praise God.

Cordially, the Southern California Conference.

EXHIBIT A.15/18: LGBTQ Pastor & SCC Officers at 120-Year Anniversary of Glendale (January 31, 2026).
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 43:37)



EXHIBIT A.15/19: LGBTQ Pastor & SCC Officers at 120-Year Anniversary of Glendale (January 31, 2026).
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 1:06:39)



EXHIBIT A.16/1: LGBTQ Pastor & SCC Officers at 120-Year Anniversary of Glendale (January 31, 2026).
Source: [Southern California Conference Article](#) (February 3, 2026)

Page 1

Glendale City Church Celebrates 120 Years of Faith, Community, and Service – Southern California Conference
<https://scc.adventist.org/stories/glendale-city-church-celebrates-120-years-of-faith-community-and-service/>

[About Us](#)[Administration](#)[Departments & Ministries](#)

Home > Posts > Glendale City Church Celebrates 120 Years of Faith, Community, and Service

Glendale City Church Celebrates 120 Years of Faith, Community, and Service

February 3, 2026

By Araya Moss

Category: Stories

Share    

lametroregion



This January marked a significant milestone for the Glendale City church (GCC) as it celebrated 120 years of faith, community, and service. The two-day celebration highlighted its rich history, commitment to Christ, creative ministry, and love for the community.

In January 1906, a group of people met in the parlor of the Glendale Sanitarium (now Adventist Health Glendale) to organize the first Adventist church in Glendale. After meeting for several years, a church building was purchased in 1911 located on the corner of Wilson Ave. and Isabel St. Due to rapid growth, the church was moved one block to its present and expanded location on the corner of Isabel St. and California Ave. In January 1930, a fire destroyed this building, but members worked quickly to have the structure rebuilt for \$69,000. Amid the Great Depression, the new building was dedicated two years later in 1932.

EXHIBIT A.16/2: LGBTQ Pastor & SCC Officers at 120-Year Anniversary of Glendale (January 31, 2026).
Source: [Southern California Conference Article](#) (February 3, 2026)

Page 2

Glendale City Church Celebrates 120 Years of Faith, Community, and Service – Southern California Conference
<https://scc.adventist.org/stories/glendale-city-church-celebrates-120-years-of-faith-community-and-service/>



The officers of the Southern California Conference (SCC) shared a congratulatory letter and gifted the congregation with \$5,000. From left to right: John H. Cress, SCC president; Herinirina; Brett Poynter, SCC Los Angeles Metro Region director; Danny Chan, SCC executive secretary; and Kathleen V. Diaz, SCC Treasurer/CFO.

taken from Deuteronomy 30, he encouraged the congregation to “choose life—shaped by divine presence and divine guidance that generates more life for others. We know that it’s the only way that we can continue to be a church that represents what God is doing in this world.”

The service reflected its tradition of music performance by featuring the GCC choir and flutist Kathy Marsh, who is a regular performer at the noon concert series the church holds every first and third Wednesday of the month in the sanctuary. The day concluded with an afternoon lunch, organ concert by Kemp Smeal, the church’s organist for more than 25 years, and a look toward the future.

Throughout the past 12 decades, the church has become known to the city as a welcoming place for worship and community care. GCC has advocated for the arts, families, social justice reforms, and more. Through partnerships with organizations in the city and beyond, the church lives out its mission to “reveal the love of Christ in all its tenderness and grandeur to the community in which we live.”

Celebrations began Friday night with a contemporary worship service in the chapel with guest speaker Pastor Andy Palomares. Sabbath morning started with breakfast in the courtyard followed by the history of Glendale City church lecture presented by Michael Scofield, MBA, assistant clinical professor, school of nursing at Loma Linda University.

“We are not celebrating this 120th anniversary in a vacuum; we are celebrating this in a very particular time in the history of our city and our country where we find ourselves being pulled in different directions,” said GCC Senior Pastor Uriel Herinirina. In his message



EXHIBIT A.16/3: LGBTQ Pastor & SCC Officers at 120-Year Anniversary of Glendale (January 31, 2026).
Source: [Southern California Conference Video](#) (February 3, 2026) (Timestamp: 00:00)

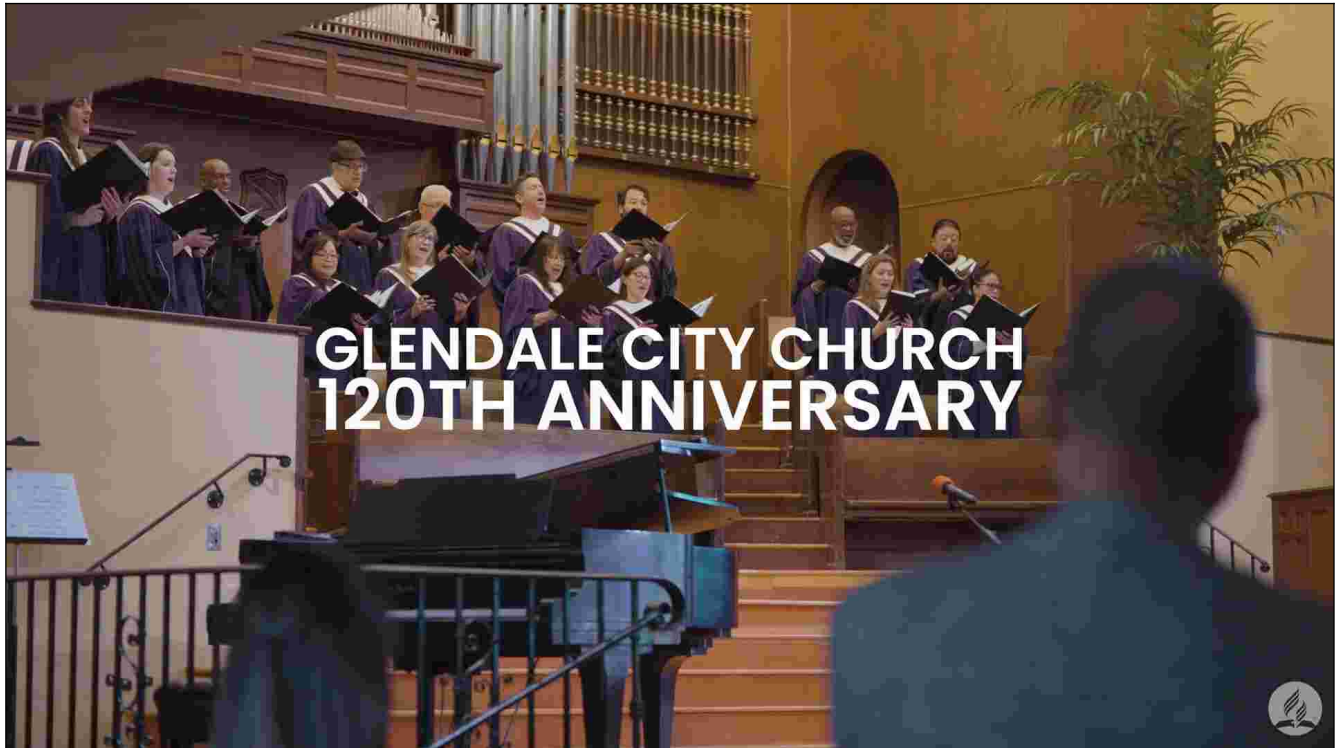
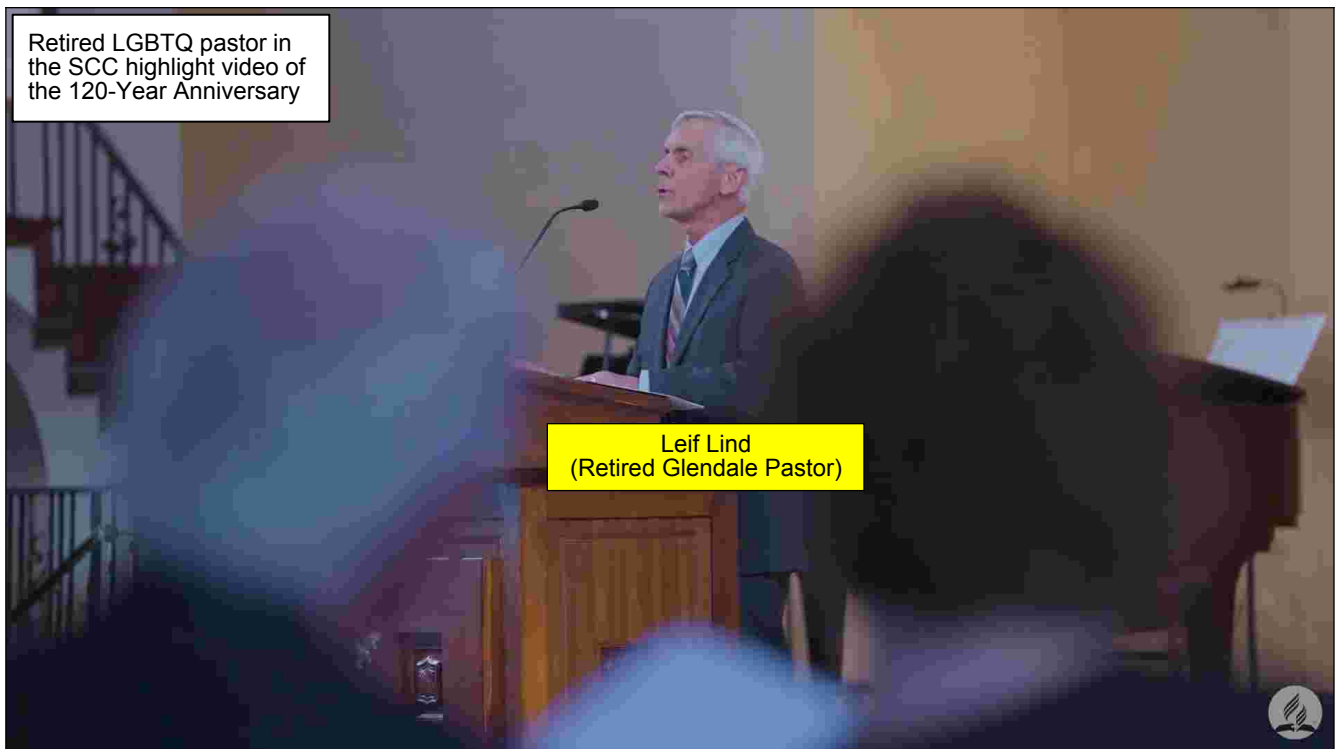


EXHIBIT A.16/4: LGBTQ Pastor & SCC Officers at 120-Year Anniversary of Glendale (January 31, 2026).
Source: [Southern California Conference Video](#) (February 3, 2026) (Timestamp: 00:12)



Retired LGBTQ pastor in
the SCC highlight video of
the 120-Year Anniversary

Leif Lind
(Retired Glendale Pastor)

EXHIBIT A.16/5: LGBTQ Pastor & SCC Officers at 120-Year Anniversary of Glendale (January 31, 2026).
Source: [Southern California Conference Video](#) (February 3, 2026) (Timestamp: 01:08)

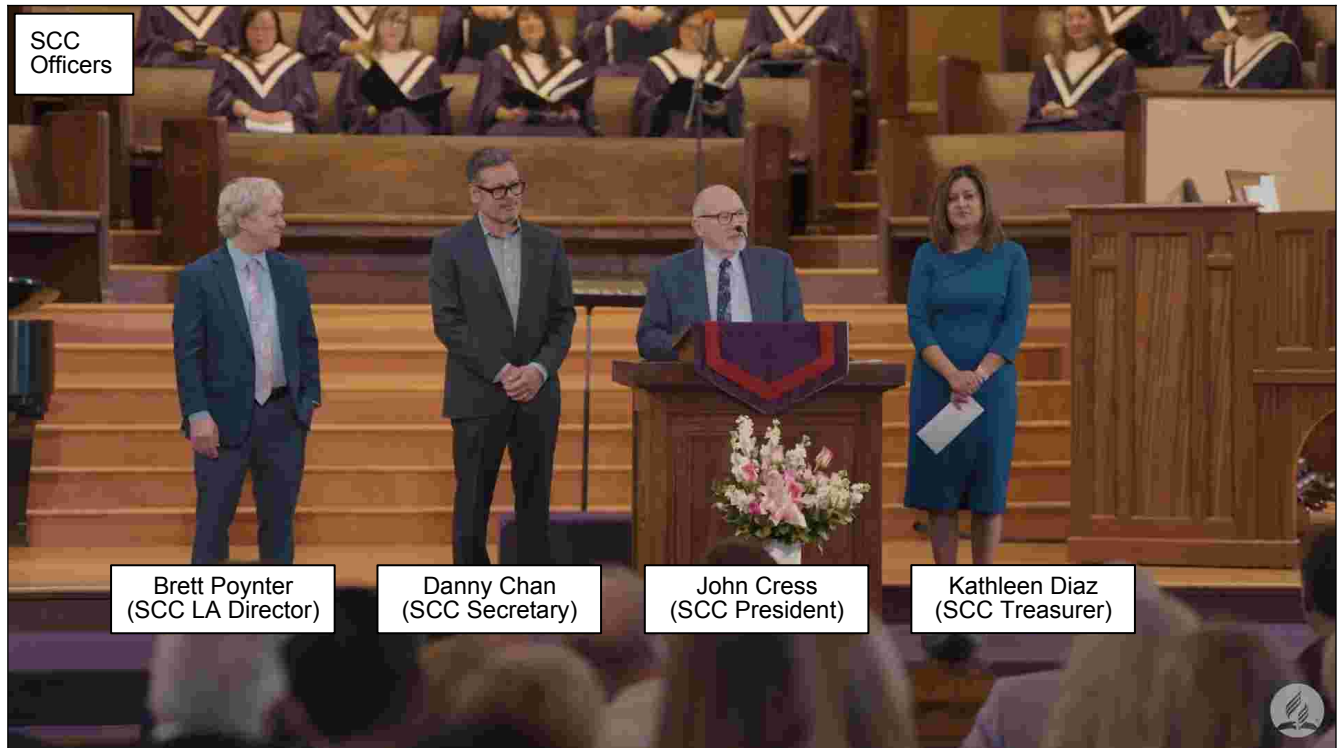


EXHIBIT A.16/6: LGBTQ Pastor & SCC Officers at 120-Year Anniversary of Glendale (January 31, 2026).
Source: [Southern California Conference Video](#) (February 3, 2026) (Timestamp: 02:32)

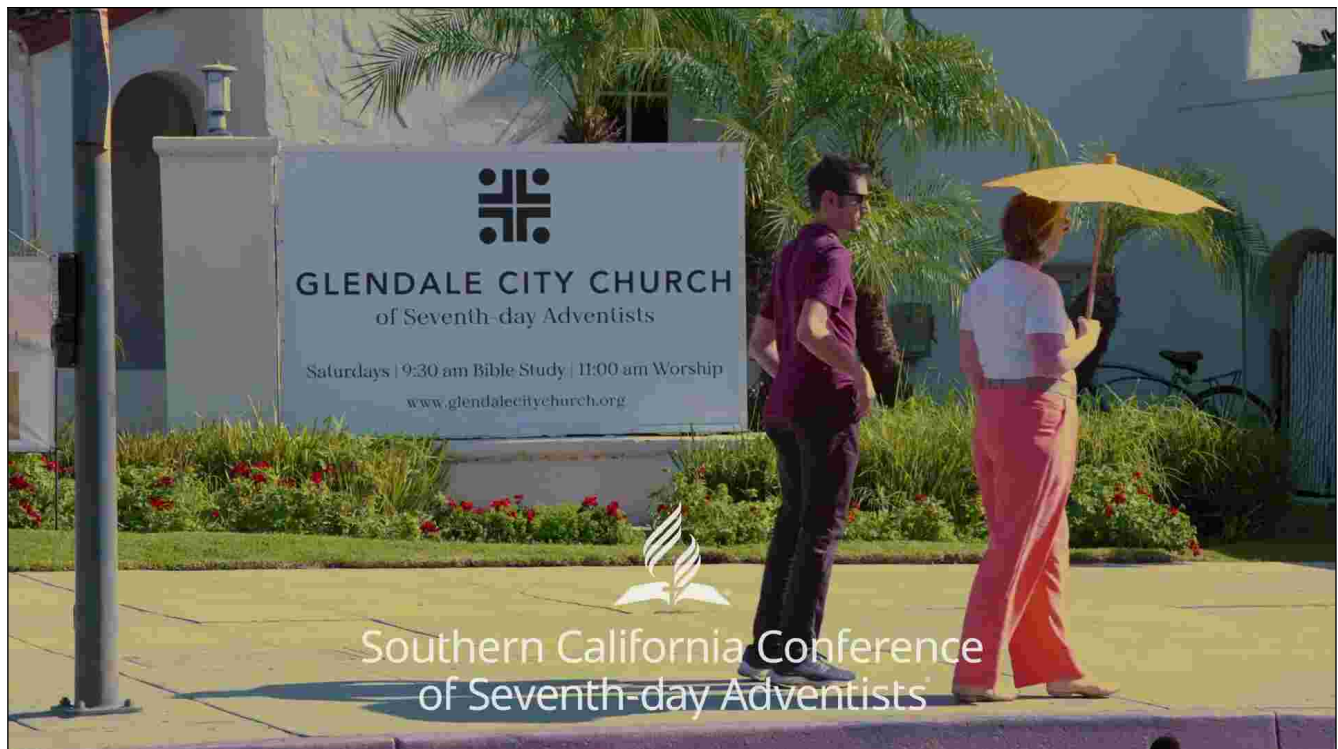
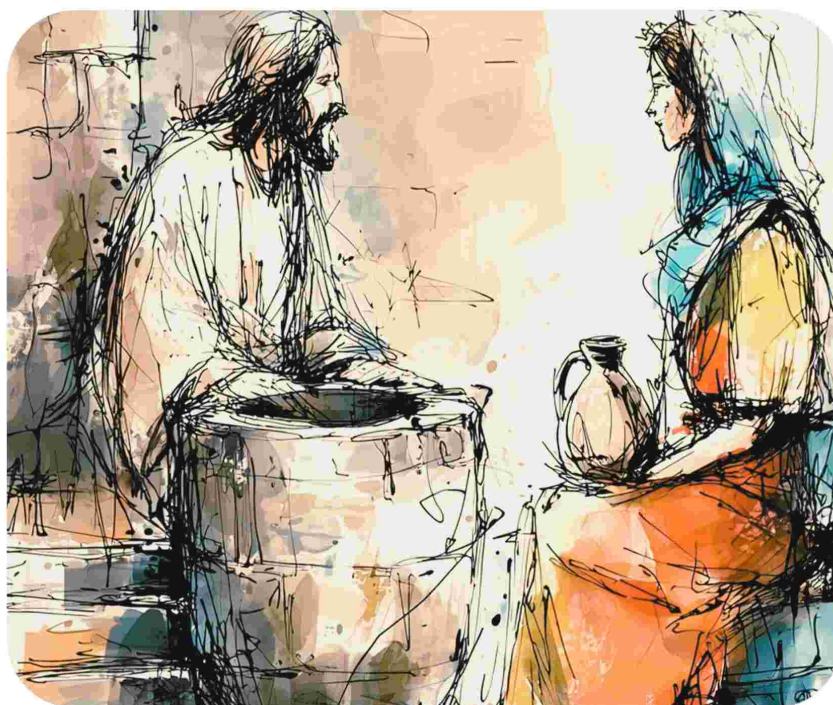


EXHIBIT A.17/1: LGBTQ Pastor Continues Preaching at Glendale City Church (March 7, 2026).

Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)



GLENDALE CITY CHURCH of Seventh-day Adventists



March 7, 2026

EXHIBIT A.17/2: LGBTQ Pastor Continues Preaching at Glendale City Church (March 7, 2026).Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)

WORSHIP SERVICE

(Scripture continued)

He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back." "I have no husband," she replied. Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true."

"Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet.... I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us."

Then Jesus declared, "I, the one speaking to you — I am he...." Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?" They came out of the town and made their way toward him....

So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. And because of his words many more became believers. They said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world."

*Sermon***The Road Less Traveled: Strangers at High Noon**

Leif Lind

*Hymn of Response***The Water God Gives Us**

Carolyn

Hymn Tune: "St. Denio"

Winfrey Gillette

- 1) The water God gives us in wondrous supply is water that's living and never runs dry.
For everyone drinks and is thirsty again, but God's living water gives life without end.
- 2) O God, we confess that we seek empty things; we strive after wealth and the comfort it brings.
We buy things in hopes that our spirits will soar, yet still we are thirsty and left wanting more.
- 3) Then just like that woman who went to the well, we hear you, O Christ, and the truth that you tell.
You know who we are and you know what we've been — you know us and love us in spite of our sin.
- 4) The gift that you give is the greatest of wealth: You give living water! You give us yourself!
May we, like that woman, go back where we live and tell those we know of the life that you give.

Benediction

Leif Lind

Postlude

Chorale Improvisation on "Now Thank We All Our God"
by Sigrid Karg-Elert

Kemp
Smeal

EXHIBIT A.17/3: LGBTQ Pastor Continues Preaching at Glendale City Church (March 7, 2026).
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 33:44)

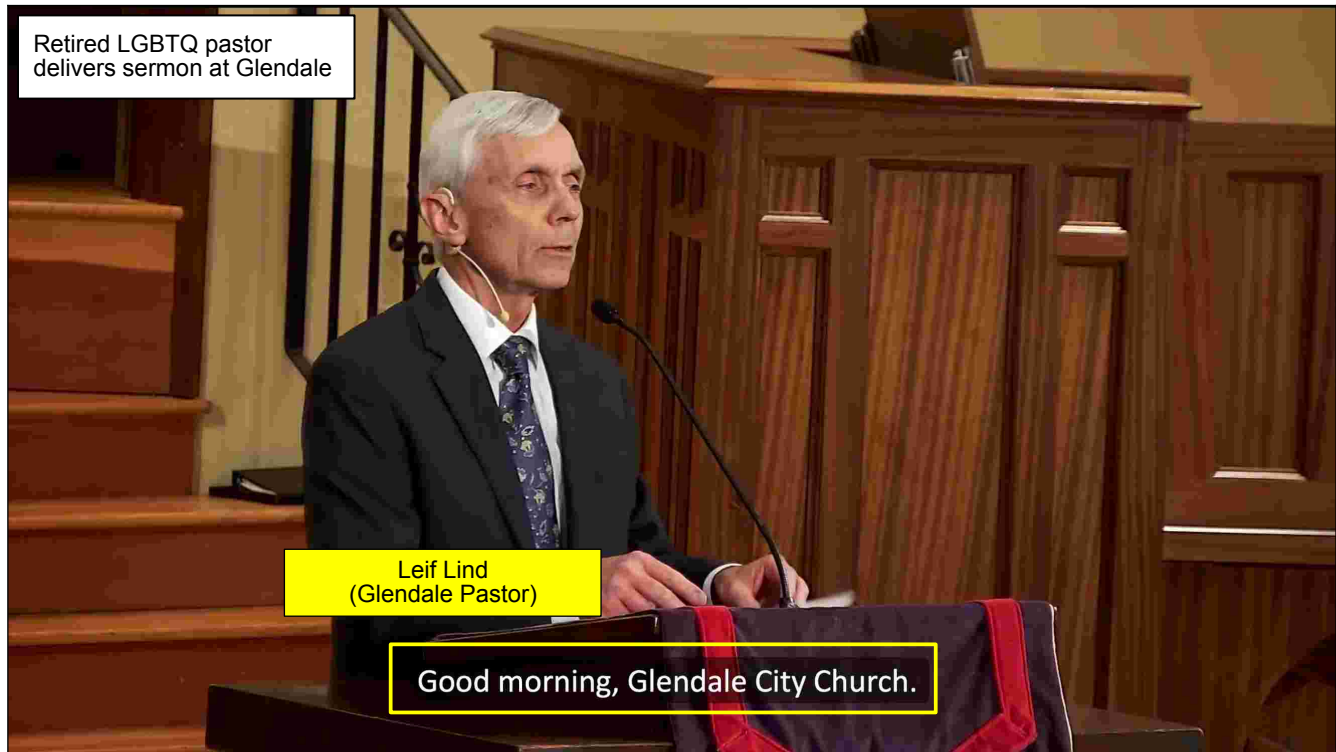


EXHIBIT A.18/1: LGBTQ Pastor Continues Preaching at Glendale City Church (July 11, 2026).
Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)



GLENDALE CITY CHURCH of Seventh-day Adventists



July 11, 2026

EXHIBIT A.18/2: LGBTQ Pastor Continues Preaching at Glendale City Church (July 11, 2026).

Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)

WORSHIP SERVICE

(Scripture Continued)

“A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop — a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. Whoever has ears, let them hear.”

The disciples came to him and asked, “Why do you speak to the people in parables?” He replied, “Because the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. Whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. This is why I speak to them in parables: Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand.”

“Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path. The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful. But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.”

Sermon

“Sow What? Seeds of Promise”

Leif Lind

EXHIBIT A.18/3: LGBTQ Pastor Continues Preaching at Glendale City Church (July 11, 2026).

Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)

WORSHIP SERVICE

Offertory

There Is A Balm in Gilead
arr. by Margaret Dorn & Peter Link

Becca Tomasko

Hymn of Response

"In the Bulb There Is a Flower"
by Natalie Sleeth, 1985

Tune: Beecher

(1) In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree;
In cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free!
In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be,
Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

(2) There's a song in every silence, seeking word and melody;
There's a dawn for every darkness, bringing hope to you and me.
From the past will come the future; what it holds, a mystery,
Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

(3) In our end is our beginning; in our time, infinity;
In our doubt there is believing; in our life, eternity.
In our death, a resurrection; at the last, a victory,
Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

Benediction

Leif Lind

Postlude

Praise the Lord With Drums and Cymbals
Sigfrid Karg-Elert

Kemp Smeal



EXHIBIT A.18/4: LGBTQ Pastor Continues Preaching at Glendale City Church (July 11, 2026).

Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 24:44)

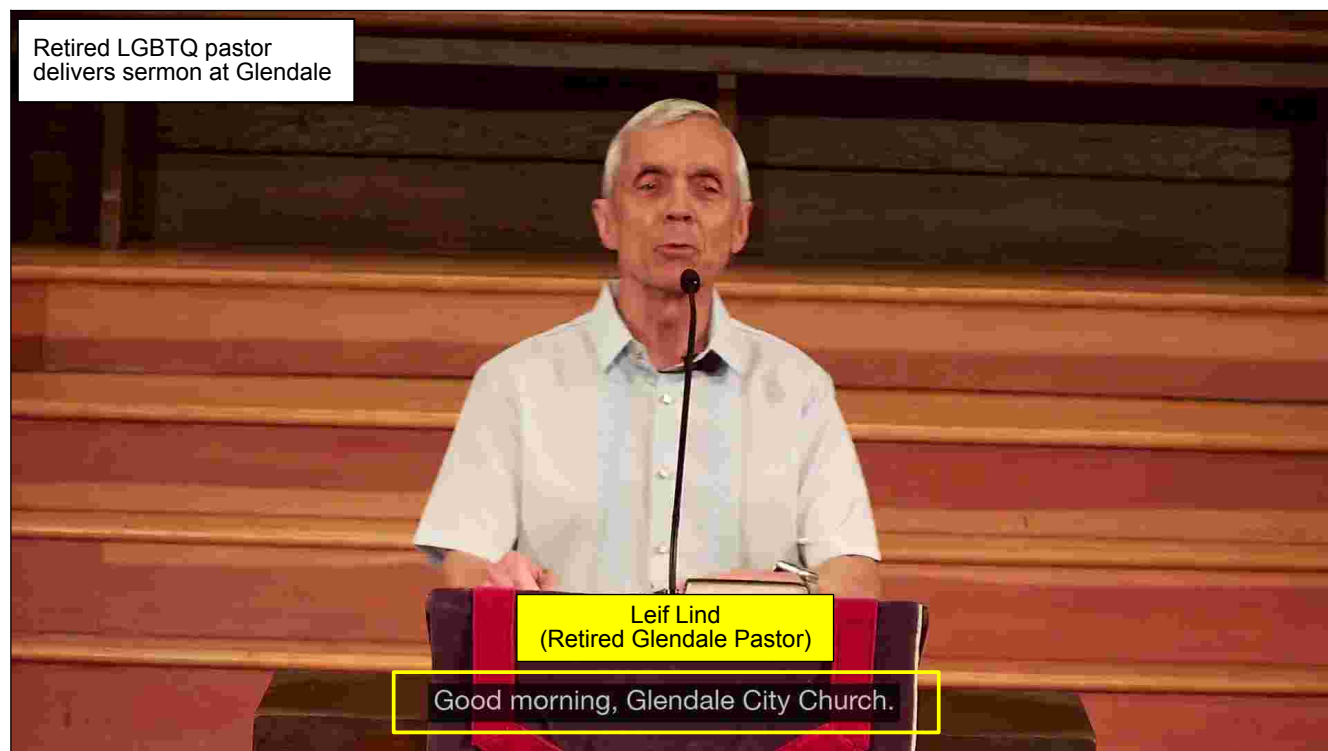


EXHIBIT A.19/1: Pride Month Events with Glendale City Church (June 2026).
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (June 23, 2026)

Page 1

"We Are Here." Glendale City Church Attends Pride in the Park - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/news/reports/we-are-here-glendale-city-church-attends-pride-in-the-park/>

SPECTRUM

Creating community through conversation
Seventh-day Adventist supported since 1969



"We Are Here." Glendale City Church Attends Pride in the Park

Tony Biehl | June 23, 2026 | Reports 🕒 2 min. read



Earlier this month, the Glendale City Church in Glendale, California, was invited to join GlendaleOUT's Pride in the Park event—a bring your own lunch picnic in Adam's Square Mini Park a couple of miles from the church. To honor our LGBTQ+ siblings, about a dozen of us trundled down to the park after church. I like to attend Pride events, so I looked forward to this one. Parking, however, was impossible. I wandered in the parking wilderness for a while, despairing at the sight of what seemed like endless cars and no spaces until a spot finally appeared—Yay!

I clumped two blocks down the street and over a crosswalk with earth tone patterns artistically adorning it—*nice*. The Mini Park was indeed mini, though well maintained—its central a retired 50s gas station building which served as the main attraction, decorated with Pride banners. There was a crowd, of course, but not overwhelming, and I easily found our group sitting on blankets under a small tree. Since my aging body does not like blankets on the ground—let alone getting on them—I unfolded my special cane into a seat and sat. I munched on my lunch along with everyone else (their own lunches, not mine). Our pastor offered me some chips the church had brought and his wife loaned me a little cloth stand for my soda. They also brought pie for dessert!

EXHIBIT A.19/2: Pride Month Events with Glendale City Church (June 2026).
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](https://spectrummagazine.org/news/reports/we-are-here-glendale-city-church-attends-pride-in-the-park/) (June 23, 2026)

Page 2

"We Are Here." Glendale City Church Attends Pride in the Park - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/news/reports/we-are-here-glendale-city-church-attends-pride-in-the-park/>



The annual Pride in the Park event is an inclusive, community-focused gathering. This year's event was a pleasant one. We were set up next to a play area with cushioned ground where kids played, good-naturedly trying to knock each other off a seesaw. After a while, a lady made a two-armed wave in our direction notifying us that a speaker was going to begin under the gas station canopy. Some of us got up and meandered over to listen.

GlendaleOUT, the group that invited us, formed in 2023 after far right anti LGBTQ+ groups gathered to disrupt a June 3 Glendale Unified School District Board of Education meeting set to declare June PRIDE month. The agitators came to protest the Board's LGBTQ+-affirming action, but leaders and the community pushed back; the school board did not cave. GlendaleOUT was organized in response, and the LGBTQ+ community and allies launched PROJECT:PRO+ECT to shield area queer and questioning students from discrimination and hate.

EXHIBIT A.19/3: Pride Month Events with Glendale City Church (June 2026).
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](https://spectrummagazine.org/news/reports/we-are-here-glendale-city-church-attends-pride-in-the-park/) (June 23, 2026)

Page 3

"We Are Here." Glendale City Church Attends Pride in the Park - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/news/reports/we-are-here-glendale-city-church-attends-pride-in-the-park/>



ABC News Channel 7 aerial footage showed a large police presence at the June 3, 2023 Board of Education meeting as protesters tried to disrupt proceedings. @ABC7/YouTube

As the speaking got underway, I got off my cane and tottered about. On one side was a parked bookmobile stocked with lots of LGBTQ+ materials for people young and old. One book was the classic *And Tango Makes Three* about two daddy penguins raising a chick. The old gas station—a well-maintained building with windows on three sides—displayed an exhibit of stringed up fake fish hovering over empty plastic bottles, almost seemingly swimming about. The sight was both weird and wonderful. Beyond the old building were several booths with various products on offer and people eager to help. One booth was Amigos Unidos, a Glendale community group formed in response to the unlawful removal of citizens without due process by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). In fact, there was a humorous piñata of an ICE agent in uniform strung up. Fortunately, the Glendale Police have been supportive of Amigos Unidos, which has helped make the city a bit safer despite the presence of some hate groups.

The event hosted a wide range of people of various ages and backgrounds all declaring “we are here!” to an indifferent or hostile world. Our church group did not interact much with the larger group assembled, but that did not matter; we came to show our support to those marginalized and threatened. Just physically being there was half the battle and an opportunity to live out our church motto, “Revealing Christ, Affirming All.” With pie for dessert.

Title Image: screen capture @ktla/YouTube

EXHIBIT A.19/4: Pride Month Events with Glendale City Church (June 2026).
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (June 23, 2026)

Page 4

"We Are Here." Glendale City Church Attends Pride in the Park - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/news/reports/we-are-here-glendale-city-church-attends-pride-in-the-park/>



About the author

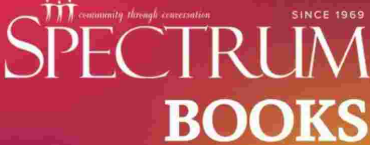
Tony Biehl teaches computer science at Glendale Community College. He holds a master's degree in computer science from West Coast University and a bachelor's degree in computer science from Pacific Union College. [More from Tony Biehl.](#)

Help Us

GROW the Youth



BUY



SHARE A

CONFIDENTIAL

NEWS TIP

CONFIDENTIAL

NEWS TIP

EXHIBIT A.20/1: Pride Month Events with Glendale City Church (June 2026).
Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#) (May 30, 2026)



GLENDALE CITY CHURCH of Seventh-day Adventists



May 30, 2026

EXHIBIT A.20/2: Pride Month Events with Glendale City Church (June 2026).
Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#) (May 30, 2026)

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Father's Day Potluck — June 20

Join us next month for a special potluck to honor GCC's Fathers on June 20th! We'll begin at 12:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall. If you're able, we'd love for you to bring a vegetarian dish to share — but please come regardless and enjoy the fellowship!

Living with Loss — A Grief Support Series

You are warmly invited to join Women's Ministries for Living with Loss, a grief support series designed to offer a safe and compassionate space for anyone navigating the challenges of loss. While hosted by Women's Ministries, this series is open to both men and women. Sessions will be held online every Friday, June 5 through August 7, from 7:00–8:00 pm PT, and will be facilitated by Women's Ministries leader Loretta Shields, PhD, DMin. If you or someone you know is carrying the weight of loss, we encourage you to take this step toward support and connection — you don't have to walk this path alone. To register and receive video call information, visit drlorettashields.com/sccwm.

Upcoming Pride Month - June

Glendale City Church celebrates Pride Month with gratitude for God's love that embraces all people — a love that welcomes, affirms, and transforms. We honor our LGBTQ+ siblings as beloved members of God's family and pray for open hearts: to see where we've feared difference and recognize the sacred kinship we all share.

In this spirit, GCC will mark Pride Month with two special events. On June 6th, we'll be joining GlendaleOut's Pride in the Park picnic — bring your own lunch and come enjoy the afternoon on the lawn with our community. Then on June 27th, we'll close out the month with a Pride Movie Night at the GCC Chapel at 6pm. More details to come. Hope you can join us!



Pride in the Park

Sat, June 6th 1pm-5pm
Adams Square Mini-Park
1020 E. Palmer Ave

Source: [GlendaleOUT Facebook](#) (May 7, 2026) / [GlendaleOUT Facebook](#) (May 29, 2026)

<https://www.facebook.com/glendaleOUT/>



EXHIBIT A.21/2: Pride Month Events with Glendale City Church (June 2026).
Source: [GlendaleOUT Website - Official Event Video Highlights](#) (June 2026)

Page 1

2026 | Since 2019

<https://www.glendaleout.org/since-2019?pgid=m8i0ul0v-e43851dd-5a38-4465-b0b2-a60c736205de>



Video Screenshot
Closing title page



Video Screenshot
Glendale City Church pastor (left) (Timestamp 00:55)

FULL LYRICS TRANSCRIPT OF VIDEO MUSIC

Video plays a techno / house track about gay lifestyle with the following lyrics.

NOTE #1: Click the link at top of this page to see actual video

NOTE #2: The German / Spanish stanzas contain corresponding words as found in the first english stanza.

First stanza in English:

"I am not gay. I am super-gay. Gay. Gay. Gay. Gay. I am super-gay. Super-gay. Super-gay. Super-gay.
I am super-gay. Super-gay. Super-gay. Super-gay. I am super-gay."

Second stanza in German:

"Ich bin nicht schwul. Ich bin super-schwul. Ich bin nicht schwul. Ich bin super-schwul. Ich bin nicht schwul.
Ich bin super-schwul. Ich bin nicht schwul. Ich bin super-schwul."

Third stanza in Spanish:

"No soy gay. Soy super-gay. Super-gay. No soy gay. Soy super-gay. No soy gay. Soy super-gay. Super-gay.
Soy super-gay. Super-gay. Soy super-gay. Super-gay."

EXHIBIT A.22/1: Pride Month & SCC Executive Secretary Sermon at Glendale City Church (June 13, 2026)
Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)



GLENDALE CITY CHURCH of Seventh-day Adventists



June 13, 2026

EXHIBIT A.22/2: Pride Month & SCC Executive Secretary Sermon at Glendale City Church (June 13, 2026)
Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)

WORSHIP SERVICE

Anthem **How Can I Keep From Singing?** GCC Choir
Arr. by Craig Courtney

Scripture Reading **Luke 19:1-4** Didi Mumford

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through it. A man was there named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was rich. He was trying to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was short in stature. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to see him, because Jesus was going to pass that way.

Sermon **The Transcendent One** Danny Chan

Offertory **The King of Love, My Shepherd Is** Rebecca Tomasko
arr. Dan Forrest

Hymn of Response **Marvelous Grace** No. 109

Benediction Danny Chan

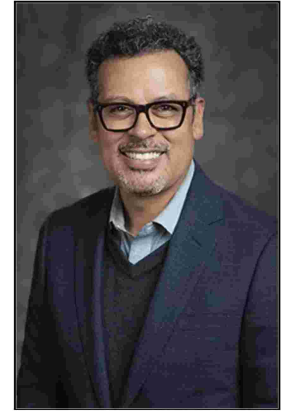
Choral Benediction **On Eagle's Wings** GCC Choir

Postlude **Crown Imperial - A Coronation March (1937)** Kemp Smeal
by William Walton

EXHIBIT A.22/3: Pride Month & SCC Executive Secretary Sermon at Glendale City Church (June 13, 2026)
Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Glendale City Church welcomes today's speaker, Danny Chan, D.Min., Executive Secretary and Ministerial Director of the Southern California Conference. Born and raised in SoCal, Danny has served his entire ministry within the Conference—as youth pastor, young adult pastor, senior pastor, and region director—overseeing 36 pastors across 28 churches. He holds an M.Div. from Andrews University and a D.Min. from Fuller Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Virna, have several adult children. His vocational mission is to pour into leaders so that calling overflows into abundant discipleship. Welcome, Pastor Danny!



Father's Day Potluck — June 20

Join us on June 20 for a special potluck as we celebrate and honor the father figures of GCC! We'll gather in the Fellowship Hall beginning at 12:30 p.m. for a potluck meal together. If you're able, we'd love for you to bring a vegetarian dish to share—but whether or not you can contribute, please come and enjoy good food, warm conversation, and the opportunity to celebrate the men who have nurtured, guided, and blessed our community.

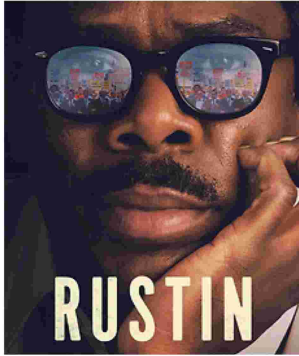


Last Sabbath afternoon, GCC folks gathered at Adams Square Mini Park for glendaleOUT's Pride in the Park picnic, enjoying good food, good company, and an afternoon of connection with our wider community. It was a wonderful time to fellowship and to show support for our LGBTQIA+ neighbors in Glendale.

EXHIBIT A.22/4: ~~Pride Month & SCC Executive Secretary Sermon at Glendale (June 13, 2026)~~

Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#)

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Save the Date for Pride Movie Night

Join us on Saturday, June 27, at 6:00 p.m. for an evening of pizza, popcorn, and a movie. We'll be watching Rustin, the acclaimed historical drama about Bayard Rustin, the openly gay Black civil rights leader who helped organize the 1963 March on Washington. Following the film, we'll explore some of its historical, cultural, and educational themes together in discussion. (Rated PG-13 for some mature thematic elements.)

Printed Church Directories: Prefer a hard copy over digital? Printed copies of our church directory will be available in the Narthex, right alongside the bulletins — feel free to take one home with you! Need extra copies? Just email us at office@glendalecitychurch.org and we'll be happy to provide you with more.

Noon Concert Series: Take a break in the middle of your week and enjoy live music at the next Glendale Noon Concert on Wednesday, June 17, from 12:10–12:40 p.m. in the Sanctuary. This month's program features Ergo Musica, with acclaimed early music specialists Adriana Zoppo on viola d'amore and Shanon Zusman on viola da gamba. Their performance will highlight elegant works from the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries by Christopher Simpson, Valentine Oldis, Attilio Ariosti, Richard Cobb, Johann Schop, and other composers of the Baroque era. Zoppo, director and curator of the Glendale Noon Concerts' early music series, has performed with numerous Southern California ensembles and recording projects, while Zusman serves on the faculty of both the University of Southern California and Claremont Graduate University and is a leading performer and teacher of the viola da gamba. Whether you are a longtime lover of early music or simply looking for a peaceful midday retreat, this concert promises a delightful and enriching musical experience.



EXHIBIT A.22/5: Pride Month & SCC Executive Secretary Sermon at Glendale (June 13, 2026)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 33:56)



EXHIBIT A.22/6: Pride Month & SCC Executive Secretary Sermon at Glendale (June 13, 2026)
Source: [Glendale City Church Video](#) (Timestamp: 36:46)

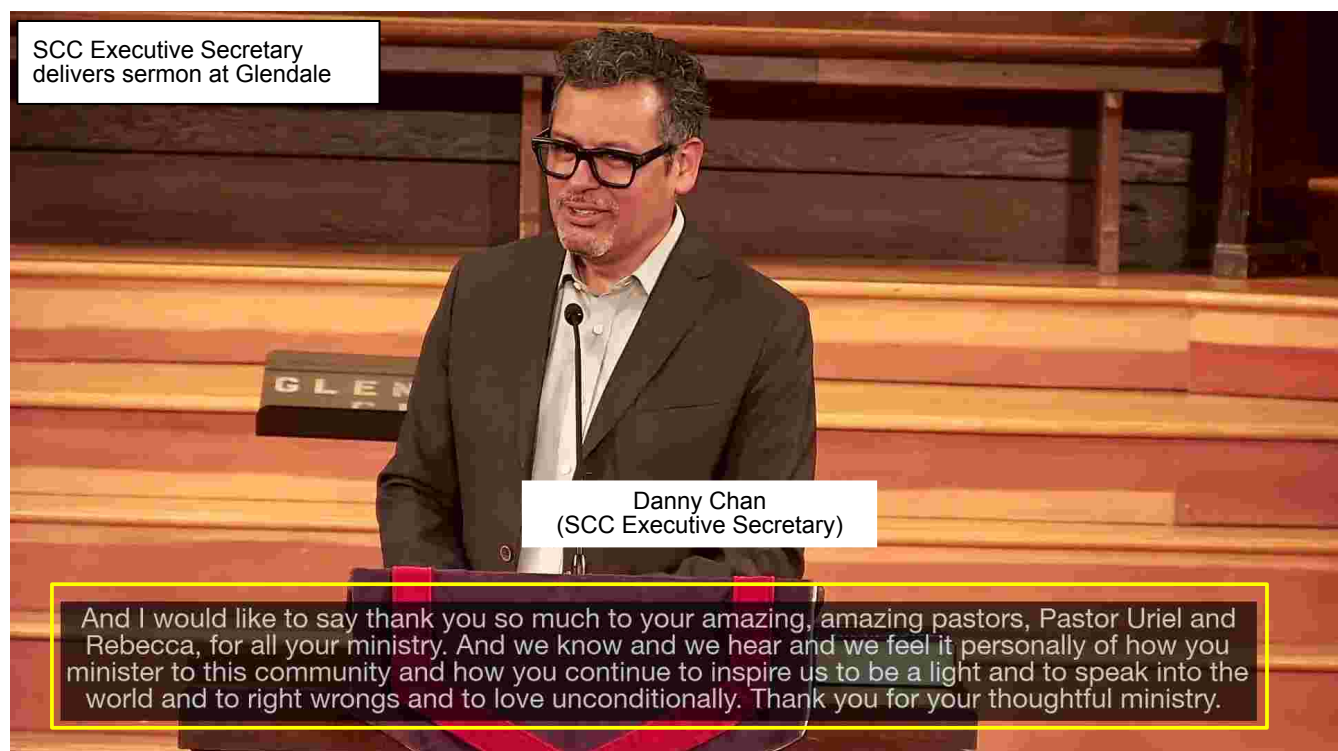


EXHIBIT A.23/1: Pride Month Events at Glendale City Church (June 2020).
Source: [Glendale City Church Facebook](#) (May 21, 2020)

Page 1

(1) The City of Glendale, CA for the first time... - Glendale City Church | Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/glendalecitychurch/posts/pfbid02xEHPojwNHDN1NwKRFA9jb..>



Glendale City Church

May 21, 2020 · 🌐

...

The [City of Glendale, CA](#) for the first time in its history has designated June 2020 as LGBTQIA+ Pride Month. How can our congregation honor and celebrate this month online? Looking to our fabulous congregational family members to help your pastors plan something. DM [Leif Lind](#), [Todd Leonard](#), or [Serena Katherine Miller](#). [#RevealingChrist](#) [#AffirmingAll](#)



EXHIBIT A.23/2: Pride Month Events at Glendale City Church (June 2021).
Source: [Glendale City Church Instagram](#) (June 1, 2021)



EXHIBIT A.23/3: Pride Month Events at Glendale City Church (June 2022).
Source: [Glendale City Church Facebook](#) (June 1, 2022)

Page 1

(1) Happy Pride Month! - Glendale City Church | Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/glendalecitychurch/posts/pfbid0V3wqJtdfTuJ26JSSgwkMD4L...>



Glendale City Church

June 1, 2022 · 🌐



Happy Pride Month!



EXHIBIT A.23/4: Pride Month Events at Glendale City Church (June 2022).
Source: [Glendale City Church Facebook](#) (June 10, 2022)

Page 1

(1) Saturday, June 11, 11:00a: Sanctuary PRIDE... - Glendale City Church | Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/glendalecitychurch/posts/pfbid02mkRLYvitpCFMzLGmFNIJ8E..>



Glendale City Church

June 10, 2022 · 🌐



Saturday, June 11, 11:00a: Sanctuary PRIDE Worship. Sermon by Todd Leonard: "The Good News of Jesus: It Gets Better."

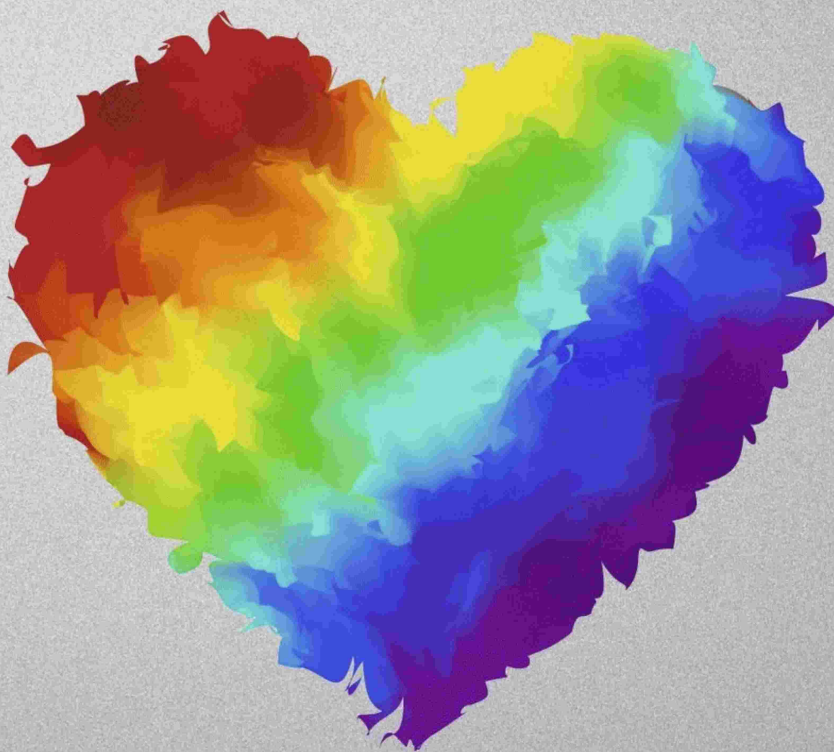


EXHIBIT A.23/5: Pride Month Events at Glendale City Church (June 2023).
Source: [Glendale City Church Facebook](#) (June 1, 2023)

Page 1

(1) Glendale City Church | Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/glendalecitychurch/posts/pfbid0u25eABNh19wrb6zrBXPzWU..>



Glendale City Church

June 1, 2023 · 🌐



EXHIBIT A.23/6: Pride Month Events at Glendale City Church (June 2023).
Source: [Glendale City Church Facebook](#) (May 25, 2023)

Page 1

(1) Save the date! - Glendale City Church | Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/glendalecitychurch/posts/pfbid026MCTvsFiqueqvArPVkp7b7C...>



Glendale City Church

May 25, 2023 · 🌐



Save the date!



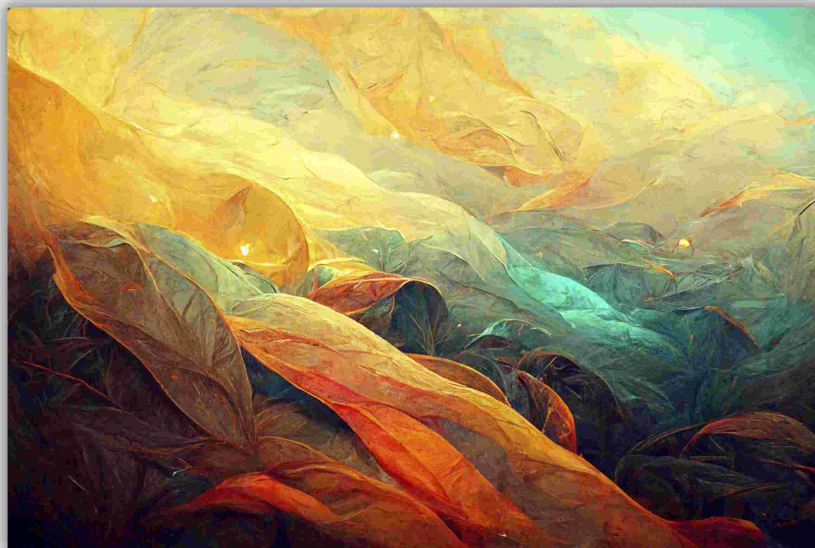
**pride
sabbath**

at glendale city church
saturday, june 10, 11:00a & 12:15p

EXHIBIT A.23/7: Pride Month Events at Glendale City Church (June 2025).
Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#) (June 7, 2025)



GLENDALE CITY CHURCH of Seventh-day Adventists



June 7, 2025
Sabbath of Pentecost

EXHIBIT A.23/8: Pride Month Events at Glendale City Church (June 2025).
Source: [Glendale City Church Bulletin](#) (June 7, 2025)

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Join Us at 1:30pm

After lunch, please join us again at 1:30 p.m. with Dr. Jim Walters for some thoughtful conversation in our afternoon seminar!

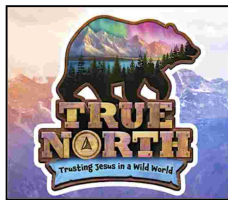
SABBATH SCHEDULE

11am - Morning Session
"Experience: Matchless"

12:10pm - Complimentary Lunch
in Fellowship Hall

1:30pm - Afternoon Session
"Inspiration: Then, Now,
Everywhere"

We extend our heartfelt sympathy to Daisy and Jerry Bulduc on the passing of Daisy's brother, Ben Dann Bautista, who died on May 16, 2025, at the age of 79. Our prayers are with them and their family as they grieve this loss.



VBS at Glendale Adventist Academy (July 14-18):

GAA is preparing for Vacation Bible School this July and volunteers are needed to help make the event a success! You can also support by donating items from their Amazon wishlist online at: rb.gy/9c0b97. Thank you!

Help us celebrate your graduate at GCC on June 21! If someone connected to our church is graduating this month, please share their name with Pastor Uriel at uriel@glendalecitychurch.org.

Glendale City Church celebrates Pride Month with gratitude for God's love that embraces all people—a love that welcomes, affirms, and transforms. We honor our LGBTQ+ siblings as members of God's family and pray for open hearts: to see where we've feared difference and recognize the sacred kinship we all share. Happy Pride Month from GCC!



EXHIBIT A.24/1: SDA Kinship Relations to Glendale City Church.

Source #1: [Glendale City Church Website - About Us](https://glendalecitychurch.org/about-us) (Screenshot: July 2026)

Page 2

About Us

<https://glendalecitychurch.org/about-us>



Our Logo

The church logo shows four human figures of different colors coming together to form a cross. This represents our belief that robust spirituality develops when a broad diversity of people come together in community.

Our logo's tagline is: Finding God at the Intersection of Our Lives



Inclusivity Statement

We do not discriminate based on gender, race, culture, wealth, education, religious background or sexual orientation. If you are learning to love God and others, you belong here. God excludes no one. Neither do we.



Affiliation

Glendale City is a Christian church affiliated with the Seventh-day Adventist denomination (www.adventist.org) Our congregation was one of the **first** Adventist churches established in this part of Southern California. While we continue to partner with this denomination, we are in a posture of protest against the unjust actions taken by our General Conference that attempt to undermine the contextualized work of the Adventist churches and centers of education in the Western United States. We are in solidarity with the actions of our Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (www.puonline.org) that:

- Ordain both women and men as clergy
- Protect the right of Adventist centers of education to teach current science to its students while honoring God as Creator
- Stand with congregations that welcome and include our LGBTQ loved ones in their faith communities

Source #2: [Glendale City Church Website - Serving the City](#) (Screenshot: July 2026)

EXHIBIT A.24/3a: SDA Kinship Relations to Glendale City Church.

Source #3: [SDA Kinship Article on 120-Year Anniversary](#) (February 3, 2026)

Page 1

120 Years of Love in Action

<https://www.sdakinship.org/post/120-years-of-love-in-action>



EN



ES



PT



ABOUT

EVENTS

RESOURCES

JOIN

NEWS

DONATE

All Posts

Kampmeeting

European Kinship Meeting

Families & Friends

Church Relations

More ▾

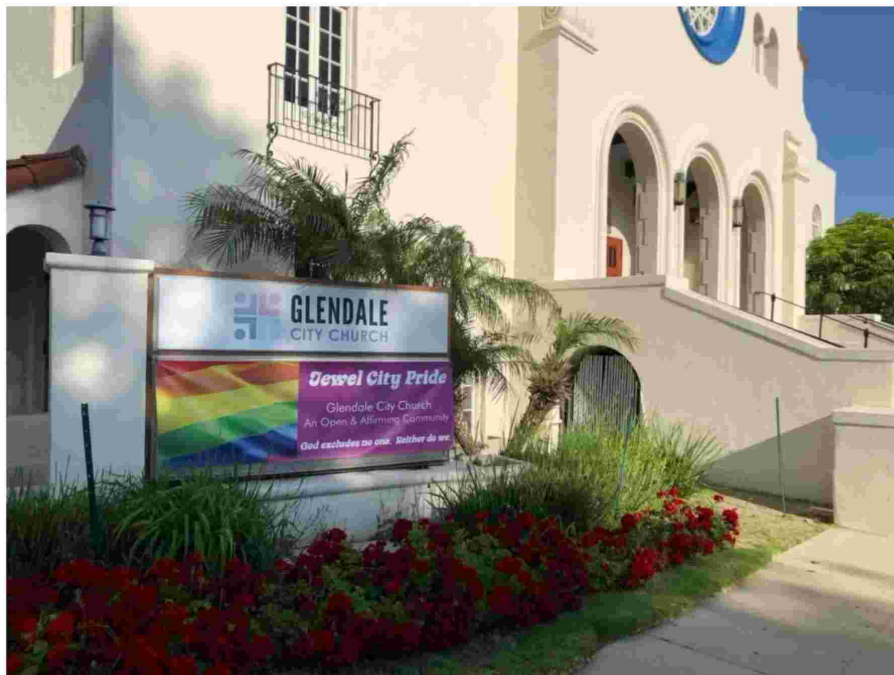


Floyd Poenitz · Feb 2 · 2 min read



120 Years of Love in Action

Updated: Feb 3



Happy February!

Valentine's Day has come to dominate the theme for February, at least in the card shops and candy stores, there is more to the month than ooey gooey chocolate. Love is usually associated with the heart and butterflies in your stomach, but that is only a part of the equation. Love without action is pretty useless. Words without actions are pretty worthless. Just like telling someone that you love them without actively showing what that love looks like has zero meaning.

EXHIBIT A.24/3b: SDA Kinship Relations to Glendale City Church.**Source #3:** [SDA Kinship Article on 120-Year Anniversary](#) (February 3, 2026)

Page 2

120 Years of Love in Action

<https://www.sdakinship.org/post/120-years-of-love-in-action>

This past weekend Glendale City Church in Glendale, California celebrated 120 years of proclaiming and living the Gospel of Jesus to their neighborhood and to the whole world (ie showing love in action). GCC has lived its message for many years, but during the AIDS crisis it took on a whole new meaning of showing love. It saw a need that very few Christian churches were meeting and no Adventist church at that time was even acknowledging. It opened its doors to the untouchables. It saw the queer community not as a group that needed to be saved from their orientation, but an integral part of their community.

They opened their doors unconditionally to everyone. They cultivated a welcoming environment where Kinshippers felt comfortable being open and out. Kinshippers sat together to worship in what fondly became known as the "Pink Pews". GCC did not do this secretly, but was very open about it and shielded us from the arrows and slurs from the official Adventist church. GCC paid a price for living their love, but that is exactly what Jesus would have done. It also became known as a safe haven for anyone who was being threatened to be disfellowshipped by their home church anywhere in the world. All they had to do was to contact the church clerk, and the membership was transferred, without question, to GCC before the homophobic home church could blink or take action. Also more recently, GCC employed, for many years, an openly gay, same sex married, pastor paid for by the congregation (not the Conference or GC). Thanks Pastor Leif Lind for your service there.

In recent years, several churches have followed suit and have openly declared themselves as Kinship Partner churches or have openly stated on their website that they welcome and affirm LGBTQIA members, both single and married. I want to state that Kinship is proud of all our allies and ally churches and we hope we can help develop more congregations that love like Jesus did.... taking ACTION to show their love by truly welcoming and affirming everyone.

Congratulations to Glendale City church and all the supportive past pastors for the past 120 years and to Pastor Uriel and Pastor Rebecca who are now leading the congregation. May God richly bless you! Kinship members, let's always show our support and love in action for this ground-breaking and wonderful congregation. Here is their statement on their website: [Glendale City Church](#)

PROUD
TO BE AFFIRMING

Inclusivity Statement

We do not discriminate based on gender, race, culture, wealth, education, religious background or sexual orientation. If you are learning to love God and others, you belong here. God excludes no one. Neither do we.

EXHIBIT A.24/3c: SDA Kinship Relations to Glendale City Church.**Source #3:** [SDA Kinship Article on 120-Year Anniversary](#) (February 3, 2026)

Page 3

120 Years of Love in Action

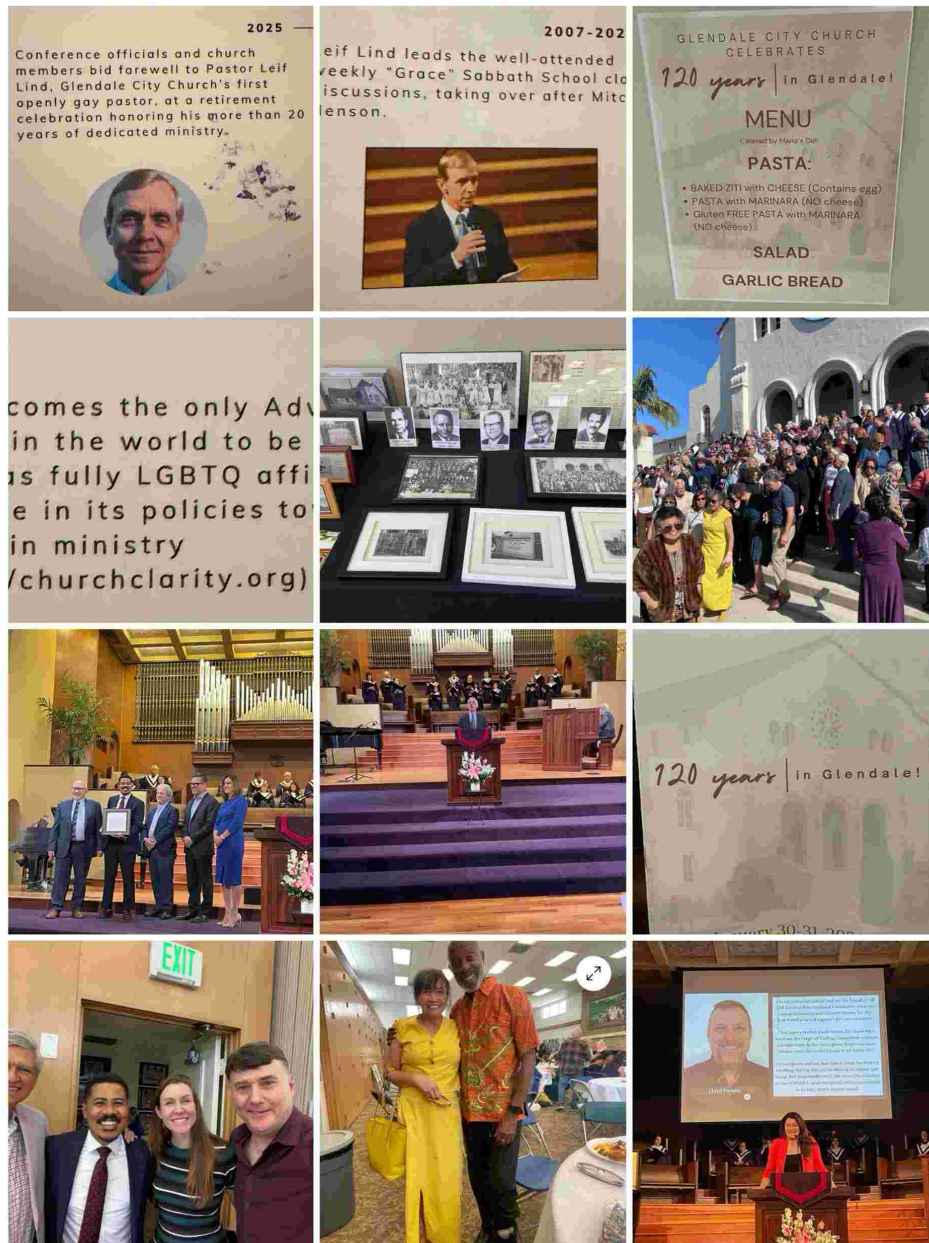
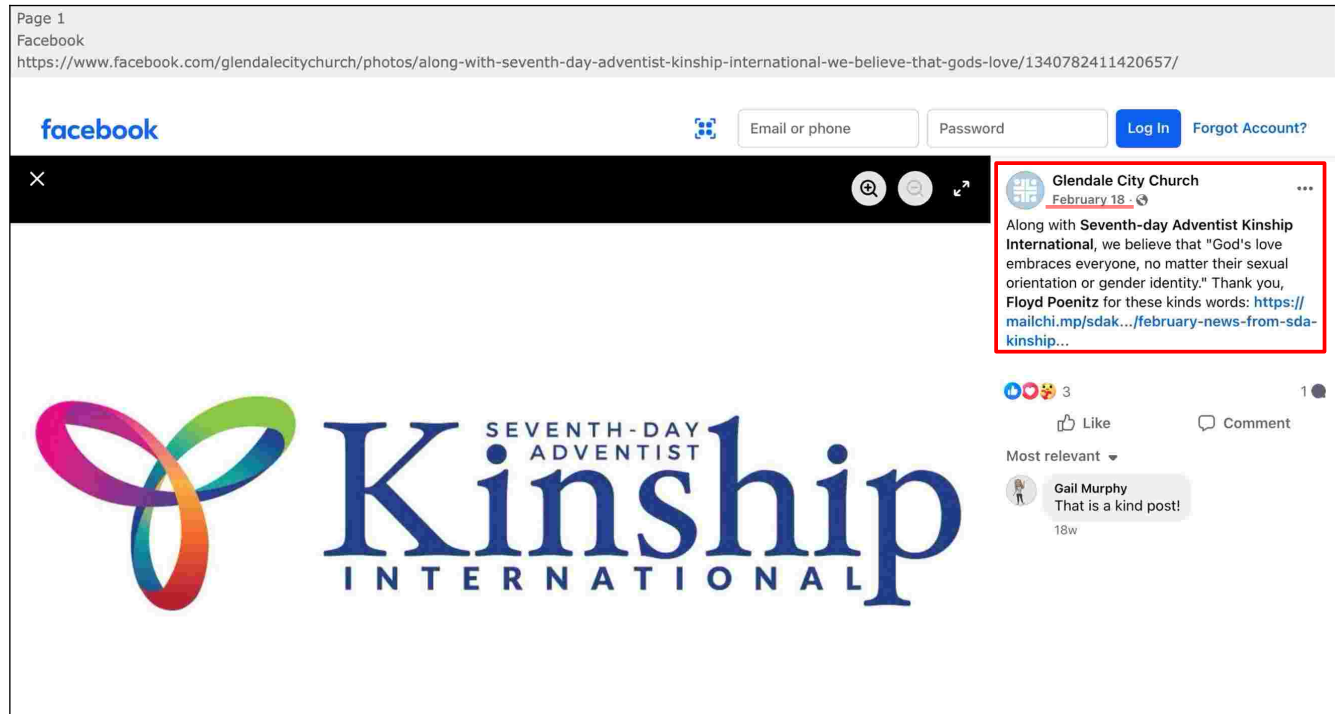
<https://www.sdakinship.org/post/120-years-of-love-in-action>

EXHIBIT A.24/4: SDA Kinship Relations to Glendale City Church.

Source #4: [Glendale City Church Facebook](#) (February 18, 2026)



Explanation: The comment above (February 18, 2026) by Glendale City Church at its Facebook channel refers to Floyd Poenitz's (SDA Kinship International President) greeting to the Glendale City Church at its 120-Year Anniversary celebration on January 31, 2026 (**Exhibit A.15/12-13**) and his subsequent article about that event (**Exhibit A.24/3a-c**).

EXHIBIT A.24/5a: SDA Kinship Relations to Glendale City Church.
Source #5: [SDA Kinship Website - About](#) (Screenshot: July 2026)

Page 1

About | Seventh-day Adventist | SDA Kinship International
<https://www.sdakinship.org/about>



EN



ES



PT



ABOUT

EVENTS

RESOURCES

JOIN

NEWS

DONATE

Connection, inclusion, and understanding are at the heart of what we do

Celebrating and supporting the lives and journeysof LGBTQIA+ Adventists for nearly 50 years

Growing together in grace and understanding

For LGBTQIA+ current and former Adventists who feel alone and have been told by your churches, schools, and families that being queer is sinful, we welcome you with open arms. This is a safe space.

The truth is, the Bible does not condemn LGBTQIA+ identities, and we believe Adventist spaces can and should treat everyone with love and respect.

Here, you're safe to ask questions, share experiences, and connect with others on similar journeys. We honor diverse viewpoints and backgrounds, providing an affirming and supportive space for all.



"It's so nice to be in a community of others like me ... a place where people are accepted without being told to change or hide."

-Kinship member

EXHIBIT A.24/5b: SDA Kinship Relations to Glendale City Church.
Source #5: [SDA Kinship Website - About](#) (Screenshot: July 2026)

Page 2

About | Seventh-day Adventist | SDA Kinship International
<https://www.sdakinskip.org/about>



Who We Serve

- LGBTQIA+ current and former Adventists
- Parents and families of LGBTQIA+ people
- Allies advocating for positive change
- Adventist members and faith leaders who want to understand LGBTQIA+ folks and minister compassionately.

I'd love to join ↘



How We Serve

You are not alone. Our worldwide, affirming community is active through:

- Private virtual community groups
- In-person events and Kampmeetings
- Weekly and monthly virtual meetings
- Community-specific messaging groups

I'd love to learn more

Where We Are

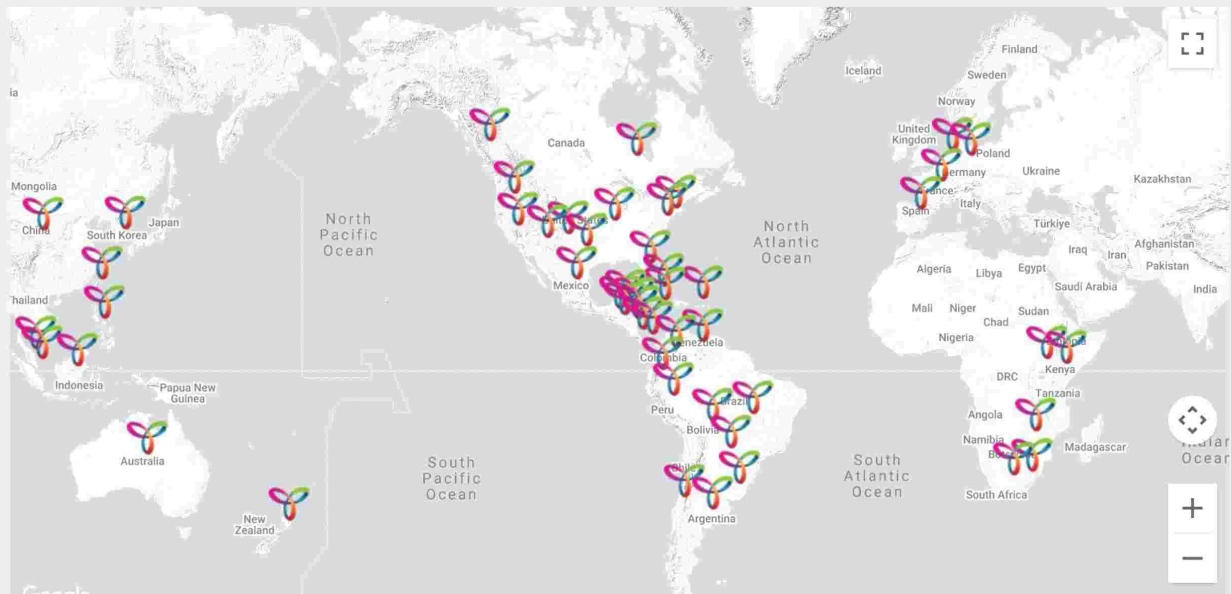


EXHIBIT A.24/5c: SDA Kinship Relations to Glendale City Church.
Source #5: [SDA Kinship Website - About](#) (Screenshot: July 2026)

Page 3

About | Seventh-day Adventist | SDA Kinship International

<https://www.sdakinship.org/about>

Google

Keyboard shortcuts Map data ©2026 1000 km Terms

“Kinship allows me to connect with people who understand my journey as a gay person. It's led to lifelong friendships and ongoing conversations. Having a community I can trust is so important and truly beautiful.”

–Kinship member

Our Mission

Our mission is to reconcile faith and LGBTQIA+ identities, foster personal growth, and advocate for inclusivity within the Seventh-day Adventist community and society.

Our Vision

We envision a future where LGBTQIA+ people are included and celebrated within the Seventh-day Adventist community and society at large. A world as God intended—where understanding replaces judgment, acceptance replaces exclusion, and love knows no boundaries.

Our Leaders



Floyd Poenitz
he/him
President



Jerry McKay
he/him
Secretary



Bob Bouchard
he/him
Treasurer/ CFO



Fabio Cernicchiaro
he/them
International Growth & Development

EXHIBIT A.25/1: Southern California Conference - Administration (2003-2026)Source: [Southern California Conference Constituency Session Website](#) / [SDA Yearbook](#)

Year	President	Executive Secretary	Treasurer	LA Metro Region
Constituency Session 2003				
2003	Larry Caviness	Velino Salazar	Sung Oh	Gerard Kiemeney
2004	Larry Caviness	Velino Salazar	Sung Oh	Gerard Kiemeney
2005	Larry Caviness	Velino Salazar	Sung Oh	Gerard Kiemeney
2006	Larry Caviness	Velino Salazar	Sung Oh	Gerard Kiemeney
2007	Larry Caviness	Velino Salazar	Sung Oh	Gerard Kiemeney
Constituency Session 2007				
2007	Larry Caviness	Velino Salazar	Sung Oh	Gerard Kiemeney
2008	Larry Caviness	Velino Salazar	Sung Oh	Gerard Kiemeney
2009	Larry Caviness	Velino Salazar	Sung Oh	Gerard Kiemeney
2010	Larry Caviness	Velino Salazar	Sung Oh	Gerard Kiemeney
2011	Larry Caviness	Velino Salazar	Sung Oh	Gerard Kiemeney
Constituency Session 2011				
2011	Larry Caviness	Velino Salazar	Sung Oh	Gerard Kiemeney
2012	Larry Caviness	Velino Salazar	Sung Oh	Gerard Kiemeney
2013	Larry Caviness	Velino Salazar	Sung Oh	Gerard Kiemeney
2014	Larry Caviness	Velino Salazar	Sung Oh	Gerard Kiemeney
2015	Larry Caviness	Velino Salazar	Sung Oh	Gerard Kiemeney
Constituency Session 2015				
2015	Velino Salazar	Vacant / Interim	Sung Oh	Gerard Kiemeney
2016	Velino Salazar	John Cress	Sung Oh	Gerard Kiemeney
2017	Velino Salazar	John Cress	Sung Oh	Gerard Kiemeney
2018	Velino Salazar	John Cress	Sung Oh	Gerard Kiemeney
2019	Velino Salazar	John Cress	Sung Oh	Gerard Kiemeney
Constituency Session 2019				
2019	Velino Salazar	John Cress	Orville Ortiz	Danny Chan
2020	Velino Salazar	John Cress	Orville Ortiz	Danny Chan
2021	Velino Salazar	John Cress	Orville Ortiz	Danny Chan
2022	Velino Salazar	John Cress	Orville Ortiz	Danny Chan
2023	Velino Salazar	John Cress	Orville Ortiz	Danny Chan
2024	Velino Salazar	John Cress	Orville Ortiz	Danny Chan
Constituency Session 2024				
2024	John Cress	Danny Chan	Kathleen Diaz	Brett Poynter
2025	John Cress	Danny Chan	Kathleen Diaz	Brett Poynter
2026	John Cress	Danny Chan	Kathleen Diaz	Brett Poynter
Constituency period continues until 2028				

Yellow color = Current SCC officers and their previous SCC positions

EXHIBIT A.25/2: Southern California Conference – Administration Current (2026)
Source: [Southern California Conference Website](#) (Screenshot: July 2026)

Page 1
Administration – Southern California Conference
<https://scc.adventist.org/administration/>

Southern California Conference
of Seventh-day Adventists

[About Us](#) ▾ [Administration](#) ▾ [Departments & Ministries](#) ▾ [Regions](#) ▾ [Resources](#) ▾  

[Home](#) > [Administration](#)

Administration

The current executive officers of the Southern California Conference (SCC) were elected at the September 2024 SCC constituency session. Learn more about them and access their respective webpages for information and documents related to the ministries they oversee and more.



Group photo by Clive Kulasekere



John H. Cress | President

John H. Cress has a heart for ministry and is passionate about Christ-centered leadership. Throughout 45 years of service, he has pastored five churches... [Read more](#)

[Visit the office of the president webpage](#) →



Danny Chan | Executive Secretary

Danny Chan, D.Min., was born and raised in Southern California in a pastor's family. He has served his entire ministry in Southern California... [Read more](#)

[Visit the executive secretary webpage](#) →



Kathleen V. Diaz | Treasurer/CFO

Kathleen V. Diaz sees her position as a sacred calling, relying on God's wisdom as she supports the mission of the conference. She joined... [Read more](#)

[Visit the treasury webpage](#) →



Royal L. Harrison | Executive VP

Royal L. Harrison, DHA, serves as vice president of the Southern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, providing leadership in... [Read more](#)

[Visit the executive vice president webpage](#) →

EXHIBIT A.25/3: Southern California Conference – Administration Current (2026)
Source: [Southern California Conference Website](#) (Screenshot: July 2026)

Page 1

John H. Cress – Southern California Conference

<https://scc.adventist.org/directory/personnel-directory/john-h-cress/>



Southern California Conference
of Seventh-day Adventists

About Us ▾

Administration ▾

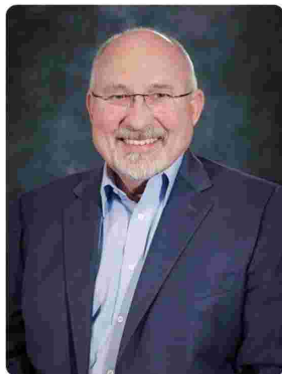
Departments & Ministries ▾



> Directory > John H. Cress

John H. Cress

President



John H. Cress has a heart for ministry and is passionate about Christ-centered leadership. Throughout 45 years of service, he has pastored five churches and served as an administrator in two conferences. He has experience redesigning structures, developing new systems, creating cycles of training and evangelism, and growing congregations both deeper with God and more in number for His kingdom.

In whatever capacity he serves, Elder Cress seeks to use his passion and gifts in leadership to prayerfully implement the mission Jesus gave all Christians — to “go make disciples” and, while we’re at it, “love one another.” Team, fun, and integrity are among his personal values. His interests include reading, skiing, boating, canoeing, golfing, hiking, traveling, and people.

Elder Cress is currently the president of the Southern California Conference, where he served as the executive secretary/ministerial director from 2016-2024. He has been married to his wife, Karen, for 47 years in August, and they share two adult children, Tim and Jennifer, and two grandkids, Oceana and Kai.

EXHIBIT A.25/4: Southern California Conference – Administration Current (2026)
Source: [Southern California Conference Website](https://scc.adventist.org/directory/personnel-directory/danny-chan/) (Screenshot: July 2026)

Page 1

Danny Chan – Southern California Conference

<https://scc.adventist.org/directory/personnel-directory/danny-chan/>



Southern California Conference
of Seventh-day Adventists

About Us ▾

Administration ▾

Departments & Ministries ▾



Directory



Danny Chan

Danny Chan

Executive Secretary



Danny Chan, D.Min., was born and raised in Southern California in a pastor's family. He has served his entire ministry in Southern California Conference as youth pastor, young adult pastor, as senior pastor, as region director overseeing 36 pastors in 28 churches, and now as executive secretary and ministerial director. He completed a Master of Divinity from Andrews University in 1998 and a Doctor of Ministry from Fuller Theological Seminary in 2023. He and his wife Virna are parents to adult children. His personal mission statement is: to pour into leaders so that calling overflows into abundant discipleship.

EXHIBIT A.25/5: Southern California Conference – Administration Current (2026)
Source: [Southern California Conference Website](#) (Screenshot: July 2026)

Page 1

SCC Welcomes Brett Poynter as New Los Angeles Metro Region Director – Southern California Conference
<https://scc.adventist.org/stories/scc-welcomes-brett-poynter-as-new-los-angeles-metro-region-director/>

[About Us](#)[Administration](#)[Departments & Ministries](#)[Regions](#)

[Home](#) > [Posts](#) > [SCC Welcomes Brett Poynter as New Los Angeles Metro Region Director](#)

SCC Welcomes Brett Poynter as New Los Angeles Metro Region Director

December 3, 2024 | [Category: Stories](#)

[lametroregion](#)

Share

Brett Poynter's pastoral journey began right here in the Southern California Conference (SCC) in 2001 as the youth and young adult pastor at the Temple City church. After nine years, Poynter was called to serve as the senior pastor at the Hacienda Heights church, where he served for eight years. Upon receiving an invitation to return to Temple City, Poynter served for six years as the senior pastor.

During his transition into the senior pastor role at Hacienda Heights, Poynter had the opportunity to join the missional church cohort at Andrews University and pursue his doctorate specializing in the missional church. Since earning his degree in 2017, he has explored what a missional church looks like practically. "It boils down to friendship evangelism, making connection with people," he said. "And as the church is reminded that creating friendships and building those friendships is the way to people's hearts, just as Jesus did*, that makes the difference."

As for his favorite thing about being a pastor, Poynter couldn't pick just one. "Definitely when people accept Christ and get baptized, and also, as the church or the newly baptized get involved in new ministries, get excited about applying the gospel and helping share the gospel," he shared. Poynter also appreciates the unique opportunity he has had to be connected to churches for so long and in the same conference, allowing him to be part of milestones like graduation and marriage as the young people he pastored grew up.

He's now stepping into the role of SCC Los Angeles Metro Region director, bringing the missional church focus with him. "Because of the new position, I still get to use and maintain my mission muscles in helping pastors in this direction as we're all committed to being missional," he said.

*See The Ministry of Healing, page 143, on the methods of Christ.



EXHIBIT A.26/1: Southern California Conference - Glendale City Church Pastors (2004-2026).
Source: Various sources

Year	Senior Pastor	Main Associate Pastor
2004	Mitch Henson (since 1990)	Leif Lind
2004	Mitch Henson	Leif Lind
2005	Mitch Henson	Leif Lind
2006	Mitch Henson	Leif Lind
2007	Mitch Henson	Leif Lind
2008	Leif Lind (Principal pastor for 6 months during search for new senior pastor)	
2008	Smuts van Rooyen	Leif Lind
2009	Smuts van Rooyen	Leif Lind
2010	Smuts van Rooyen	Leif Lind
2011	Smuts van Rooyen	Leif Lind
2012	Smuts van Rooyen	Leif Lind
2012	Todd Leonard	Leif Lind
2013	Todd Leonard	Leif Lind
2014	Todd Leonard	Leif Lind
2015	Todd Leonard	Leif Lind
2016	Todd Leonard	Leif Lind
2017	Todd Leonard	Leif Lind
2018	Todd Leonard	Leif Lind
2019	Todd Leonard	Leif Lind
2020	Todd Leonard	Leif Lind
2021	Todd Leonard	Leif Lind
2022	Todd Leonard	Leif Lind
2023	Todd Leonard	Leif Lind
2023 - 2024	Leif Lind (Principal pastor for 12 months during search for new senior pastor)	
2024	Uriel Herinirina	Leif Lind
2025	Uriel Herinirina	Leif Lind (up 2/2025) Rebecca Barceló
2026	Uriel Herinirina	Rebecca Barceló

EXHIBIT A.26/2: Southern California Conference - Glendale City Church Pastors (2026).
Source: [Southern California Conference LinkedIn](#) (August 2024)

Page 1

#sccadventists #newhire #employeespotlight | Southern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

https://www.linkedin.com/posts/sccadventists_sccadventists-newhire-employeespotlight-activit...



Top Content

People

Learning

Jobs

Games

Southern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists' Post



Southern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

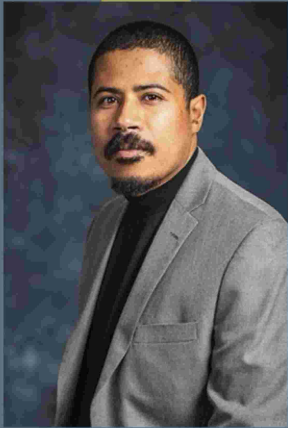
531 followers

1y

...

We are excited to share that Uriel Herinirina has joined Glendale City church as lead pastor. Scroll to learn more about his experience, and stay tuned for more updates! We are thankful that he has answered the call to pastoral ministry here in SCC 😊

#SCCAdventists #newhire #employeespotlight





Welcome
URIEL
HERINIRINA

.....

CHURCH: Glendale City Church

POSITION: Pastor

Since August 2024

Pastor Herinirina, who previously served in Portland, Oregon, is passionate about biblical stories and their power to expand our spiritual imagination.

Connect with the Glendale City church on Facebook at www.facebook.com/glendalecitychurch.

This page intentionally blank (for double-sided printing).

**SUPPORTING EVIDENCE EXHIBIT -- B
LA SIERRA UNIVERSITY (LSU) &
SOUTHEASTERN CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE (SECC)**

Public Documentation Concerning

LGBTQ-Affirming Activities at La Sierra University and La Sierra University Church, with
Southeastern California Conference Responsibility for the University Church

Occurrence

2020 – Present (2026)

EXHIBIT B.1/1: LGBTQ Affirmation Background at La Sierra University.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (March 26, 2021)

Page 1

The Adventist Church and Its LGBT Members — Part 3 - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/news/adventist-church-and-its-lgbt-members-part-3/>

SPECTRUM

Creating community through conversation
Seventh-day Adventist supported since 1969



CULTURE | NEWS

The Adventist Church and Its LGBT Members — Part 3

Ronald Lawson | March 26, 2021 29 min. read



Editor's Note: In this four-part series for Spectrum, Adventist sociologist Ronald Lawson explores the historical and current relationship between the Adventist Church and its LGBT members. This article originally appeared in the Spectrum print journal (volume 48, issue 4), and will be reprinted online in full over the coming days. Read [Part 1 here](#), [Part 2 here](#), and [Part 4 here](#).

Adventist Schools and Colleges

Teenage LGBT students are often bullied at school. As I have prepared to write about Adventist education, I have found myself wondering about the extent to which the amount and kind of bullying in Adventist schools differs from that in secular schools. Even though I was 6-foot-plus tall by the time I was 13, I was bullied at my secular school and called names like faggot even before I was anywhere near dealing with that issue personally; the bullies sensed that I was different and not inclined to fight back physically, and acted accordingly. I have wondered whether there is more or less of such bullying at Adventist schools, and whether the possibility of seeing LGBT or potentially-LGBT students as sinners as well as different would change the dynamics.

I posed questions concerning this topic on gay-friendly Adventist-related sites on Facebook, seeking data, and received a bunch of replies. A number of these suggested that many of the LGBT per-

EXHIBIT B.1/2: LGBTQ Affirmation Background at La Sierra University.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (March 26, 2021)

Page 2

The Adventist Church and Its LGBT Members — Part 3 - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/news/adventist-church-and-its-lgbt-members-part-3/>

sons responding had experienced less bullying at Adventist schools — perhaps because the students all knew one another as a result of the small size of those schools. Some reported more trouble from administrators/teachers: for example, some who refused to write positive references for students who appeared as if they might be LGBT. When respondents could report on the situation of current students, their comments suggested that it had changed more recently; many public schools now recognize and support their LGBT students, and there are gay-straight alliances and other support for them there. However, this is not true in Adventist academies; evidence was put forward suggesting that the sin issue has become more important there in recent years: “When I was (a teacher and counselor) at small Adventist schools, the kids who came out as LGBT were picked on mercilessly.”

By the mid-1990s, Adventist colleges had moved away from witch hunts focused on suspected gay students to policies of “don’t ask, don’t tell.” In part, this was because they had become more accustomed to the presence of known gay students within their student bodies. Another ingredient was their increasing need to maximize tuition income. Students found in compromising situations, however, are still likely to face discipline, although expulsion is now rare.

PUC was the first college to have a gay support group among students, in the late 1980s. This garnered help from the pastor of the campus church and several faculty. Walla Walla, what was then CUC, and La Sierra followed during the 1990s. All depended on the presence of students with the courage to act. The visibility and indeed the very existence of each group rose and fell as active students graduated and newcomers became involved.

During the 1980s and 1990s, students who were openly LGBT on campuses faced a lot of negative responses from other students. However, as homosexual issues became politically prominent in the new century, and as courts made decisions recognizing same-sex marriage, other students became more supportive, and many saw these issues as the major human rights issues of this time. The result was the emergence of a new kind of organization, gay-straight alliances, on some Adventist NAD campuses.

There are currently LGBT-related organizations on seven NAD campuses, where they seem to be of great importance to the members. Three of these have official recognition, and the others function without harassment. Members from each campus meet annually, usually at Kinship’s Kampmeeting. In very recent years, the climate for LGBT students has improved greatly on most campuses, with support from faculty and often tacit support from administrators. However, a few administrators have tried to block the formation of groups on the remaining campuses, ostensibly to be in support of the denomination. The dynamics at La Sierra University (LSU) have been representative of those at several campuses.

LGBT students at LSU created support groups starting in the early 1990s. Since their early iterations were not officially recognized, they were not permitted to meet on campus; instead, they met in the homes of supportive faculty members off-campus. They were also hampered by not having access to the usual means used by other student clubs to publicize their activities. Since they depended on

EXHIBIT B.1/3: LGBTQ Affirmation Background at La Sierra University.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (March 26, 2021)

Page 3

The Adventist Church and Its LGBT Members — Part 3 - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/news/adventist-church-and-its-lgbt-members-part-3/>

the presence of student leaders who had the courage to be open about their orientation, their existence was intermittent. While La Sierra was part of Loma Linda University in the 1970s and 1980s, it ignored the possibility that it had LGBT students. There was a lot of bullying, hate, and harassment of the LGBT students, especially in the men's dormitories, but the college would not be accountable for mistreatment. The administration made a fuss in the later 1980s when the student paper published an ad from Kinship, making its phone number available to LGBT students needing help.

Once LSU separated from LLU, it became more open under the Guy and Geraty administrations, although this was always cautious and only really visible at an unofficial level. Nevertheless, many students continued to make homophobic remarks in classes, and the LSU chaplain was hostile to homosexuals. A new VP for Student Life, appointed in 1995, rewrote the Student Handbook in a much more LGBT-friendly fashion, but this was undone after 2000 on the initiative of the new Provost, Ella Simmons. Meanwhile, however, the faculty had become more supportive: in 1995, over a hundred of them agreed to place their names on a list of faculty who were safe for LGBT students to talk with. At this time, a member of the Counseling department was important in publicizing a new unofficial LGBT support group among potential members. The Psychology department later took over and expanded this role. However, the Board of Trustees was seen as conservative, and some administrators also. The Student Life administration was unwilling to ask the Board to approve an LGBT support group, which was necessary to make it a legal student club.

In the early years of the new century, the attitude of the LSU student body began to change noticeably, because of both a new chaplain and societal changes. The LGBT students began to feel that they had many allies on campus, although some continued to be adamantly opposed to them. In 2011, LGBT students organized again, as Prism, and when they began the process of applying for formal recognition the student government voted in favor of this unanimously. However, the Student Life administration again refused to forward their application to the Board, thus again forcing the LGBT support group to function unofficially. However, the group later gained the equivalent of official standing under the umbrella of the Psychology department. This made it organizationally more stable. Meanwhile, the presence of several LGBT faculty members and administrators has become more widely known, though not officially acknowledged, on campus.

The Adventist LGBT college students in the NAD came to regard the denial of their right to organize on their campuses as a discrimination problem that needed to be addressed. They also wanted to work together on problems faced by a significant number of Adventist LGBT students, such as rejection by their families when they came out to them or were discovered by them. In an attempt to address these issues more effectively, Rebby Kern from LSU and Eliel Cruz from Andrews University founded the Inter-Collegiate GSA (Gay-Straight Alliance) Coalition of LGBT groups (IAGC) at Adventist Colleges in 2011-12. Kinship worked with them, and it really took off. It began to train potential LGBT leaders on all the Adventist campuses, and several college administrations began to hold conversations with their campus LGBT group. The IAGC regarded the NAD statement issued in 2015, which stated that celibate homosexuals could be church members and hold any church office, as affirming their identity and giving the colleges permission to work with them.

EXHIBIT B.1/4: LGBTQ Affirmation Background at La Sierra University.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (March 26, 2021)

Page 4

The Adventist Church and Its LGBT Members — Part 3 - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/news/adventist-church-and-its-lgbt-members-part-3/>

They used that interpretation to extend their contact with college/university administrations.

Meanwhile, at the two largest universities, Loma Linda (LLU) and Andrews (AU), both of which happen to be GC institutions, recent changes have been especially dramatic. These universities have been addressing such issues at a level far beyond the rest of the church, and, as such, have become social labs, working through things in advance of the denomination, and setting precedents en route.

Andrews University

In October 2009, Nicholas Miller, a Seminary professor, responding to the publication of *Christianity and Homosexuality* and its chapters by Adventist biblical scholars addressing the scriptural passages usually used to “bash” LGBT people, organized a “scholarly conference” on Marriage, Homosexuality, and the Church. Its focus was tightly theological. Those working with students at Andrews University found its contents irrelevant to their LGBT students. In fact, the practical issues of how to respond to Adventist LGBT children were never addressed in those years.

In 2013–14, Jonathan Doram, an AU freshman, described his feelings about being a gay student at AU:

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.

The Capetown “summit” in 2014 had brought with it a call for continued conversation on the topic of LGBT Adventists. Spurred by this, AULL4One, the unofficial Gay-Straight Alliance at Andrews University formed in 2013, proposed that its members tell their personal stories to other interested members of the student body, and the university administration agreed to sponsor “a conversation with LGBT students” on Sabbath afternoon, April 19, 2014. President Niels-Erik Andreassen explained that it was “important that we seek to offer compassion and support for all members of our community.” The session was opened by then-Provost Andrea Luxton and moderated by two faculty members. The university advertised the event as “a supportive environment where Andrews University LGBT students can honestly and safely share their stories.” The event was attended by over six hundred people. It garnered a lot of enthusiasm both on campus, where the student newspaper devoted an entire issue to it, and from LGBT alumni who had not had voices when they were students there. However, the university received pushback from conference presidents such as Jay Gallimore of Michigan.

A year later, the unofficial group wanted to raise money for a homeless shelter in Chicago for LGBT

EXHIBIT B.1/5: LGBTQ Affirmation Background at La Sierra University.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (March 26, 2021)

Page 5

The Adventist Church and Its LGBT Members — Part 3 - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/news/adventist-church-and-its-lgbt-members-part-3/>

teens. (There are high numbers of such teens because many are thrown out of their homes when they come out to their parents. Some of the LGBT students at AU have themselves had such an experience.) However, the AU administration became nervous and refused the request because the group was working with an LGBT organization in Chicago that used drag shows to raise money. It explained that the Seventh-day Adventist Church does not support intimate LGBT relationships. Consequently, “Andrews University’s policies do not permit the raising of funds to support the work of agencies that advocate behaviors contrary to Adventist beliefs.” However, Eliel Cruz, the campus LGBT leader, who had excellent connections to the press, fought back by gaining press publicity for AU’s refusal to help the homeless. For example, the American edition of the respected British newspaper, *The Guardian*, published an article headlined, “Christian charities preach helping the less fortunate, unless you’re gay.” AUll4One turned to crowdfunding to finance its project, collecting \$17,000, while the university was shamed in the press.

AU responded by establishing an LGBT Student Life Practice and Policies Taskforce, to address the difficult problem of how to operationalize the official position of the church on homosexuality, marriage, and same-sex unions in a way that provided compassionate care for LGBT students and prevented harassment of them. The concern for homeless LGBT youth resulted in a study by AU faculty that is examining the phenomenon of Adventist families who throw their LGBT children out after they have come out or been discovered by their parents.

In September 2016, Campus Pride, a national non-profit organization endeavoring to create safer college campuses for LGBT students, added AU to its Shame List, which calls out the “shameful acts of religion-based prejudice.” A key reason for this was the university’s refusal to allow an official LGBT group on campus. (The unofficial group, like that earlier at La Sierra University, was not permitted to meet on campus or advertise to find others who may need help.) Ironically, this announcement came just in advance of the release of its *Framework for Relating to Sexual Orientation Differences on the Campus of Andrews University* by the Taskforce.

While insisting that students refrain “from romantic behaviors between individuals of the same sex,” it recommended creating a safe, caring, and informed environment for LGBT students, and an official campus organization designed to minister to their needs. In arriving at this recommendation, it took notice of the findings of a large study by faculty members that “a significant number of Adventist young adults who identify as LGBT have experienced a great deal of suffering and rejection from family members and faith communities.” Consequently, the university’s goal was to “engage these students spiritually and support them emotionally as they navigate their sexuality and/or gender identity.” The recommendation was approved by the Board of Trustees in October 2017. The plan offered students confidentiality, so that they were not outing themselves in joining the organization. Meetings are run by two faculty members, and look rather like a counseling office. The formation of this organization did not remove the need for the unofficial gay-straight alliance; the two organizations cooperate so that their meetings do not clash. Meanwhile, the university is still working on how to respond to questions raised by transgender students.

EXHIBIT B.1/6: LGBTQ Affirmation Background at La Sierra University.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (March 26, 2021)

Page 6

The Adventist Church and Its LGBT Members — Part 3 - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/news/adventist-church-and-its-lgbt-members-part-3/>

Andrews University follows the GC in distinguishing between sexual orientation and sexual activity. However, since it is aware that this has not been recognized in key legal decisions, this may be a reason why its official statements do not indicate that it does not discriminate on the basis of orientation. Staff members who administer in the area of student life expressed frustration with the extent to which discussions in this area emphasize religious rights while neglecting biblical themes like hospitality, neighborliness, Christian forbearance, and access. One summed up the current situation: “In practice, LGBT students on Adventist campuses are still often excluded and made to feel unwelcome. There is a long way to go before the institutional culture is successfully changed. Meanwhile, many LGBT students think of themselves as no longer Adventists before they graduate — because they do not see a place for themselves within their church.”

Loma Linda University

Loma Linda University, the site of the Adventist Medical School and other related programs, long had a reputation of being inhospitable to gay and lesbian students. This was especially so during the long administration of President Lyn Behrens. In September 2000, she told a local newspaper during an interview that faculty were fired and students expelled if caught or suspected of breaking the university rules banning homosexual conduct. Student records were marked that the dismissal was because of immorality, and they were not given supporting letters or help in finding other schools. In an August 2002 article in the *Adventist Review*, the LLU vice president for diversity, Leslie Pollard, reported being asked about the university’s position on sexual orientation after making a presentation on health care and diversity at a national conference. His answer had been “Loma Linda has one standard applicable to both hetero- and homosexual persons: celibacy before marriage; monogamy within marriage.” Since same-sex marriage was still illegal, he was in effect saying that only celibate homosexuals were acceptable. In response to another question, he added that Loma Linda did not knowingly hire practicing homosexuals or extend benefits to their partners.

During this time, university policies, reflected in the rules listed in the student and faculty handbooks, omitted mention of sexual orientation or gender identity from the lists of categories of people who were protected from discrimination, abuse, or other mistreatment. Similarly, in the section that covered principles of conduct concerning the relationships students develop with their patients, the clause that proscribed “refusal to treat any patient for reason of...” also omitted those categories.

However, under the administration of the current president, Richard Hart, and especially over the last six years, Loma Linda University has become a much more welcoming environment for LGBT Adventists. This has been a complex process, in which several clusters of factors each played important parts.

The dramatic changes in American attitudes toward LGBT people over the last twenty years influenced court and legislative decisions and the questions raised at re-accreditation visits.

Recognizing that its community included LGBT people, for it did not grill potential faculty mem-

EXHIBIT B.1/7: LGBTQ Affirmation Background at La Sierra University.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (March 26, 2021)

Page 7

The Adventist Church and Its LGBT Members — Part 3 - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/news/adventist-church-and-its-lgbt-members-part-3/>

bers or students concerning their sexual orientations, LLU chose not to be out of step with the law or the communities it serves, and came to realize that following the example of Jesus meant caring for such marginalized groups also.

The personal commitment of several key administrators evolved over time, becoming very different from that of earlier administrations. Knowledge of the angst of LGBT friends, family members, and students, and a certainty that they too were children of God, led such administrators to become strongly committed to making LLU a truly welcoming campus. For example, a close friend of President Hart, dating back to academy and college, transitioned from man to woman in the 1990s. Without Hart's commitment and zeal, the changes would probably not have been made at this time.

LLU was proud because both its faculty and students were drawn from many countries and were racially and culturally diverse. Its commitment to diversity broadened over time to include sexual orientation and gender identity also.

A growing commitment to follow where scientific research they trusted took them had prepared LLU administrators to think of gender identity and sexual orientation as scientific rather than doctrinal issues; scientific research, especially Kerby Oberg's studies of fetal development, helped both administrators and students understand the complexity of sexual differentiation, and that sexual orientation is not a choice.

In recent years, the rules listed in the LLU Student Handbook have gradually become more protective and friendly toward LGBT people. Treatment stigmatizing or degrading a student because of sexual orientation was forbidden in the Student Mistreatment section by 2011. In 2013, the medical school moved ahead of the rest of the university in the policies distributed in the orientation package to incoming students by its Office of Student Affairs: "Any form of discrimination or harassment based on personal characteristics of race, sexual orientation, gender, or gender identity will not be tolerated." This was the first mention in any LLU policy of gender identity. In 2014, the Student Handbook broadened the scope of Title IX: "Loma Linda University maintains a strict policy prohibiting discrimination and harassment based on personal characteristics of... sexual orientation, gender identity..." However, the policies prohibiting same-sex sexual contact remained in force. The 2015 Handbook, which was published shortly after the Supreme Court decision legalizing same-sex marriage throughout the nation was announced, removed the reference to homosexual sexual relations as being contrary to the ideals of the university and subject to disciplinary action. Sexual relations between same-sex couples had finally been accepted on campus within a marriage. The 2019 Handbook removed the statement that sexual relations within a committed heterosexual marriage were God's ideal.

During the years 2016–17, the process of changing LLU's attitudes toward LGBT people sped up. In May 2016, President Hart asked Dr. Jana Boyd, the newly hired director of the Employee and Student Assistance Program, to be involved in working toward making the university a safe and affirming environment for LGBT students and faculty/staff. She created a resource site for LGBT in-

EXHIBIT B.1/8: LGBTQ Affirmation Background at La Sierra University.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (March 26, 2021)

Page 8

The Adventist Church and Its LGBT Members — Part 3 - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/news/adventist-church-and-its-lgbt-members-part-3/>

formation and materials, which involved meeting with LGBT persons on campus in order to ask them what resources were needed. She also began working with them toward creating an officially recognized LGBT support group.

Next, Hart invited a current transgender student, a former gay student, and a faculty member who is the mother of two gay children to tell their stories at meetings of the University Leadership Council, whose membership included most of the primary administrators and leaders. In September 2016, he made understanding LGBT people the theme of a Leadership Retreat.

In December 2016, the university had agreed to sponsor a Humanities Sabbath afternoon panel discussion on “Religion and the LGBT Community.” After the meeting ended, some LGBT students and others gathered near the front, meeting and conversing with one another. This led to the formation of an unofficial LGBT club on campus. In mid-2017, Jana Boyd created an official LGBT support group, where students could discuss personal and campus issues. This was the first officially recognized LGBT group on any Adventist campus. In 2020, the LGBT club also gained official status.

Since LLU is a medical and health-related university, some of the research and teaching done there was immediately relevant to LGBT issues. For example, the research of Kerby Oberg on fetal development allowed him to speak with authority in a course about human development that discussed the developmental basis of intersex persons, who have both male and female sexual organs, and also about the way sexual organs and brains develop and can get out of sync — a situation that can result in biological sex being discordant with a person’s gender. Oberg showed that these variations could be biological, rather than theological, and therefore not a choice. LGBT students spoke enthusiastically about Oberg’s classes, for the data presented had helped them understand and accept their sexual orientations.

In December 2016, Oberg addressed the NAD Symposium on Transgender People at Santa Barbara. After that, President Hart arranged for him to make presentations at LLU to the President’s Leadership Council and to a committee of the university’s Board of Trustees in January 2017. In these presentations, Oberg provided evidence that gender identity could have a biological basis and as such would not be a choice, making it a medical rather than a theological issue. Hart also arranged for a transgender student to tell her story to the LLU Diversity Council, and for Oberg to speak after her, explaining the biological basis of reproduction. This had the effect of placing her story in scientific context.

President Hart devoted the issue of his letter to the campus, *Notes from the President*, distributed on February 2, 2017, to relating to LGBT people. This passage was highlighted:

“It is critical that we understand, treat and support everyone we encounter, regardless of their hereditary, cultivated, assigned or self-assumed sexual identity. That is what we do as health professionals. It is what our code of conduct expects of us.”

EXHIBIT B.1/9: LGBTQ Affirmation Background at La Sierra University.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (March 26, 2021)

Page 9

The Adventist Church and Its LGBT Members — Part 3 - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/news/adventist-church-and-its-lgbt-members-part-3/>

He continued:

“My own interactions suggest that most LGBT individuals are not trying to stand out, or fly a flag — they are longing to be accepted as part of the human race and community they find themselves in... Christ Himself spent his time on earth reaching out to individuals who were marginalized during his day.... While the Bible doesn’t give us a specific story about Jesus relating to an LGBT person, individuals under this umbrella would certainly fit into His lexicon of those deserving His compassion and care. The question of causation asked of Him about the blind man — ‘Who sinned, this man or his parents?’ — seems very pertinent here. Christ’s answer — ‘Neither, but to glorify God’ — acknowledges his acceptance regardless of causation.... It seems to me that this is not a time for judgment, but rather a time for acceptance, a time for offering emotional support during a difficult journey.”

There has subsequently been a remarkable shift in Loma Linda University’s treatment of LGBT persons: the meetings of the student LGBT groups are advertised on monitors throughout the campus; transsexual students have received gender-changing surgery and transitioned while training at the university; the university now has openly LGBT faculty members and is open to hiring same-sex couples. While this shift may have been initiated by the need to face accrediting agencies and to be in accordance with new California laws, key decision makers became personally invested in totally ending discrimination. As a result of this focus, they have withstood opposition and criticism from GC President Ted Wilson.

The staff who provide help to students at the other Adventist colleges and universities in the NAD are aware of the dramatic developments toward LGBT acceptance on the Loma Linda campus. Some have told me that they see Loma Linda as better positioned to move in directions that the GC might object to, and hope that it can create a wake that will also propel other campuses in a similar direction. Since they realize that the new state-sponsored regulations helped push Loma Linda toward dramatic changes, they realize that the time may come when similar regulations will pressure their colleges to be more caring toward their gay students. They see an irony in that pattern, where actions by government or courts prod Adventist institutions to be more Christian in their actions.

Congregations and Pastors

Given the negativity of the Adventist Church’s official statements, the diversity of voices within it, and the bitter debates within society about civil rights for homosexuals, to what extent have Adventist congregations and pastors in the United States and Canada become caring and welcoming toward homosexuals? To what extent do Adventist churches support their LGBT children and members and offer them unconditional love? On the other hand, to what extent do they judge and reject them? How frequently do churches assume that they have no LGBT people and practice “don’t ask/don’t tell,” offering no support or affirmation until perhaps one of their youth “comes out” by bringing a same-sex sweetheart to church?

EXHIBIT B.1/10: LGBTQ Affirmation Background at La Sierra University.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (March 26, 2021)

Page 10

The Adventist Church and Its LGBT Members — Part 3 - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/news/adventist-church-and-its-lgbt-members-part-3/>

We saw earlier that what matters most to the GC and the NAD is not whether a person's sexual orientation is homosexual, but whether or not he/she is believed to be sexually active. Celibate homosexuals are supposedly eligible to be members and hold any office in their local church. This means that a same-sex couple in a committed relationship, who may now be legally married, is by definition not eligible. A 2017 incident illustrates some possible dynamics. A married lesbian couple had been attending a Californian church: one was a long-term Adventist, the other new to Adventism. When the latter's experience in that church and with her spouse led her to request baptism, the pastor and officers were supportive, but the senior pastor was nervous about performing the baptism himself. A retired ordained pastor agreed to do so.

However, word of the happening was leaked to a right-wing publication in Oregon, which made a fuss about it. This led various church authorities, including GC President Ted Wilson, to apply considerable pressure to the conference, demanding that it discipline both the senior pastor for permitting the baptism to take place and the retired pastor for having performed an "illegal baptism," and that the baptism be annulled. The conference initially asked the retired pastor if she would be willing to relinquish her ministerial credential in order to allow it to demonstrate that it had taken strong action and upheld a strong position. However, ultimately it took the position that membership is a local matter, and no move was made at the church to annul the baptism. The senior pastor was reprimanded for going against church policy, but no efforts were made either to remove him or rescind his ordination. The retired pastor feels that considering the amount of pressure that came from the GC president, both the NAD president and union and conference officials handled the matter with "the softest touch possible." Both the lesbian who was baptized and her partner endured very distressing events, but both remain Adventists.

In fact, there are considerable differences from one congregation to another. This was well illustrated by two interviews I completed back-to-back in Los Angeles. One of the questions on the interview schedule for pastors asked, "How many gay members do you have?" When I asked this of the pastor of a large Hispanic church, his first response was "none," which he quickly changed to "maybe one." He then told me of a member who had been disfellowshipped because of his homosexuality, but had later been re-baptized because he claimed to have been "cured." However, the members shunned him when he attended church because they did not believe his claim. The pastor explained that he did not speak to him either, because this would have offended the congregation's lay leaders. My next interview was with the pastor of a predominantly white church only a few miles away. He told me that his youth leader, who was highly admired, was widely known to be gay and that he and his partner often sang duets in services.

Most North American Adventist churches follow an unwritten, unstable version of "don't ask, don't tell." This means that it is acceptable if an LGBT member is single and discreet. It may be acceptable for a couple, especially a lesbian couple, to attend together as "friends"; some lesbian couples have been able to live together, and even follow one another from one city to another as they change church-related jobs, without raising overt suspicion. However, if a member is open about a same-sex relationship, severe problems frequently emerge. Consequently, the most stable same-sex relationships — married couples — are likely to attract trouble. Some pastors and members want

EXHIBIT B.1/11: LGBTQ Affirmation Background at La Sierra University.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (March 26, 2021)

Page 11

The Adventist Church and Its LGBT Members — Part 3 - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/news/adventist-church-and-its-lgbt-members-part-3/>

their congregations to be safe places for LGBT Adventists to worship, free of harassment from the pulpit or from members. However, because the church hierarchy has embraced an antagonistic position and some members may voice negative opinions, many are loath to risk conflict.

Consequently, only a handful of congregations are known to be accepting of acknowledged same-sex couples. Sadly, such accepting situations can also be fragile and uncertain, for a loving pastor can be replaced by a crusader, new antagonistic members may set out to “cleanse” the church, or the conference can suddenly intervene, and in each case a previously loving community may then become a poisonous environment.

One example of such a dramatic change occurred at San Francisco Central Church, where several LGBT members had found a spiritual home and also support in a ministry to reach out to members of the broader gay community. That ministry folded in 2004 when one leader died and his partner then moved away. This allowed two ultraconservative newcomers to the church to change the accepting dynamic, kill the outreach program, and intimidate the remaining LGBT members. Another example occurred at the North Oshawa Church in Ontario, Canada, which had supported and integrated a gay couple. Later, however, the conference intervened and, in a vicious process, a new pastor was appointed and new, compliant lay leaders elected. Both the gay couple and the former leaders were made to feel so unwelcome that they formed a new, independent congregation.

An LGBT Adventist can also be left without a spiritual home if he or she needs to move to another area. In the late 1980s, a Kinship member was nominated to be head elder of his church in suburban Philadelphia. Surprised by this development, he felt it necessary to inform his pastor that he was gay, and was assured that his sexual orientation would not disqualify him; when he added that his roommate was his partner, the pastor remained steadfast. Some years later, the gay elder moved to the opposite side of the metropolitan area, and began to attend a nearby church. However, when he gave the pastor there the same information, he was abruptly disfellowshipped. He was so hurt by the experience that he switched to an accepting church of another denomination.

When I moved to Asheville, NC, in 2015, I was told by the pastor of the church I attended that I was welcome to attend services but that I should not attempt to move my membership to the church for I would then be rejected. While I had been asked to play the organ and to lead song services for about three months after I started attending the church, once my sexuality became known via the grapevine, I was never again asked to do anything. It was apparently assumed that I was sexually active; I was never asked about that. While attending there I endured a virulently anti-gay sermon preached by a lay member and a presentation by “Coming Out” Ministries, Ted Wilson’s favorite ex-gay group, whose depiction of “the gay lifestyle” was false and offensive to me.

Many Adventist pastors do not know how to minister to gay members. I have heard numerous complaints about derisive statements about homosexuals from the pulpit, and even insensitive jokes at their expense, from pastors who are apparently oblivious to the fact that there may be closeted LGBT persons sitting in the pews. Some pastors have also betrayed those who have confided in them.

EXHIBIT B.1/12: LGBTQ Affirmation Background at La Sierra University.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (March 26, 2021)

Page 12

The Adventist Church and Its LGBT Members — Part 3 - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/news/adventist-church-and-its-lgbt-members-part-3/>

The typical Adventist congregation creates opportunities for its heterosexual youth to bond, and there is excitement when one shows romantic interest in another. However, LGBT youth have no such opportunities, and if one brings a boyfriend or girlfriend that he/she has met elsewhere, they are immediately suspect. So, they are obliged to go to gay bars or to search online for a partner. This makes it much more difficult to create an “Adventist home.”

The evidence suggests that Adventist congregations and pastors usually offer their LGBT members conditional, rather than unconditional, love. Because of this, the best way for a gay or lesbian member to survive there is to remain closeted — but this prevents strong bonds from developing because such members must try to hide who they really are. This forces them to turn instead to the gay community for genuine, caring friendships. The closet is an uncomfortable space in which to be confined. LGBT Adventists of older generations often put down deep roots in their churches when they were young because they found love there while they struggled secretly with their sexual orientation. Once they came out to themselves, they realized that the love they had felt might be conditional, but they often remained active in their churches because of both the strength of their faith in the Lord and the fact that Adventism had become such an important part of their identities. Given the negative situations that they often endured, it is amazing how many remained committed to their congregations. However, this is much less common among the current generation of youth; because of the availability of information on the internet and of support groups in public schools, they tend to “come out” at a much earlier age, and to realize that their churches are so unwelcoming that they frequently look for a loving environment elsewhere. Is this the result that Adventist churches and denominational leaders desire?

The possibility of a church voting to become an “affirming congregation,” which has become important in several mainline denominations, has only recently emerged within Adventism. A website dedicated to encouraging Adventist congregations to craft welcoming statements, with examples of what various churches have voted, was created in 2018, largely through the efforts of Chris Blake, professor emeritus at Union College. The goal of the site, AdventistChurchWelcomingStatements.org, is to give site visitors “biblical inspiration for creating a welcoming statement, a list of actual welcoming statements, and tips for creating a welcoming statement for your church.” It notes that,

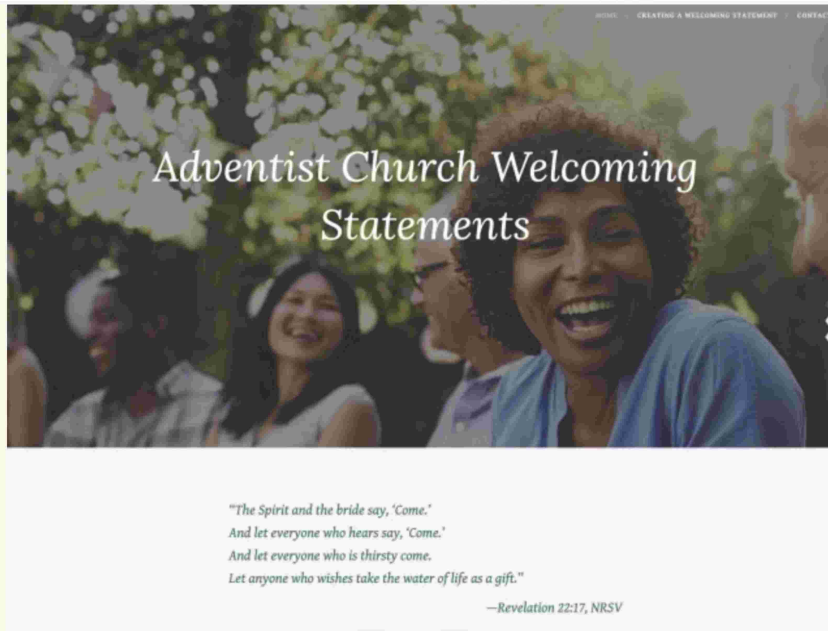
“The Seventh-day Adventist Church has officially published many encouraging statements welcoming *all* people... In practice, however, Adventist churches at times have been exclusive and repellent. We have closed doors to people who didn’t behave like us or think like us or look like us. We have cared more about being right than about being kind. We have confused acceptance with agreement. We have been too motivated by fear. We have turned away thirsty seekers of the free water of life... Now is the time to be more intentional concerning the openness and warmth of our local church climates. As important as a mission or vision, a welcoming statement gives the church a face.”

EXHIBIT B.1/13: LGBTQ Affirmation Background at La Sierra University.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (March 26, 2021)

Page 13

The Adventist Church and Its LGBT Members — Part 3 - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/news/adventist-church-and-its-lgbt-members-part-3/>



The website [AdventistChurchWelcomingStatements.org](#) provides instructions on how to craft a welcoming statement, along with listing churches with similar welcomes.

The site lists twenty-seven Adventist churches and their welcoming statements: twenty-four from the US, three from Australia. Here are two examples:

"The Charlottesville Seventh-day Adventist Church welcomes you and people of every race, appearance, belief system, sexual orientation, nation, gender, economic level, age, and ability."

Florida Hospital Church: "We are... single, married, divorced, female, male, straight, LGBTQ, poor, rich, old, young. At FHC, we welcome any member of the community to join us in worship. We don't care if you're a practicing Christian or got lost in traffic and wound up here by mistake. We want to offer you grace and peace as you begin or continue your faith journey."

I found this statement the most striking:

"La Sierra University Church is a church 'between,' bridging generations and communities... We are also seeking reconciliation with those we have left out. Though we have said, 'You are welcome here,' we realize that many in the LGBT community, in particular, do not feel included. We confess that we have fallen short. Aspiring to follow Christ's command to love one another, we resolve to work for change in our church community to be fully welcoming and affirming for all LGBT people. As we work to make concrete changes and open new conversations, please hear us when we say, 'ALL are welcome here.'"

EXHIBIT B.1/14: LGBTQ Affirmation Background at La Sierra University.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (March 26, 2021)

Page 14

The Adventist Church and Its LGBT Members — Part 3 - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/news/adventist-church-and-its-lgbt-members-part-3/>

I decided to explore how LSUC came to embrace this statement. Pastor Chris Oberg, the first, and so far only, woman lead pastor at an Adventist university church, had come to understand and care about the struggle of LGBT Adventists. Consequently, when the film *Seventh-Gay Adventists* (see [Part 4](#)) was released in 2012, she insisted that it be shown in the church sanctuary, not another space, and she was there to introduce it. The church was jammed, with over 1,500 present for the showing. Pastor Oberg then spent the next six years fostering dialogue, preaching on compassion, inclusion, and welcome, and many in-depth church-board conversations, until ultimately the collective consciousness of the congregation was raised, and it was ready to be really accepting and welcoming. As is true in many churches, the community included several LGBT people, including students, and many allies. These included a gay couple, Gabriel and Chase Uribe, both graduates of LSU, who became committed to participating in the process. In 2018, when the LSUC Board formed a Welcoming Statement Taskforce to suggest the next steps in making the church truly welcoming, Gabriel was one of those appointed to it. While crafting the statement, it became clear that equally important to marginalized people is a safe space to gather and be at home, for a statement can only do so much. Along the way, many were surprised to hear a simple request for a Sabbath School class for LGBT people where they could grow their devotion to God and study Scripture, not foster some other agenda. Consequently, the Task Force chose to begin not with a welcoming statement but with something more tangible, an explicitly welcoming Sabbath School class catering to the needs of LGBT people. It felt that this would help demonstrate that the sentiment expressed in the statement was real and not mere words. The class was voted by the board in September 2018 and launched the following month, with Gabriel and Chase as the teachers; it was named the Kinship Class. The committee then completed the welcoming statement, choosing to include the reconciling, confessing language quoted above. Although Gabriel had not thought an apology was necessary, the committee decided that it was important because of the long history of damage by faith communities, including Adventists, to their LGBT siblings. At the beginning of 2019, the Task Force brought the statement to the board and then to a business session of the congregation. Both the class and the statement had been endorsed without a single dissenting vote.

When Gabriel and Chase married in 2017, they wanted their pastor to tie the knot. However, this was impossible because Adventist authorities have absolutely forbidden Adventist pastors to have any roles in performing same-sex weddings. However, to the surprise of the couple, every member of the LSUC pastoral staff attended their wedding in order to celebrate with them and show their love for them.

The contrast between the university churches at La Sierra and Loma Linda seems strange and unexpected. While LLU has become welcoming to LGBT people, the LLU Church, which is situated on its campus, makes no such statement; unlike La Sierra University Church, it has lagged behind the university. This is so even though its senior pastor, Randy Roberts, is also a vice-president of the university and in that capacity has approved the changes made by the university. When asked about this, an associate pastor told me that there has not been a negative comment about homosexuals in a sermon for several decades, and explained that it is difficult for LLUC to address this issue because of the diversity of views within the congregation; it is a “big-tent” congregation. This

EXHIBIT B.1/15: LGBTQ Affirmation Background at La Sierra University.
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (March 26, 2021)

Page 15

The Adventist Church and Its LGBT Members — Part 3 - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/news/adventist-church-and-its-lgbt-members-part-3/>

means that LGBT members can participate in services but should not expect overt statements of support; that is, the church is still in a “don’t ask/don’t tell” mode. It is therefore not a surprise that most of the LGBT students who attend church services do so at one of two overtly accepting congregations, one of which is independent from the denomination and conference. It surprised me that most of the LLU administrators interviewed were not aware of this disparity between the official positions of the university and the church that bears its name until I asked them the reasons for it.

[Read Part 1 here.](#)

[Read Part 2 here.](#)

[Read Part 4 here.](#)

Ronald Lawson is a lifelong Seventh-day Adventist, and a sociologist studying urban conflicts and sectarian religions. He is retired from Queens College, CUNY, and now lives in Loma Linda, CA.

Main image credit: [Sharon McCutcheon](#) on [Unsplash](#) / Spectrum. In-line image courtesy of [AdventistChurchWelcomingStatements.org](#).

This article originally appeared in the current *Spectrum* print journal, volume 48, issue 4.



EXHIBIT B.2/1: LGBTQ Affirmation by Church Board & Pastors at La Sierra University Church.
Source: [SDA Kinship SS Instagram](#) (September 25, 2019)
La Sierra Church - Board: September 24, 2018 (see statement below)
La Sierra Church - Business Session: January 2019

Page 1

Instagram

<https://www.instagram.com/kinshipsabbathschool/reel/B24hOwVBVEE/>



Church Welcoming Statement

To be published on the church website on "About Us" page

La Sierra University Church is a church "between," bridging generations and communities. We are a diverse Christian congregation situated in the 92505 neighborhood of western Riverside, next to two campuses, La Sierra Academy and La Sierra University. As one of only 13 campus churches in the Seventh-day Adventist denomination in North America, we recognize our unique responsibility to future generations.

We strive to be authentic, transparent, inclusive, and compassionate—to be congruent between our talk and our walk. Grace shapes the ways we pattern our shared lives and is expressed in a commitment to wellness. We are as weak as our most vulnerable member and as strong as our healthiest. Thus, our congregational liturgy closes with, "Be Well."

We are at our best when we are willing to be relevant, raw, and wrestling with our faith.

We are also seeking reconciliation with those we have left out. Though we have said, "You are welcome here," we realize that many in the LGBT+ community, in particular, do not feel included. We confess that we have fallen short. Aspiring to follow Christ's command to love one another, we resolve to work for change in our church community to be fully welcoming and affirming for all LGBT+ people. As we work to make concrete changes and open new conversations, please hear us when we say, "ALL are welcome here."

—Voted by the Church Board on September 25, 2019

EXHIBIT B.2/2: LGBTQ Affirmation by Church Board & Pastors at La Sierra University Church.
Source: [SDA Kinship SS Instagram](#) (October 28, 2023) / [LSU Church Pastoral Staff](#) (Current)

Page 1

Instagram

<https://www.instagram.com/kinshipsabbathschool/p/Cy7uu6fugnE/>

kinshipsabbathschool
Riverside, California

Follow ...



kinshipsabbathschool 143w
Each of these pastors at SDA La Sierra University Church are accepting and affirming of all of God's children including LGBTQ+ folks. We are so thankful for each of them for advocating for LGBTQ+ folks, advocating for inclusive spaces within the church and denouncing discrimination and hate when it shows up in our community.

Learn more about your pastors:
<https://lasierra.church/pastoral-staff/>



56



3



October 28, 2023



Add a comment...



EXHIBIT B.3/1: LGBTQ Kinship Sabbath School at La Sierra University Church.
Source: [La Sierra Church Kinship Sabbath School Facebook](#) (Screenshot: July 2026)

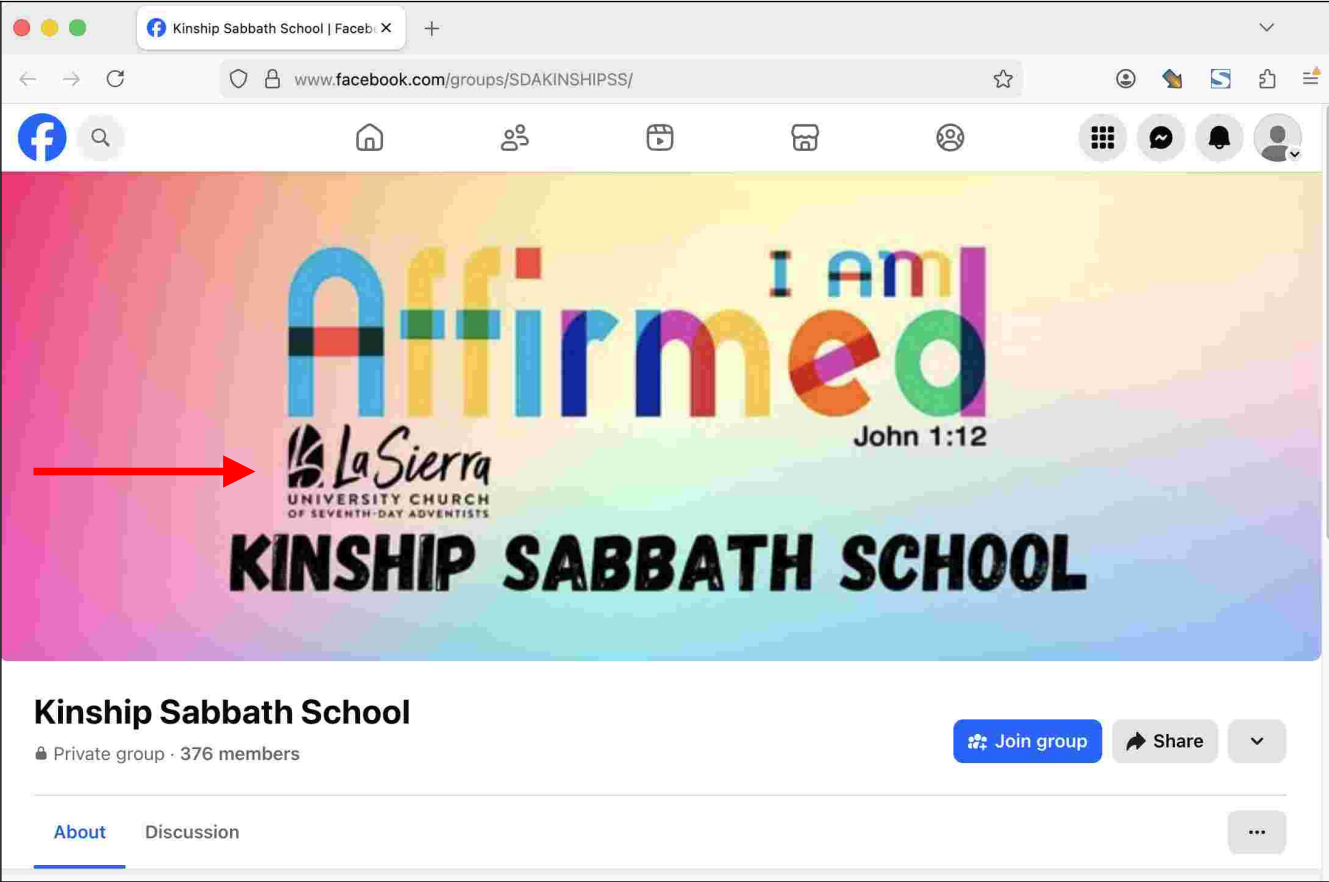


EXHIBIT B.3/2: LGBTQ Kinship Sabbath School at La Sierra University Church (2019)
Source: [La Sierra Church Kinship Sabbath School Instagram](#) (September 22, 2019)

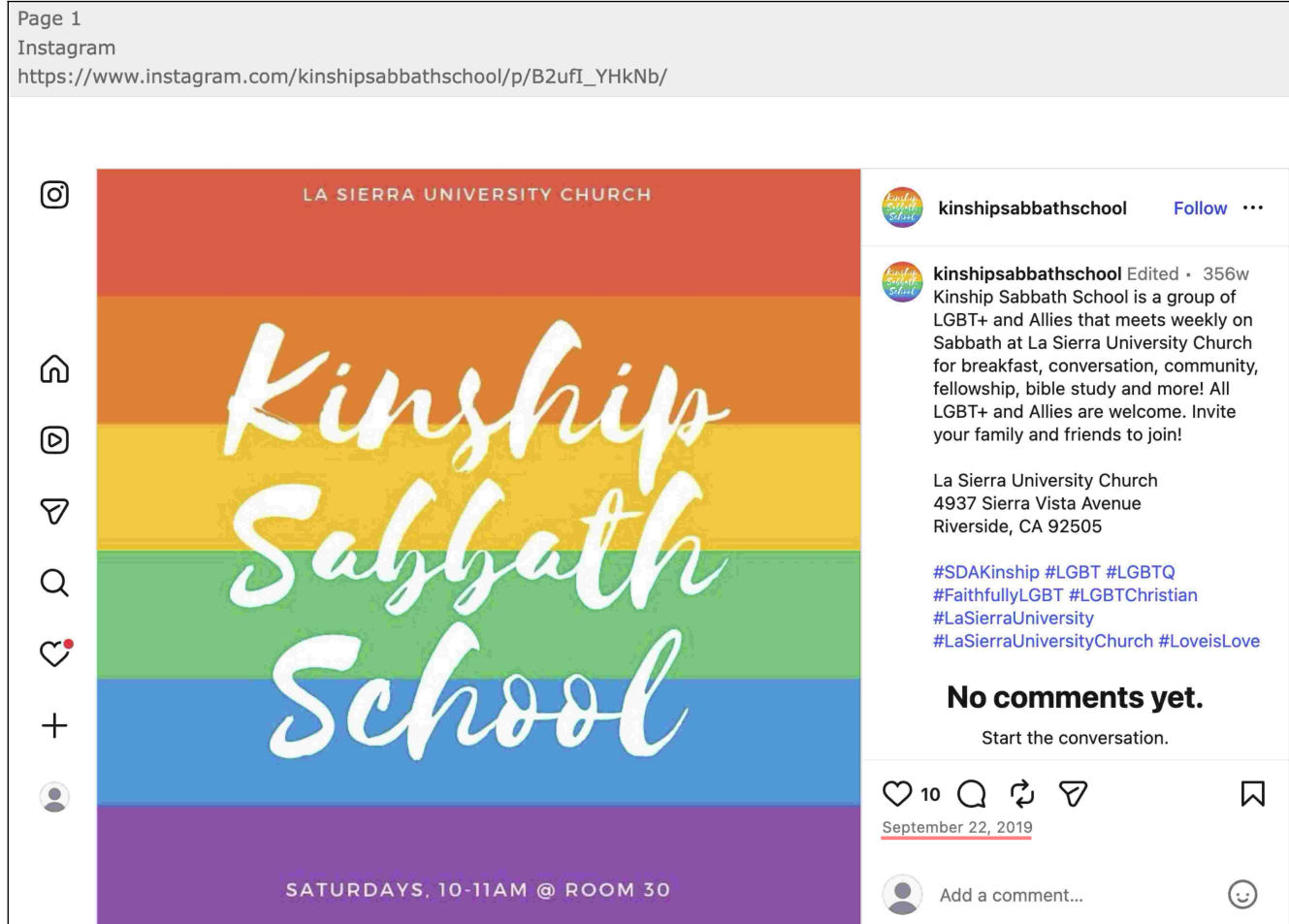


EXHIBIT B.3/3: LGBTQ Kinship Sabbath School at La Sierra University Church (2019)
Source: [La Sierra Church Kinship Sabbath School Instagram](#) (September 22, 2019)

Page 1
Instagram
<https://www.instagram.com/kinshipsabbathschool/p/B2ujl2ZHJ9w/>





The image is a screenshot of an Instagram post. The main content is a graphic with the word "Affirmed" in large, colorful, block letters. To the right of "Affirmed" is the text "I am" in smaller, colorful letters, followed by a large, colorful letter "e". Below "Affirmed" is the La Sierra University Church logo, which includes the text "La Sierra UNIVERSITY CHURCH OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS". To the right of the "I am e" text is the text "John 1:12".



kinshipsabbathschool
La Sierra University Church
[Follow](#) [...](#)



kinshipsabbathschool [Edit](#) • 356
I
Join us for breakfast, conversation,
community, fellowship bible study and
more! 🏳️‍🌈📖

Kinship Sabbath School
La Sierra University Church
Saturdays, 10:00AM, Room 30

"Yet to all who did receive him, to
those who believed in his name, he
gave the right to become children of
God."

17
[September 22, 2019](#)

 Add a comment... 

EXHIBIT B.3/4: LGBTQ Kinship Sabbath School at La Sierra University Church (2019)
Source: [La Sierra Church Kinship Sabbath School Instagram](#) (October 10, 2019)

Page 1
Instagram
<https://www.instagram.com/kinshipsabbathschool/p/B3cdm-0hQSM/>



LA SIERRA UNIVERSITY CHURCH
OF SEVENTH DAY ADVENTISTS

**kinshipsabbathschool** Follow ...

**kinshipsabbathschool** 354w
Blessed with family that grew out of La Sierra University Church. #BeYou #FaithfullyLGBT 🏳️‍🌈❤️🙏

**uuser12234566778** 354w
What a beautiful cathedral church LSU church is I love the architecture 🙏

**jebmalingkas** 354w 🙏❤️

76 2 2

October 10, 2019

Add a comment...

EXHIBIT B.3/5: LGBTQ Kinship Sabbath School at La Sierra University Church (2019)
Source: [La Sierra Church Kinship Sabbath School Instagram](#) (October 12, 2019)

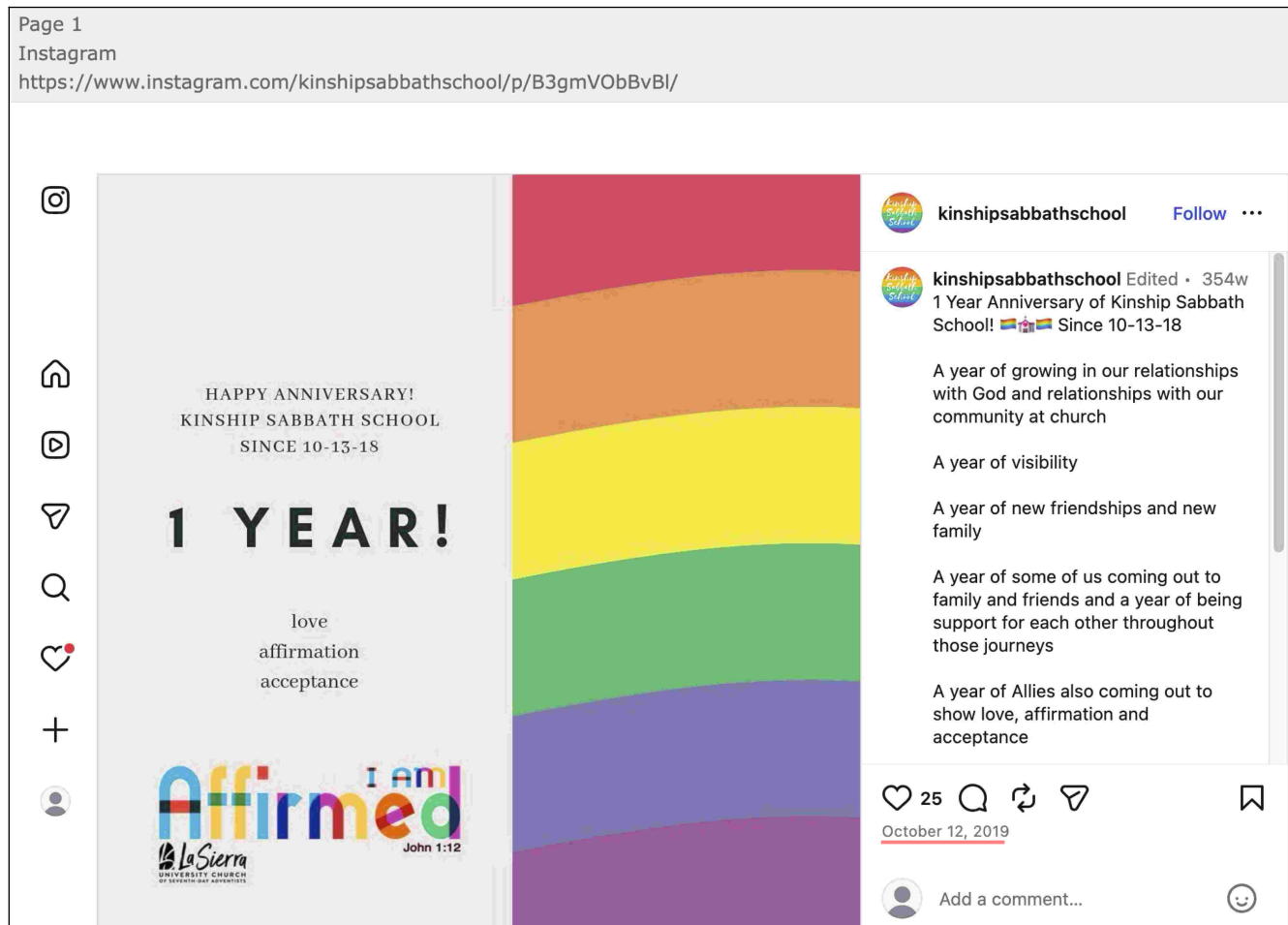


EXHIBIT B.3/6: LGBTQ Kinship Sabbath School at La Sierra University Church (2020)
Source: [La Sierra Church Kinship Sabbath School Instagram](#) (January 4, 2020)

Page 1
Instagram
<https://www.instagram.com/kinshipsabbathschool/p/B64tyF2BrVv/>





La Sierra
UNIVERSITY CHURCH
OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

FELLOWSHIP - BIBLE STUDY - COMMUNITY

KINSHIP SABBATH SCHOOL
Saturdays, 10AM
La Sierra University Church
4937 Sierra Vista Ave
Riverside, CA 92505
www.lasierra.church



kinshipsabbathschool Follow ...

No comments yet.
Start the conversation.

**23**

January 4, 2020

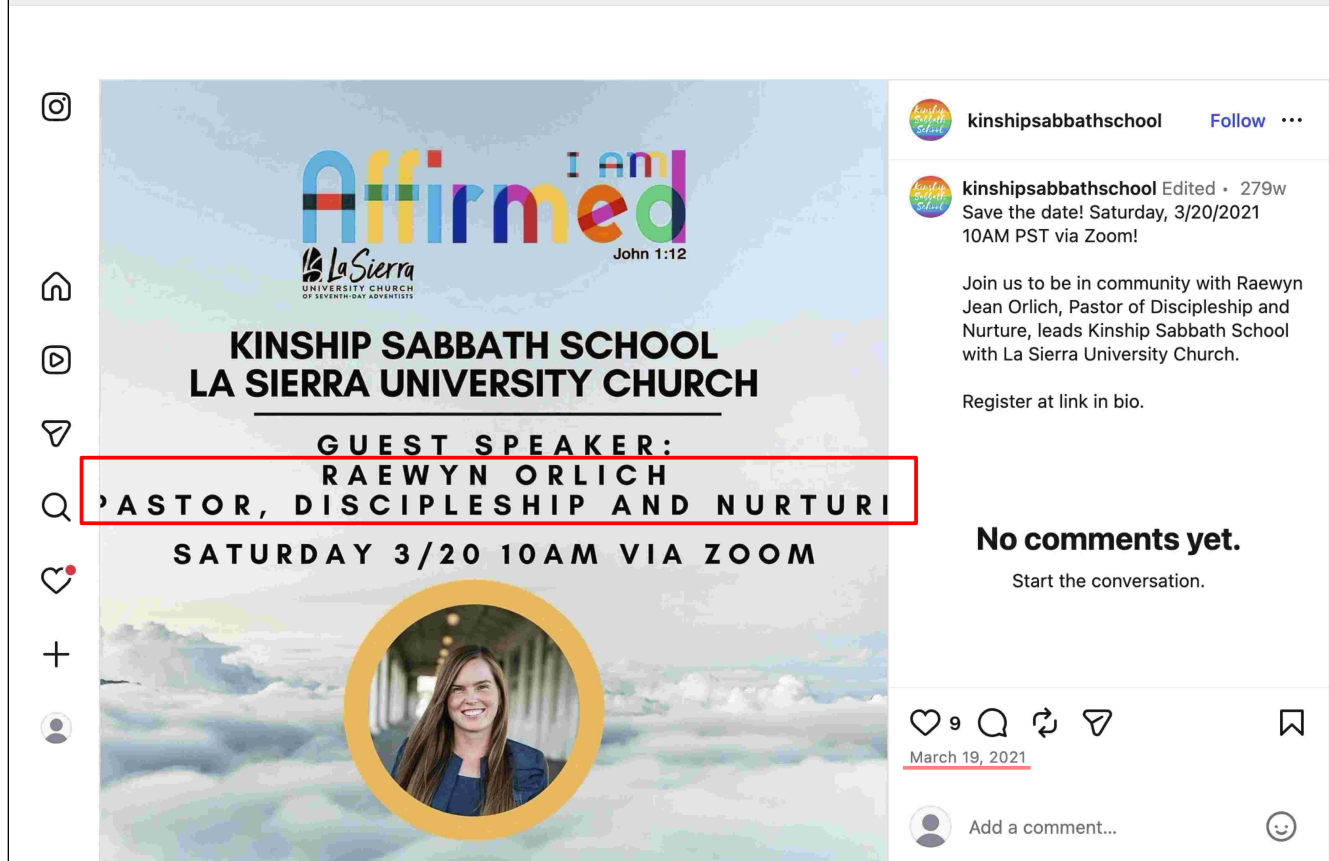
 Add a comment... 

EXHIBIT B.3/7: LGBTQ Kinship Sabbath School at La Sierra University Church (2021)
Source: [La Sierra Church Kinship Sabbath School Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/kinshipsabbathschool/p/CMlphohBQII/) (March 19, 2021)

Page 1

Instagram

<https://www.instagram.com/kinshipsabbathschool/p/CMlphohBQII/>



The image is a screenshot of an Instagram post from the account 'kinshipsabbathschool'. The post features a promotional graphic for a 'Kinship Sabbath School' event at 'La Sierra University Church'. The graphic includes the 'Affirmed' logo with the text 'I AM' and 'John 1:12', and a circular portrait of a woman, Raewyn Orlich. The text on the graphic reads: 'KINSHIP SABBATH SCHOOL LA SIERRA UNIVERSITY CHURCH', 'GUEST SPEAKER: PASTOR, DISCIPLESHIP AND NURTURE', and 'SATURDAY 3/20 10AM VIA ZOOM'. The Instagram interface shows the post was edited 279 weeks ago, has no comments yet, and was posted on March 19, 2021. The user's bio mentions joining the community with Raewyn Jean Orlich, Pastor of Discipleship and Nurture, who leads the Kinship Sabbath School with La Sierra University Church. A red box highlights the text 'GUEST SPEAKER: PASTOR, DISCIPLESHIP AND NURTURE'.

kinshipsabbathschool Follow ...

kinshipsabbathschool Edited • 279w
Save the date! Saturday, 3/20/2021
10AM PST via Zoom!

Join us to be in community with Raewyn Jean Orlich, Pastor of Discipleship and Nurture, leads Kinship Sabbath School with La Sierra University Church.

Register at link in bio.

No comments yet.
Start the conversation.

March 19, 2021

Add a comment...

EXHIBIT B.3/8: LGBTQ Kinship Sabbath School at La Sierra University Church (2022)
Source: [La Sierra Church Kinship Sabbath School Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/kinshipsabbathschool/p/CYpxsuCIIL2/) (January 13, 2022)

Page 1

Instagram

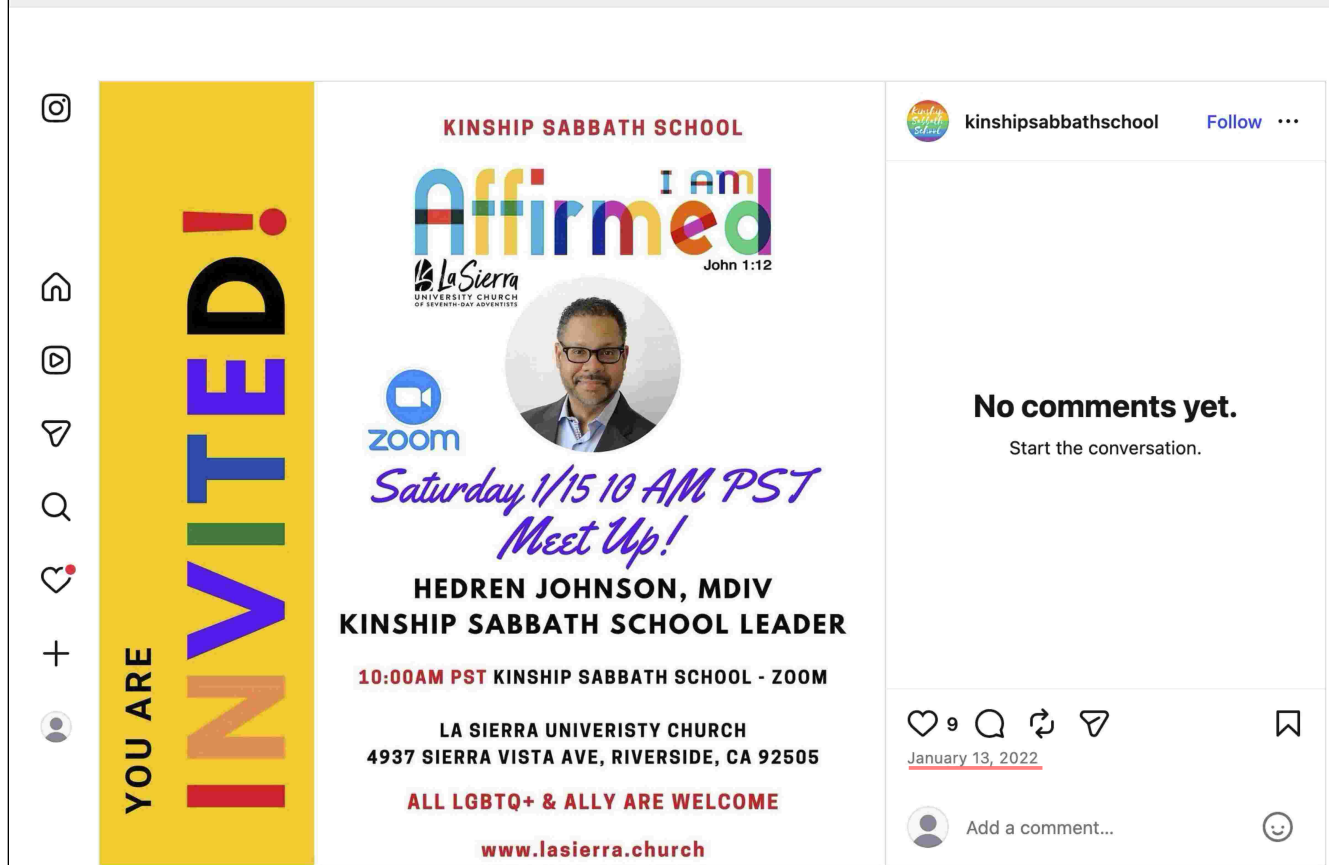
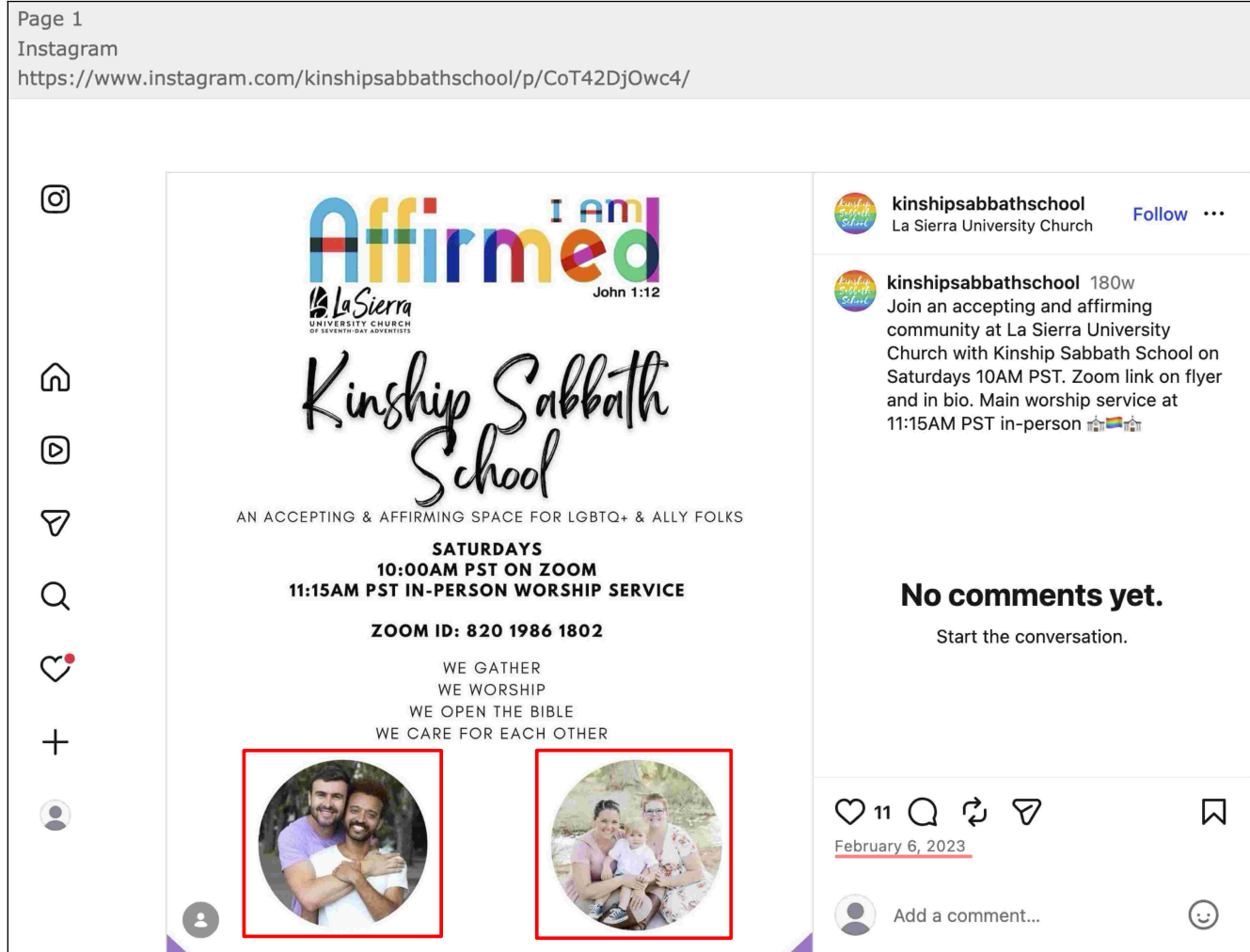
<https://www.instagram.com/kinshipsabbathschool/p/CYpxsuCIIL2/>

EXHIBIT B.3/9: LGBTQ Kinship Sabbath School at La Sierra University Church (2023)
Source: [La Sierra Church Kinship Sabbath School Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/kinshipsabbathschool/p/CoT42DjOwc4/) (February 6, 2023)

Page 1
Instagram
<https://www.instagram.com/kinshipsabbathschool/p/CoT42DjOwc4/>



The image is a screenshot of an Instagram post from the account 'kinshipsabbathschool'. The post features a flyer for 'Kinship Sabbath School' at La Sierra University Church. The flyer includes the 'Affirmed I AM' logo, the text 'AN ACCEPTING & AFFIRMING SPACE FOR LGBTQ+ & ALLY FOLKS', and details about Saturday services: '10:00AM PST ON ZOOM' and '11:15AM PST IN-PERSON WORSHIP SERVICE'. It also provides a Zoom ID: 820 1986 1802 and a list of activities: 'WE GATHER', 'WE WORSHIP', 'WE OPEN THE BIBLE', and 'WE CARE FOR EACH OTHER'. Two circular photos are shown at the bottom of the flyer, each enclosed in a red rectangular box. The first photo shows two men embracing, and the second shows a family of four. The Instagram interface shows the post was made 180 weeks ago, has 11 likes, and no comments yet. The date 'February 6, 2023' is visible at the bottom of the post.

Affirmed I AM
La Sierra UNIVERSITY CHURCH OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS
John 1:12

Kinship Sabbath School

AN ACCEPTING & AFFIRMING SPACE FOR LGBTQ+ & ALLY FOLKS

SATURDAYS
10:00AM PST ON ZOOM
11:15AM PST IN-PERSON WORSHIP SERVICE

ZOOM ID: 820 1986 1802

WE GATHER
WE WORSHIP
WE OPEN THE BIBLE
WE CARE FOR EACH OTHER

kinshipsabbathschool La Sierra University Church
Follow ...

kinshipsabbathschool 180w
Join an accepting and affirming community at La Sierra University Church with Kinship Sabbath School on Saturdays 10AM PST. Zoom link on flyer and in bio. Main worship service at 11:15AM PST in-person 🏡🇺🇸🏡

No comments yet.
Start the conversation.

11
February 6, 2023

Add a comment...

EXHIBIT B.3/10: LGBTQ Kinship Sabbath School at La Sierra University Church (2023)
Source: [La Sierra Church Kinship Sabbath School Instagram](#) (April 26, 2023)

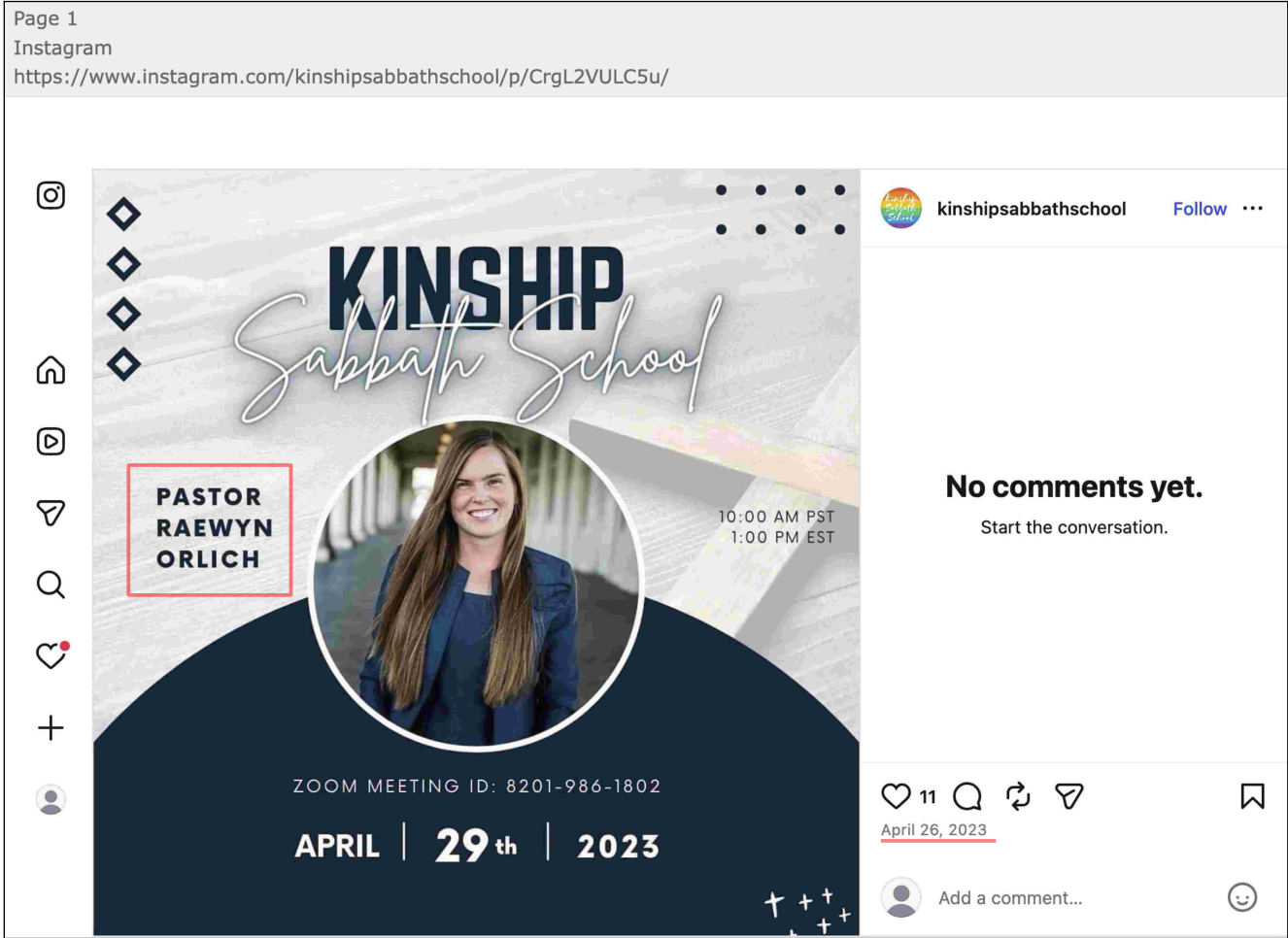


EXHIBIT B.3/11: LGBTQ Kinship Sabbath School at La Sierra University Church (2023)
Source: [La Sierra Church Kinship Sabbath School Instagram](#) (September 14, 2023)

Page 1

Instagram

<https://www.instagram.com/kinshipsabbathschool/p/CxKefAmux3j/>

EXHIBIT B.3/12: LGBTQ Kinship Sabbath School at La Sierra University Church (2026)Source: [La Sierra Church Kinship Sabbath School](#) (August 1, 2026) / [Current Event List](#)

Page 1

Kinship Sabbath School | SDA Kinship

<https://www.sdakinship.org/event-details/kinship-sabbath-school-2026-08-01-10-00>

EN



ES



PT

[ABOUT](#)[EVENTS](#)[RESOURCES](#)[JOIN](#)[NEWS](#)[DONATE](#)

Sat, Aug 01 | Online- Zoom

Kinship Sabbath School

SDA Kinship Sabbath School is an accepting, affirming, and safe space for LGBTQIA+ people and allies.

[Request Access](#)

Time & Location

Aug 01, 2026, 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM PDT

Online- Zoom

Other dates

[Sat, Sep 05, 10:00 AM](#)[Sat, Oct 03, 10:00 AM](#)[Sat, Nov 07, 10:00 AM](#)[View all 12 dates](#)

About the event

Kinship Sabbath School was founded in 2018 at La Sierra University with the support of the Seventh-day Adventist La Sierra University Church Pastors, Board of Directors and Members and Community. Kinship Sabbath School is an accepting, affirming and safe space for LGBT+ and Allies to experience bible study and fellowship together with community.

EXHIBIT B.3/13: LGBTQ Kinship Sabbath School at La Sierra University Church (2026)
Source: [La Sierra Church Kinship Sabbath School Instagram](#) (February 21, 2026)
(Photo taken of actual La Sierra University Church Bulletin Board)

Page 1

Instagram

https://www.instagram.com/kinshipsabbathschool/p/DVCH_Tikv6b/

Bible Study GROUPS & CLASSES

Childrens & Youth Sabbath School Classrooms

Tiny Tots	Ages 0-3	Rm. 4
Primary 1	Grades Pre-K-1	Rm. 5
Primary 2	Grades 2-4	Rm. 6
The Well	Grades 5-8	Rm. 7
High School	Grades 9-12	Rm. 16

Adult Bible Study Classrooms

Collegiate Sabbath School	Bible study led by College students	Rm. 11
Conversations	Discussion based on themes from books of the Bible	Rm. 11
Destination Sabbath School	Special features and large-group discussion of Adult Bible Study Guide	Rm. 12
Faculty & Friends	Discussion based on themes from the Adult Bible Study Guide	Zoom (online only)
Journey	Bible study, selected books, and varied discussion topics	Rm. 14
Kinship	Bible study and spiritual growth for LGBTQ+ and Allies	Zoom (online only)
McCalla Class	Beth McCalla led study of the Adult Bible Study Guide	Rm. 1
Outlook	Discussion of the Adult Bible Study Guide	Rm. 3

kinshipsabbathschool

Follow ...

kinshipsabbathschool 22w

sofiareneegil 22w

1 like Reply

View all 1 replies

12 2 1

February 21

Add a comment...

Kinship

Zoom (online only)

Bible study and spiritual growth for LGBTQ+ and Allies

EXHIBIT B.4/1: La Sierra University LGBTQ Lavender Graduation 2026 (June 5, 2026).
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](https://spectrummagazine.org/news/sabbath-school-class-hosts-lavender-graduation-to-honor-lgbtq-graduates/) (June 10, 2026)

Page 1

Sabbath School Class Hosts Lavender Graduation to Honor LGBTQ+ Graduates - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/news/sabbath-school-class-hosts-lavender-graduation-to-honor-lgbtq-graduates/>

SPECTRUM

Creating community through conversation
Seventh-day Adventist supported since 1969



NEWS

Sabbath School Class Hosts Lavender Graduation to Honor LGBTQ+ Graduates

Jared Wright | June 10, 2026 6 min. read



Among Adventism's underreported stories are the accounts of communities within the denomination that value and affirm queer people—places where “safe space,” “chosen family,” “preferred pronouns,” and “LGBTQ+ affirming” are not catchphrases but meaningful realities.

On Friday evening, June 5, La Sierra University Church's (LSUC) Kinship Sabbath School transformed Sierra Vista Chapel in Riverside, California, into one of those places for its sixth annual Lavender Graduation. The event stood out not only for its rainbow decor, but also and more significantly for its poignant celebration of seven graduating LGBTQ+ students from La Sierra University (LSU) and other Southern California schools—one of whom received recognition in absentia.

Celebrants included members of the LSUC pastoral staff, LSU faculty and administration, family and friends of the graduates, and yes, chosen family there to provide support in place of family members who could not or would not attend.

EXHIBIT B.4/2: La Sierra University LGBTQ Lavender Graduation 2026 (June 5, 2026).
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (June 10, 2026)

Page 2

Sabbath School Class Hosts Lavender Graduation to Honor LGBTQ+ Graduates - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/news/sabbath-school-class-hosts-lavender-graduation-to-honor-lgbtq-graduates/>



Small rainbow pride flags outside Sierra Vista Chapel marked the entrance to the Lavender Graduation. Raquel Mentor/SPECTRUM

Lavender Graduations date back to 1995 at the University of Michigan (U-M), when [Ronni Sanlo](#)—a woman from Florida who in 1979 lost custody of her children after coming out as lesbian—decided to do something about traditional graduation ceremonies’ failure to provide “safe or affirming environments for LGBTQ+ graduates, leaving some students feeling alienated on a day meant to celebrate their hard work and success.” Sanlo wanted to give U-M’s LGBTQ+ students the support she never experienced, and created the first Lavender Graduation to show “LGBTQ+ students they were seen, valued and celebrated.”

[The La Sierra community held its first Lavender Graduation virtually in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic when LSUC’s Kinship Sabbath school class partnered with Kinship International to honor three LGBTQ+ graduates. After going dark in 2021, the event has honored a total of 35 graduates including this year’s cohort.](#)

[Nearly a decade ago, Gabriel Uribe, a healthcare professional and former Social Work instructor at La Sierra University, and his husband Chase Uribe, a licensed clinical social worker, launched the Kinship Sabbath School, a first of its kind weekly gathering with LGBTQ+ members and allies from multiple continents. The group meets regularly on Sabbaths to study and worship. The couple has coordinated the La Sierra community Lavender Graduations since their start in 2020. For the second year in a row, Gabriel’s absence due to a deployment with the US Public Health Service Commissioned Corps saw Chase host the event solo.](#)

EXHIBIT B.4/3: La Sierra University LGBTQ Lavender Graduation 2026 (June 5, 2026).
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](https://spectrummagazine.org/news/sabbath-school-class-hosts-lavender-graduation-to-honor-lgbtq-graduates/) (June 10, 2026)

Page 3

Sabbath School Class Hosts Lavender Graduation to Honor LGBTQ+ Graduates - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/news/sabbath-school-class-hosts-lavender-graduation-to-honor-lgbtq-graduates/>



*Chase Uribe, an LSU alum and Kinship Sabbath School cofounder, hosts Lavender Graduation on June 5, 2026.
Raquel Mentor/SPECTRUM*

The Lavender Graduation's welcome was given by Lamont Damon, a marriage and family therapist associate with a master's in counseling from LSU, who has recently taken over leadership of Kinship Sabbath School.

Following Damon, LSUC Senior Pastor Iki Taimi offered prayer. He prayed that the graduates would know that their value does not lie in their output or in their earning potential, "but in the simple and profound truth that they are your beloved, created in your image."



EXHIBIT B.4/4: La Sierra University LGBTQ Lavender Graduation 2026 (June 5, 2026).
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](https://spectrummagazine.org/news/sabbath-school-class-hosts-lavender-graduation-to-honor-lgbtq-graduates/) (June 10, 2026)

Page 4

Sabbath School Class Hosts Lavender Graduation to Honor LGBTQ+ Graduates - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/news/sabbath-school-class-hosts-lavender-graduation-to-honor-lgbtq-graduates/>

Iki Taimi offers a dedicatory prayer during Lavender Graduation. Raquel Mentor/SPECTRUM

Taimi continued,

Bless those who have known rejection with belonging; bless those who have carried burdens with rest; bless those who have questioned their place in this world with a deep sense of purpose; bless those who have felt unseen with the assurance that they are known and cherished ... and move us into this celebration mindful that none of us walk alone.

LSU President Christon Arthur stood next to address the graduates. His participation, as noted later in the program, buoyed graduates and his university colleagues alike. And of the president's participation in these Lavender Graduations, Gabriel Uribe later remarked in correspondence for this article, "President Arthur has been supportive since day one. We are blessed to have him along with Former President Wisbey, who was an early supporter of Kinship Sabbath School's ministry."



Christon Arthur speaks to graduates during Lavender Graduation. Raquel Mentor/SPECTRUM

Arthur told the graduates, "Look within yourself and say, 'I am La Sierra.'" The president affirmed the graduates' personhood and humanity, and said "La Sierra doesn't come in a particular shape or size or orientation; La Sierra is big enough for all."

After Arthur's remarks, Anthony Garrison-Engbrecht delivered the evening's equivalent of a commencement speech. The vice president for Student Affairs at CalArts in Santa Clarita, California, Garrison-Engbrecht grew up in the rural town of Andover, Kansas about two and a half hours from Wichita. He recounted his struggles as a queer, biracial child of immigrants and a first generation

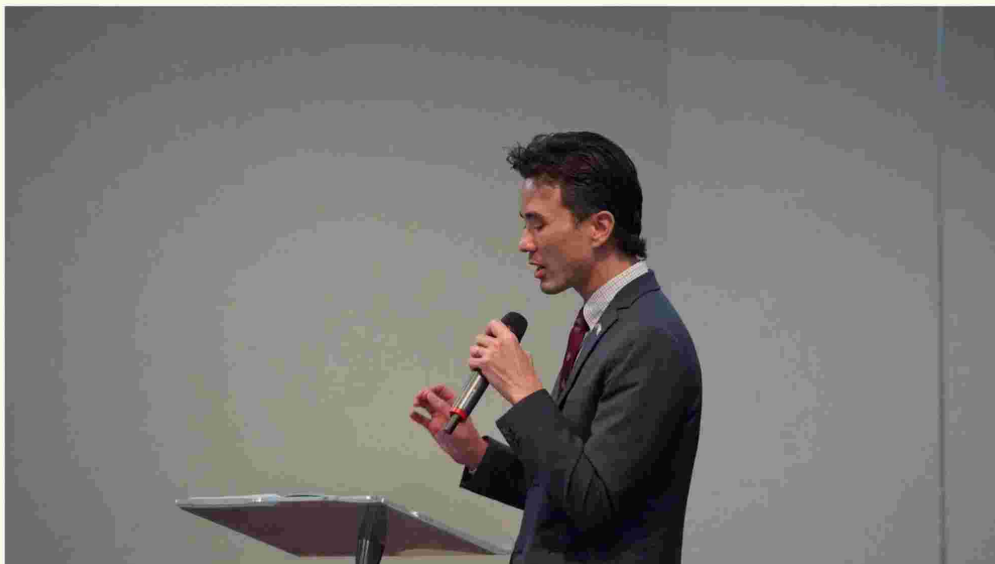
EXHIBIT B.4/5: La Sierra University LGBTQ Lavender Graduation 2026 (June 5, 2026).
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (June 10, 2026)

Page 5

Sabbath School Class Hosts Lavender Graduation to Honor LGBTQ+ Graduates - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/news/sabbath-school-class-hosts-lavender-graduation-to-honor-lgbtq-graduates/>

college student, noting the difficulty he felt grappling with questions of identity and belonging. “I didn’t know many openly LGBTQ people when I came out,” he said. And because “the future wasn’t visible” at the time, he added, “it became easy to wonder if that future existed at all.” But from that place of pain and isolation, he learned the importance of communities where people feel seen, heard and valued.



“The question before you now is not whether you have gifts but what you will do with them.” Anthony Garrison-Engbrecht speaks to graduates during Lavender Graduation. Raquel Mentor/SPECTRUM

“Tonight’s celebration says who you are matters,” Garrison-Engbrecht declared. “Your stories matter, your experiences matter, and your future matters.” He drew on American poet Mary Oliver’s poem, *The Summer Day*. “Tell me,” he said, quoting the poem’s closing lines, “what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?”

When Garrison-Engbrecht concluded his remarks, Chase Uribe invited all of the graduates onto the platform to receive personalized certificates, commemorative enamel event pins, and affirmations from the audience. But first, Uribe invited La Sierra faculty members and administrators to stand on the stage—some of them in graduation regalia—after which he introduced each graduate. The graduates were then given a chance to share anecdotes about their childhood goals and school memories.

EXHIBIT B.4/6: La Sierra University LGBTQ Lavender Graduation 2026 (June 5, 2026).
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](https://spectrummagazine.org/news/sabbath-school-class-hosts-lavender-graduation-to-honor-lgbtq-graduates/) (June 10, 2026)

Page 6

Sabbath School Class Hosts Lavender Graduation to Honor LGBTQ+ Graduates - Spectrum Magazine

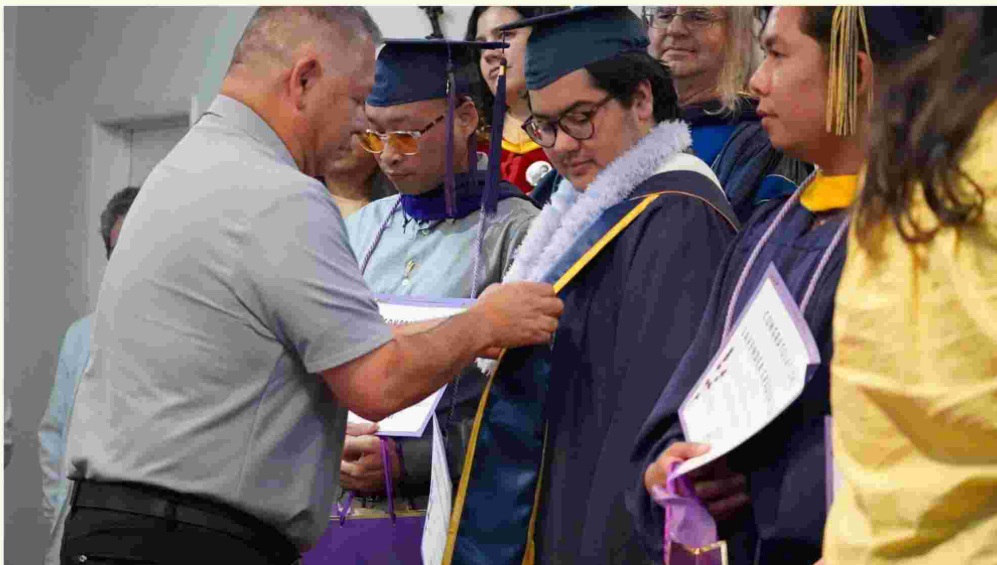
<https://spectrummagazine.org/news/sabbath-school-class-hosts-lavender-graduation-to-honor-lgbtq-graduates/>



A graduate's mortarboard graduation cap says, "Visible for those who can't be." Raquel Mentor/SPECTRUM

Here are the graduates and their recollections:

Quinn McFarland graduates this coming Sunday with a bachelor's degree in English literature and writing from LSU. Asked what gives him hope, he responded, "I spend my summers with queer youth, and they bring me hope knowing our future is in good hands." McFarland plans to pursue a master's degree in Art History from the University of York in England.



Quinn McFarland receives a Lavender Graduation pin from Rick Menjivar. Raquel Mentor/SPECTRUM

EXHIBIT B.4/7: La Sierra University LGBTQ Lavender Graduation 2026 (June 5, 2026).
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](https://spectrummagazine.org/news/sabbath-school-class-hosts-lavender-graduation-to-honor-lgbtq-graduates/) (June 10, 2026)

Page 7

Sabbath School Class Hosts Lavender Graduation to Honor LGBTQ+ Graduates - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/news/sabbath-school-class-hosts-lavender-graduation-to-honor-lgbtq-graduates/>

Yvonne Wilson will graduate with her bachelor's degree in social work from LSU. Speaking about her most positive experience at La Sierra, Wilson said that she began school in 2016, took a break, and then came back. She said the university community has been her most positive experience — "People being supportive, loving and caring." Wilson said that as a combat veteran, she at one point wanted to fly jets. Now, she says that she would like to get a van to provide mobile services, particularly to Vietnam vets.



Yvonne Wilson (left) with an "I Am Affirmed" Lavender Graduation certificate beside Christine Cales of LSU's Philanthropy Office. Raquel Mentor/SPECTRUM

Michael Au is graduating with a master's degree in clinical psychology from National University. He said, "I would tell my younger self to keep pushing through." Au plans to become a licensed marriage and family therapist focusing LGBTQ+ teens and adults.

Carlyle Tagalog will graduate from California Baptist University with a master's degree in Industrial and Organizational Psychology. When he was young, he wanted to be a mermaid and gameshow host. Now, he works for an aerospace manufacturing company and hopes to use his degree to serve people in that sector.

Bill Le will graduate with a masters degree in instructional design and technology from Cal State Fullerton. For Le, ballroom dancing is one of the many things that brings him joy. His nearly serious offer to demonstrate his voguing skills drew cheers and applause.

After the graduates shared, Desiree and Rick Menjivar provided them with Lavender Graduation pins and warm hugs. The couple are community members who often step in during milestone mo-

EXHIBIT B.4/8: La Sierra University LGBTQ Lavender Graduation 2026 (June 5, 2026).
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](https://spectrummagazine.org/news/sabbath-school-class-hosts-lavender-graduation-to-honor-lgbtq-graduates/) (June 10, 2026)

Page 8

Sabbath School Class Hosts Lavender Graduation to Honor LGBTQ+ Graduates - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/news/sabbath-school-class-hosts-lavender-graduation-to-honor-lgbtq-graduates/>

ments for LGBTQ+ individuals who may not have parents of origin with them due to familial rejection, often originating from denominational or cultural pressures. Gabriel noted, “they have been doing this for almost a decade and have walked folks down the aisle, stood in during graduations, and [participated in] many other special moments.”



With immaculate refreshments and fabulous centerpieces, Lavender Graduation combined decor, words, and presence to celebrate the graduates. Raquel Mentor/SPECTRUM

Audience members were given the opportunity to share words of encouragement or personal remembrances of the graduates. “You *are* a mermaid,” an audience member told Tagalog, before offering an affectionate affirmation.

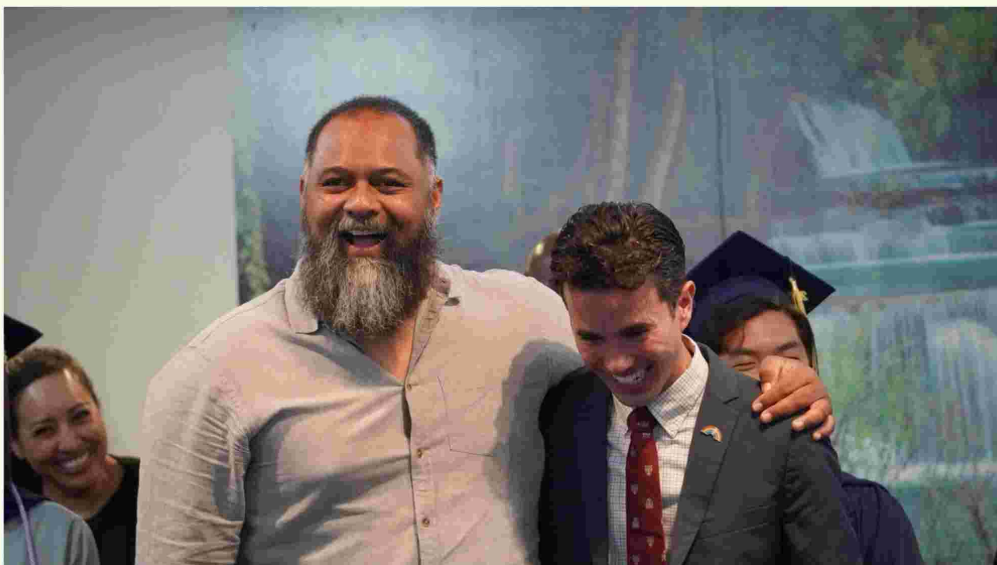


EXHIBIT B.4/9: La Sierra University LGBTQ Lavender Graduation 2026 (June 5, 2026).
Source: [Spectrum Magazine Article](#) (June 10, 2026)

Page 9

Sabbath School Class Hosts Lavender Graduation to Honor LGBTQ+ Graduates - Spectrum Magazine

<https://spectrummagazine.org/news/sabbath-school-class-hosts-lavender-graduation-to-honor-lgbtq-graduates/>

Ikki Taimi and Anthony Garrison-Engbrecht smile while being honored with mementos for participating in the event. Raquel Mentor/SPECTRUM

Wonil Kim, professor of Old Testament at LSU's H.M.S. Richards Divinity School, joked that "this might sound like I'm kissing up," but insisted that he was not because, "I have tenure," he said to some laughter. And then turning serious, Kim noted the importance of seeing the university president and Interim Provost Leslie Martin participating in the event. Prior to Arthur and Martin, no senior university administrators had taken part in the event. His acknowledgement garnered sustained applause for the university leaders.



Wonil Kim (left) stands alongside LSUC and LSU leaders, waiting to congratulate Bill Le. Kim's shirt says "The only minority destroying America is the rich." Raquel Mentor/SPECTRUM

After remarks from the audience and LSU faculty and administrators, LSUC associate pastor for Discipleship and Nurture, Raewyn Orlich, was invited to offer prayer. "God, in your love you made a beautiful rainbow," she began. "Forgive us when we insist on living in black and white."

All images: Raquel Mentor/SPECTRUM. All rights reserved, and may not be duplicated or shared without express, written consent.



About the author

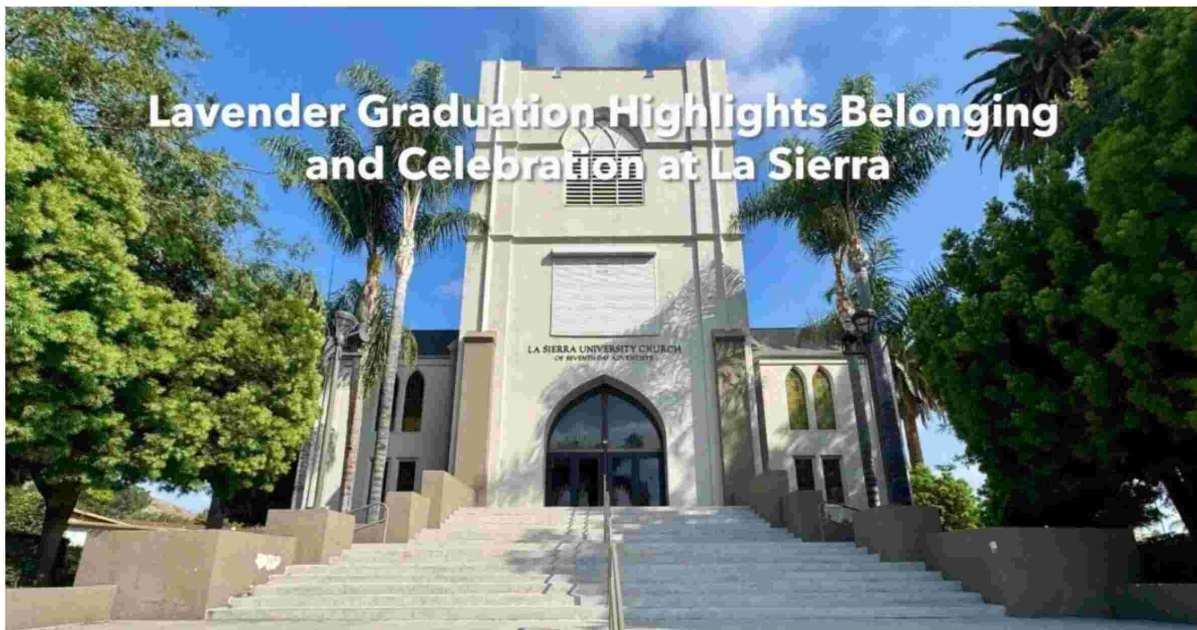
Jared Wright is a producer for the Spectrum Website. An Adventist missionary kid, he has lived in Central Africa, Southeast Asia, Central America and in the Eastern, Southeastern and Southwestern United States. He served as a pastor for four years prior to joining the Spectrum team. [More from Jared Wright.](#)

EXHIBIT B.5/1: La Sierra University LGBTQ Lavender Graduation 2026 (June 5, 2026).
Source: [Adventist Today Article](#) (May 18, 2026)

Page 1

La Sierra University to Host Lavender Graduation Honoring LGBTQ+ Students – Adventist Today
<https://atoday.org/la-sierra-university-to-host-lavender-graduation-honoring-lgbtq-students/>

AdventistToday.org



18
MAY
2026

La Sierra University to Host Lavender Graduation Honoring LGBTQ+ Students

NEWS / INCLUSION, LA SIERRA UNIVERSITY, LAVENDER 2026

La Sierra University will host its annual Lavender Graduation ceremony on June 5 at 6 p.m. at Sierra Vista Chapel on its church campus in Riverside, honoring LGBTQ+ graduates from the university and surrounding colleges, according to [an article in The Raincross Gazette by Ken Crawford.](#)

EXHIBIT B.5/2: La Sierra University LGBTQ Lavender Graduation 2026 (June 5, 2026).
Source: [Adventist Today Article](#) (May 18, 2026)

Page 2

La Sierra University to Host Lavender Graduation Honoring LGBTQ+ Students – Adventist Today
<https://atoday.org/la-sierra-university-to-host-lavender-graduation-honoring-lgbtq-students/>

Organized by Kinship Sabbath School in affiliation with [SDA Kinship International](#), the ceremony will take place one week before graduation weekend.

University President Christon Arthur said the event reflects La Sierra’s commitment to celebrating all graduates:

“One of those commemorations, the [Lavender Celebration](#), which occurs the weekend before our graduation weekend, is our opportunity to celebrate and bless our LGBTQ+ students who are graduating.”

He further states:

“It is a beautiful and memorable ceremony where we bless, honor, celebrate, and worship with our students before they leave campus. I gladly participate because it is an opportunity for me to remind our LGBTQ+ students how much I love them, and that La Sierra University will always be their home.”

Arthur also emphasized the university’s message of inclusion and belonging:

“We say unequivocally to our LGBTQ+ students, and to all our students, that there is a home for them at La Sierra... a home where they can thrive, flourish, grow, and live their full potential to become everything that God created them to be.”

At the time of this release, a keynote speaker has not yet been named.

EXHIBIT B.6/1: La Sierra University LGBTQ Lavender Graduation 2026 (June 5, 2026)
Source: [Raincross Gazette Article](#) (May 15, 2026)

Page 1

La Sierra University to Honor LGBTQ+ Graduates at Lavender Graduation Ceremony

<https://www.raincrossgazette.com/la-sierra-university-to-honor-lgbtq-graduates-at-lavender-graduation-ceremony/>

≡ MENU 🔍 SEARCH



The Raincross Gazette

LOG IN

SUBSCRIBE

TOWER

OWN YOUR LEGACY

HIGHER EDUCATION

La Sierra University to Honor LGBTQ+ Graduates at Lavender Graduation Ceremony

Organized by SDA Kinship International, the June 5 ceremony honors LGBTQ+ graduates from La Sierra and other area institutions.



KEN CRAWFORD

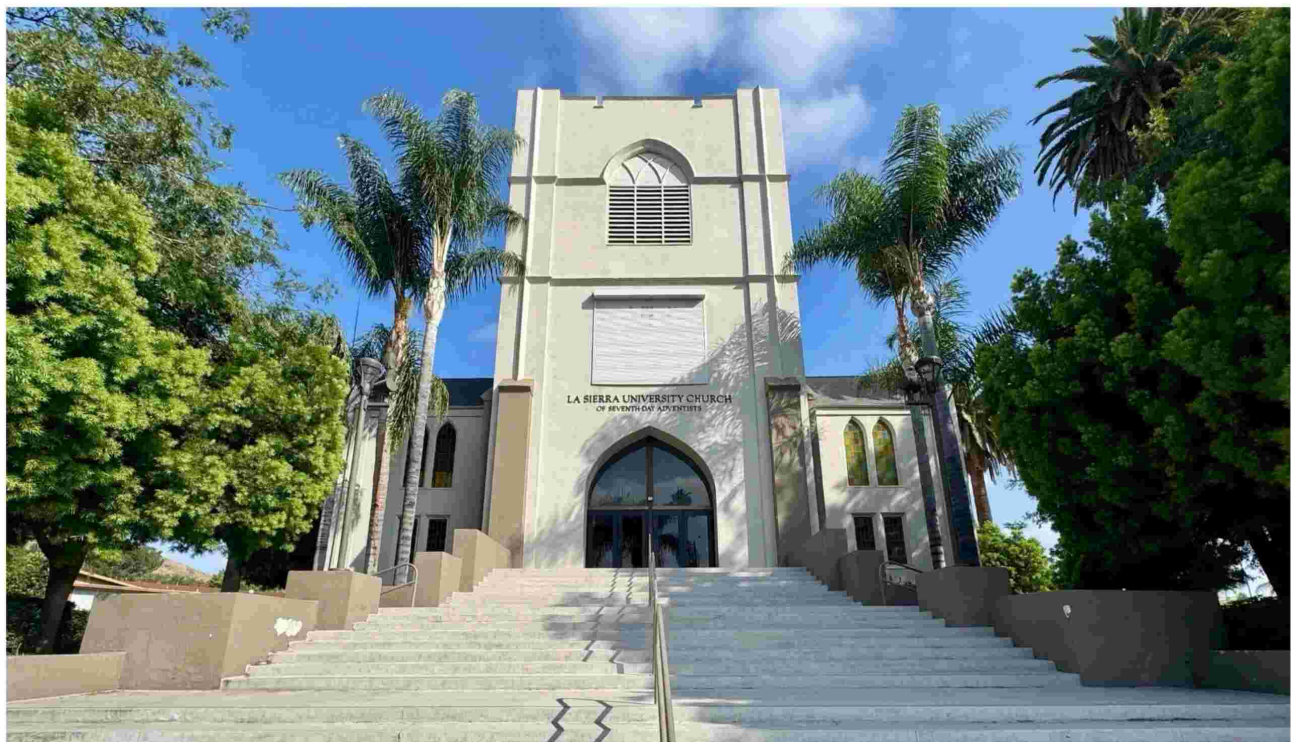
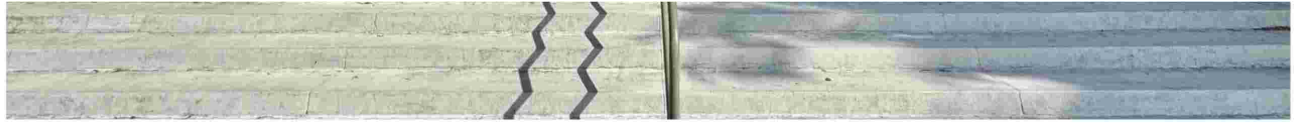


EXHIBIT B.6/2: La Sierra University LGBTQ Lavender Graduation 2026 (June 5, 2026).
Source: [Raincross Gazette Article](#) (May 15, 2026)

Page 2

La Sierra University to Honor LGBTQ+ Graduates at Lavender Graduation Ceremony

<https://www.raincrossgazette.com/la-sierra-university-to-honor-lgbtq-graduates-at-lavender-graduation-ceremony/>



La Sierra University Church of Seventh-day Adventists, at 4920 Sierra Vista Ave. in Riverside, will host the annual Lavender Graduation ceremony on June 5. (Ken Crawford)

MAY 15 2026 • 4:59 AM • 1 MIN READ

SHARE ▼

La Sierra University will host its annual Lavender Graduation ceremony June 5 at 6 p.m. at Sierra Vista Chapel on the La Sierra University Church campus, 4920 Sierra Vista Ave., Riverside.

The event is organized by Kinship Sabbath School, a local fellowship group for LGBTQ+ students and allies affiliated with SDA Kinship International, an independent support network for current and former Seventh-day Adventists. The ceremony honors LGBTQ+ graduates from La Sierra and other area colleges and universities.

University President Dr. Christon Arthur said the ceremony is part of how La Sierra celebrates its graduating students each year.

"One of those commemorations, the Lavender Celebration, which occurs the weekend before our graduation weekend, is our opportunity to celebrate and bless our LGBTQ+ students who are graduating," Arthur said. "It is a beautiful and memorable ceremony where we bless, honor, celebrate, and worship with our students before they leave campus. I gladly participate because it is an opportunity for me to remind our LGBTQ+ students how much I love them, and that La Sierra University will always be their home."

Arthur said La Sierra views all students, including those who identify as LGBTQ+, as full members of the university community.

"We say unequivocally to our LGBTQ+ students, and to all our students, that there is a home for them at La Sierra," he said. "A home where they can thrive, flourish, grow, and live their full potential to become everything that God created them to be."

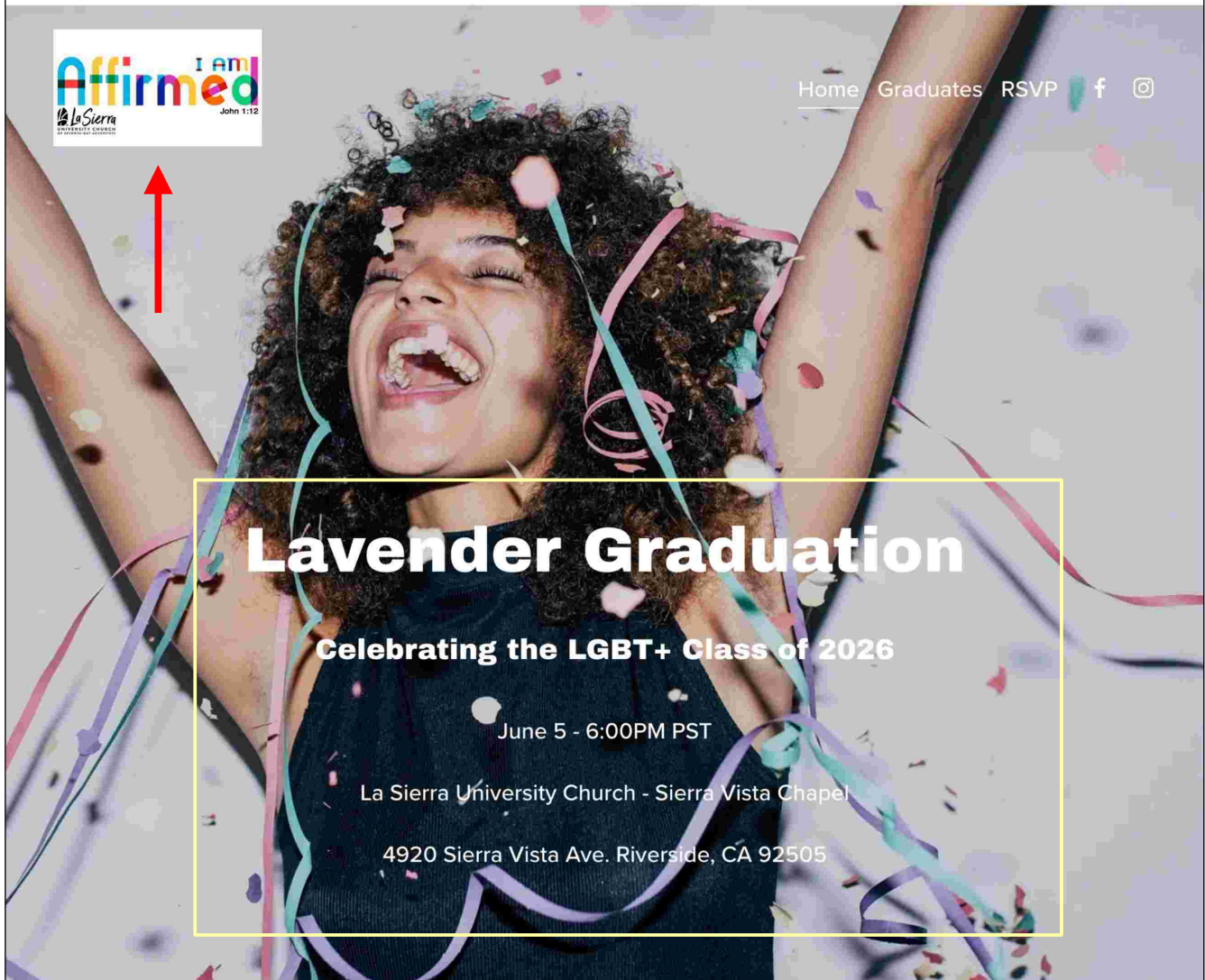
The ceremony takes place one week before La Sierra University's commencement weekend. A keynote speaker has not yet been announced.

EXHIBIT B.7/1: La Sierra University LGBTQ Lavender Graduation 2026 (June 5, 2026).
Source: [Tangerine Octopus at Squarespace](#) (Screenshot: July 2026)

Page 1

Kinship SS Lavender Graduation 2026

<https://tangerine-octopus-epz2.squarespace.com/>



**Celebrating
Graduates**

EXHIBIT B.7/2: La Sierra University LGBTQ Lavender Graduation 2026 (June 5, 2026).
Source: [Tangerine Octopus at Squarespace](https://tangerine-octopus-epz2.squarespace.com/) (Screenshot: July 2026)

Page 2

Kinship SS Lavender Graduation 2026

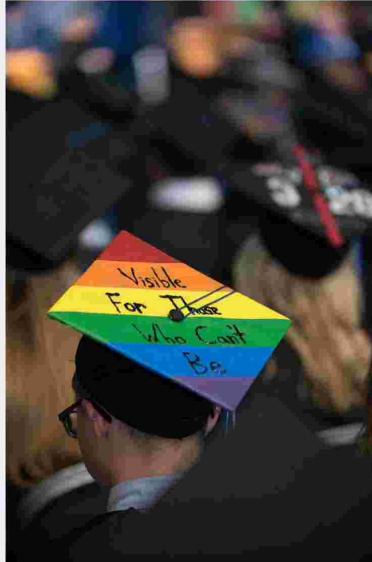
<https://tangerine-octopus-epz2.squarespace.com/>



What is It?

Lavender Graduation is an annual ceremony conducted on numerous campuses to honor lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and ally students and to acknowledge their achievements and contributions to the University. It was created by Ronni Sanlo, a Jewish lesbian keynote speaker in LGBT communities.

- Graduates Register Here -



Why We Celebrate

For decades students at colleges and universities around the world have been celebrating both their academic achievements and their cultural heritages at specialized commencement events. Many of these events are student-initiated and usually occur during the university-wide commencement weekend. These events provide a sense of community for minority students who often experience tremendous culture shock at their impersonalized institutions.



Friends & Family

Come and celebrate your graduate as we acknowledge their accomplishments.

Graduations are major milestones not just for those who are graduating but for family and friends who walked alongside their graduate through their journey.

EXHIBIT B.7/3: La Sierra University LGBTQ Lavender Graduation 2026 (June 5, 2026).
Source: [La Sierra Church Kinship Sabbath School Instagram](#) (April 24, 2026)

Page 1

Instagram

<https://www.instagram.com/p/DXgJsPAAgBw/>



GRADUATES REGISTER
AT QR CODE BELOW



EXHIBIT B.8/1: La Sierra University LGBTQ Lavender Graduation 2020 (June 7, 2020)
Source: [La Sierra Church Kinship Sabbath School Instagram](#) (May 22, 2020)

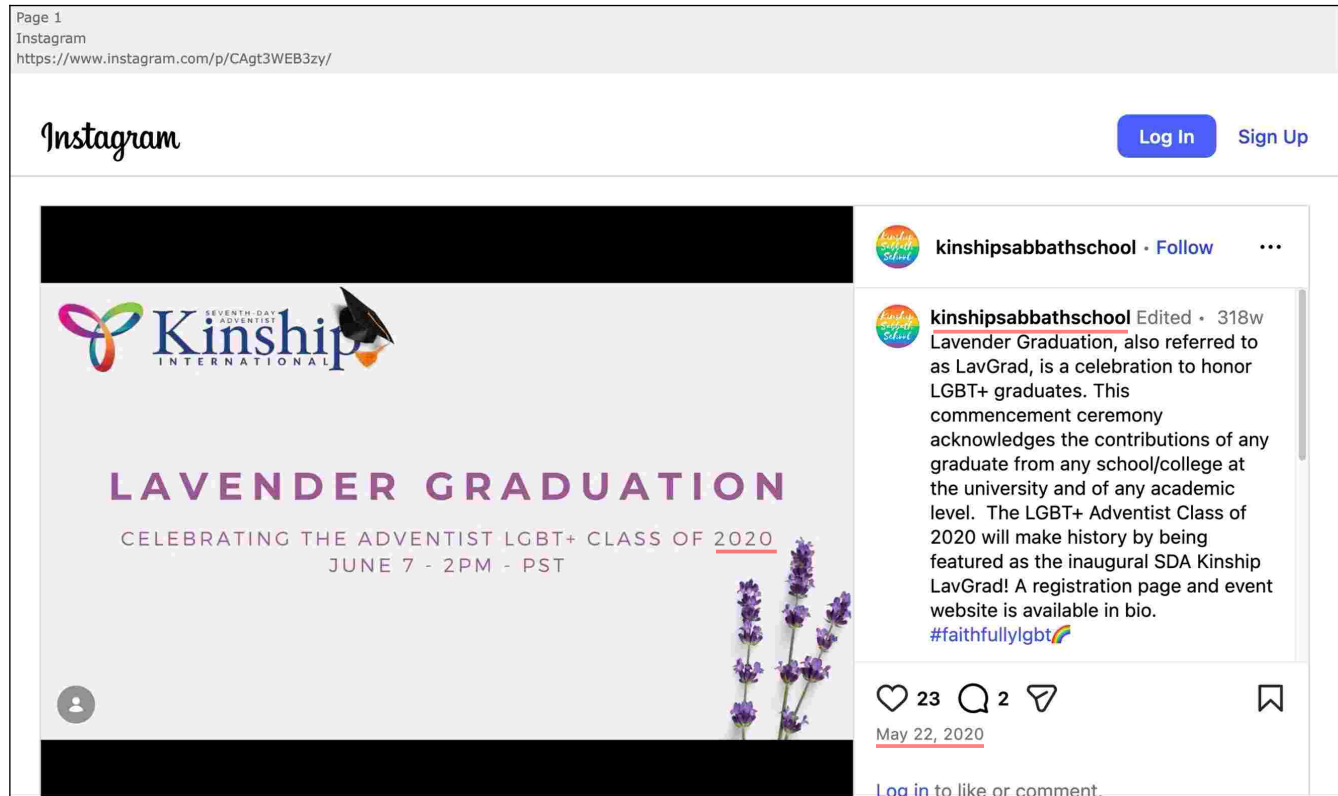


EXHIBIT B.8/2: La Sierra University LGBTQ Lavender Graduation 2022 (June 3, 2022).
Source: [La Sierra Church Kinship Sabbath School Instagram](#) (May 19, 2022)

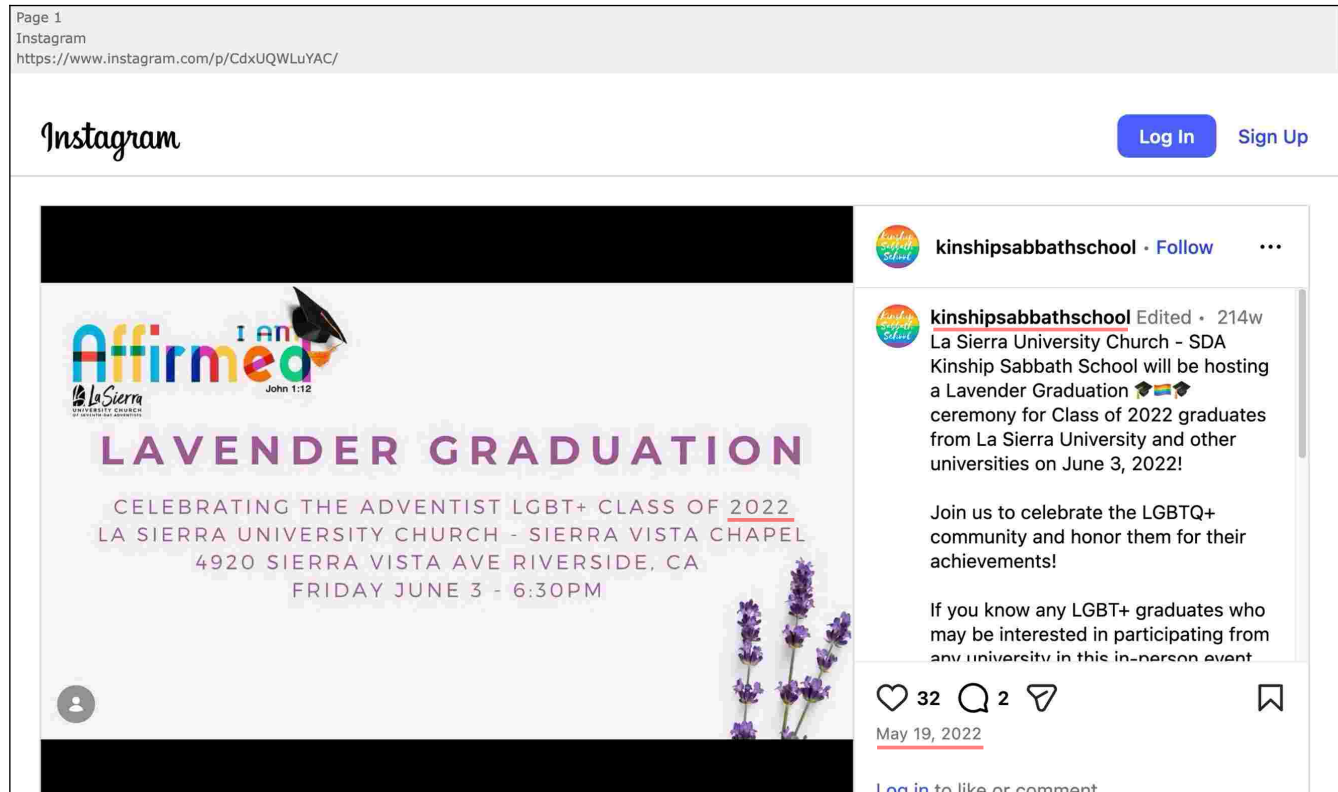


EXHIBIT B.8/3: La Sierra University LGBTQ Lavender Graduation 2023 (June 3, 2023).
Source: [La Sierra Church Kinship Sabbath School Instagram](#) (May 5, 2023)

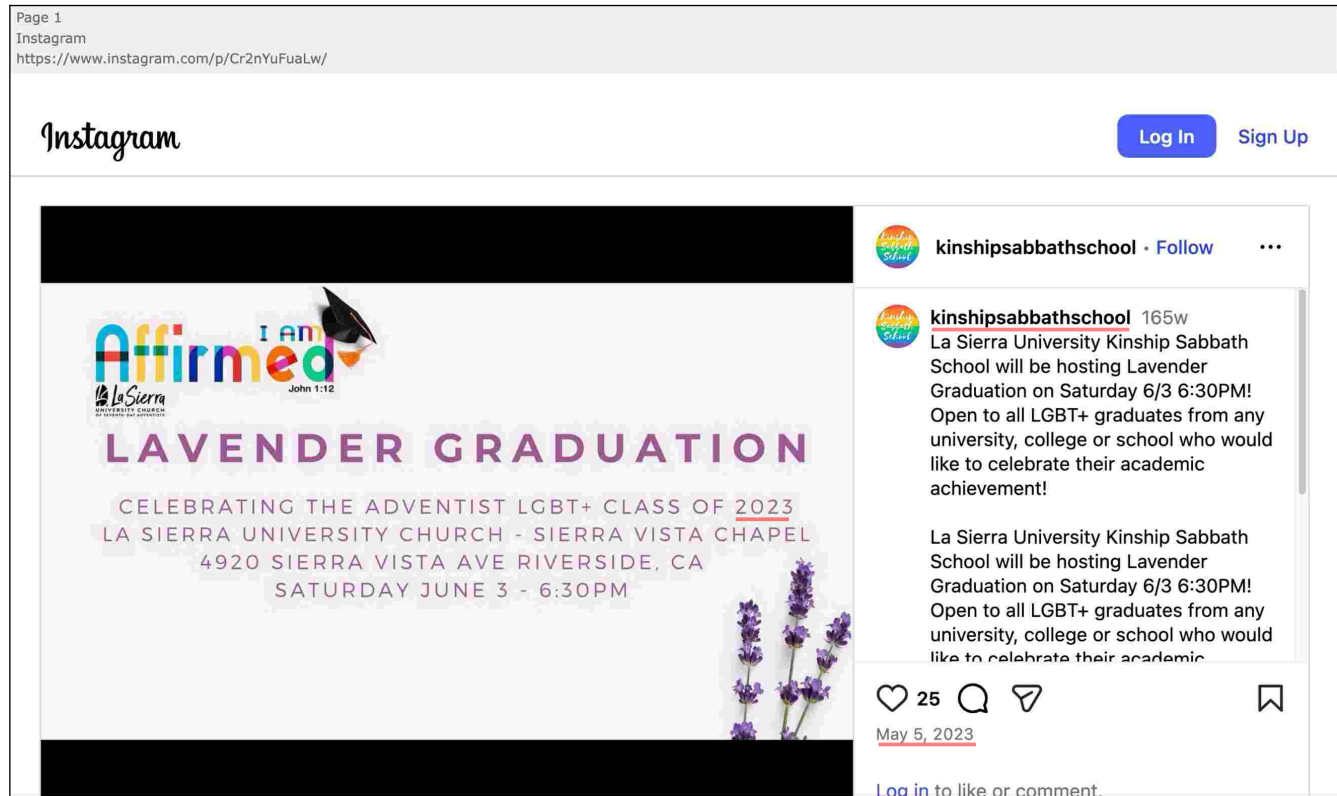


EXHIBIT B.8/4: La Sierra University LGBTQ Lavender Graduation 2024 (May 31, 2024).
Source: [Riverside Pride Promotion](https://www.riversideprideie.org/event/la-sierra-university-church-lavender-graduation/) (May 2024)

Page 1

La Sierra University Church: Lavender Graduation - Riverside LGBTQ+ Pride

<https://www.riversideprideie.org/event/la-sierra-university-church-lavender-graduation/>



[HOME](#) [ABOUT](#) [EVENTS](#) [MEET UP](#) [GET INVOLVED](#) [DONATE](#) [SPONSOR](#) [CONTACT US](#) [LOG IN](#)

« All Events

This event has passed.

La Sierra University Church: Lavender Graduation

May 31, 2024 @ 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm PDT

This event is not endorsed or organized by Riverside LGBTQ+ Pride. It is organized by a third party, and we are boosting the signal.

LAVENDER GRADUATION

CELEBRATING LGBT+ GRADUATES
OF THE CLASS OF 2024

May 31st @ 6pm
Sierra Vista Chapel
La Sierra University Church

GRADS
REGISTER
HERE



Lavender Graduation is an annual ceremony conducted on numerous campuses to honor lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and ally students and to acknowledge their achievements and contributions to the University.

[Click here to register](#)

EXHIBIT B.8/5: La Sierra University LGBTQ Lavender Graduations 2025 (June 6, 2025).
Source: [Kinship Sabbath School Instagram](#) (May 25, 2025)

Page 1
Instagram
<https://www.instagram.com/p/DKGcbMYxOIm/>

Instagram

Log InSign Up



LAVENDER GRADUATION

CELEBRATING MEMBERS OF THE LGBTQ+ CLASS OF 2025
4920 SIERRA VISTA AVE RIVERSIDE, CA
FRIDAY JUNE 6 - 6:00PM



kinshipsabbathschool · Follow

...



kinshipsabbathschool

58w

Join us on Friday, 6/6 6PM for Lavender Graduation 🎓🌈🏳️🌈 hosted by @lasierrachurch in Riverside to celebrate the LGBTQ+ graduates of 2025! This is open to graduates from any high school, college, university or other program. Any graduates 🎓 interested in attending can register at the link in bio.

Family, friends, chosen family, professors, pastors and all are welcome to celebrate! 🌈

13

May 25, 2025

Log in to like or comment.

EXHIBIT B.9/1: LGBTQ Commencement Speaker Sabrina Cervantes at La Sierra University (June 14, 2026).
Source #1: [La Sierra University Website](#) (June 9, 2026)

Page 1

State Sen. Cervantes to give La Sierra commencement address, university preps to graduate hundreds - La Sierra News
<https://lasierra.edu/article/state-sen-cervantes-to-give-la-sierra-commencement-address-university-preps-to-graduate-hundreds/>



Site Menu

[Home](#) > [Newsroom](#) > [Article](#) > State Sen. Cervantes to give La Sierra commencement

State Sen. Cervantes to give La Sierra commencement address, university preps to graduate hundreds

06/09/2026 [Darla Martin Tucker](#)

RIVERSIDE, Calif. — (www.lasierra.edu) On Sunday, June 14 nearly 380 La Sierra University students will receive their hard-earned diplomas and enter next chapters of their lives. Graduates participating in the Founders' Green annual event will celebrate their achievements inspired by words from State Sen. Sabrina Cervantes who will deliver commencement address.



State Sen. Sabrina Cervantes will deliver the Sunday, June 14 commencement address for La Sierra University's graduates.

Related Links

- [Graduation Weekend Info & Livestream](#)

The university's graduation weekend begins Friday, June 12 with a consecration service at the La Sierra University Church, followed by baccalaureate on Saturday, June 13 with dedication services that afternoon for graduates of the School of Education and the H.M.S. Richards Divinity School at different locations.

Conferring of Degrees takes place on Sunday on the university's Founders' Green with several thousand expected in attendance. La Sierra University President Christon Arthur will preside over the conferring of degrees following Cervantes' address titled "Education: the Foundation of Opportunity."

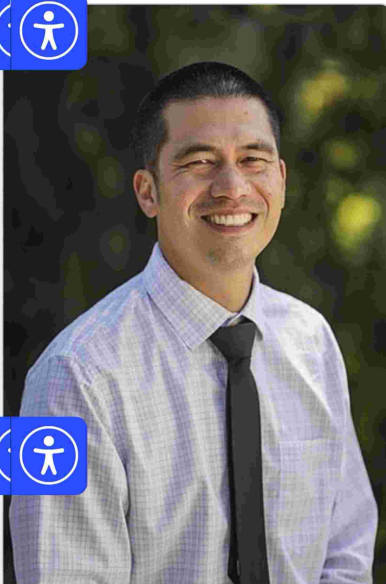
EXHIBIT B.9/2: LGBTQ Commencement Speaker Sabrina Cervantes at La Sierra University (June 14, 2026).
Source #1: [La Sierra University Website](#) (June 9, 2026)

Page 2

State Sen. Cervantes to give La Sierra commencement address, university preps to graduate hundreds - La Sierra News
<https://lasierra.edu/article/state-sen-cervantes-to-give-la-sierra-commencement-address-university-preps-to-graduate-hundreds/>



Sam Leonor, chief mission officer for Adventist Health will serve as as baccalaureate speaker on Saturday, June 13.



Jason Decena, La Sierra University strategic enrollment specialist and ministerial liaison will speak for the consecration

Cervantes was elected to the California Legislature in 2016, making history as the youngest lawmaker elected at the time and ushering in a new generation of leadership for the Inland Empire. In 2024, she was elected to the California State Senate to represent the 31st District, serving communities across Riverside and San Bernardino counties including La Sierra University. Cervantes currently serves as chair of the California Senate Committee on Appropriations. She previously served as chair of the California Latino Legislative Caucus becoming the first representative from the Inland Empire to lead the caucus in its more than 50-year history and now serves as vice-chair of the LGBTQ+ Caucus.

Cervantes has authored 58 bills signed into law focused on expanding opportunity, protecting fundamental rights, and strengthening California communities. She has advanced voter protections, safeguarded privacy rights, improved access to maternal mental health care, reduced barriers to higher education and financial aid, supported survivors of sexual assault, and fostered a more inclusive economy.

Cervantes has secured more than \$650 million in investments benefiting working families, students, veterans, small businesses, and regional infrastructure throughout the Inland Empire.

A lifelong Riverside County resident, Cervantes is a working mother of triplets and a proud graduate of the University of California, Riverside where she earned a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science. She also completed an Executive Education program at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

Sunday's commencement will also feature awards for excellence in teaching and for service to two faculty members and one staff member—Professor of Biology Lloyd Trueblood will receive the Verla Rae Kwiram Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award; Professor of Counseling Psychology Dora Clarke-Pine the Distinguished Teaching Award; and

EXHIBIT B.9/3: LGBTQ Commencement Speaker Sabrina Cervantes at La Sierra University (June 14, 2026).
Source #1: [La Sierra University Website](#) (June 9, 2026)

Page 3

State Sen. Cervantes to give La Sierra commencement address, university preps to graduate hundreds - La Sierra News
<https://lasierra.edu/article/state-sen-cervantes-to-give-la-sierra-commencement-address-university-preps-to-graduate-hundreds/>

service on Friday, June 12.



The President's Award for Outstanding University Graduate Student will be given to Joseph Young, Master of Business Administration.

Biology Department Manager Ryan VanDeventer the Jay J. Nethery Award for Extraordinary Service to Students.

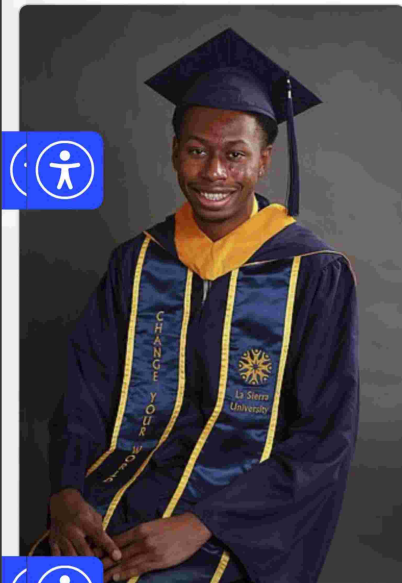
The President's Award for Outstanding University Undergraduate Student will be given to Yannik Gibson, Bachelor of Science in biology and biomedical science graduating summa cum laude, with the President's Award for Outstanding University Graduate Student going to Joseph Young, Master of Business Administration.

Other weekend guest speakers will include Jason Decena, strategic enrollment specialist and ministerial liaison for the consecration service and Sam Leonor, chief mission officer for Adventist Health as baccalaureate speaker.

Further details about graduation weekend including parking and other information is available at <https://lasierra.edu/graduation/>.

La Sierra University is located at 4500 Riverwalk Parkway, Riverside, Calif.

← Back



President's Award for Outstanding University Undergraduate Student will be given to Yannik Gibson, Bachelor of Science in biology and

EXHIBIT B.9/4: LGBTQ Commencement Speaker Sabrina Cervantes at La Sierra University (June 14, 2026).
Source #2: [La Sierra University Website](#) (June 17, 2026)

Page 1

La Sierra celebrates 378 graduates, Cervantes calls for grads to open doors - La Sierra News
<https://lasierra.edu/article/la-sierra-celebrates-378-graduates-cervantes-calls-for-grads-to-open-doors/>



Site Menu

[Home](#) > [Newsroom](#) > [Article](#) > La Sierra celebrates 378 graduates, Cervantes calls for

La Sierra celebrates 378 graduates, Cervantes calls for grads to open doors

06/17/2026 [Darla Martin Tucker](#)

RIVERSIDE, Calif. — www.lasierra.edu — In a message that underscored the transformational impact of education on individuals' lives, California State Sen. Sabrina Cervantes called upon [La Sierra University](#)'s graduates to use their achievements and opportunities as doorways through which they can help others succeed.



Vy Cao, assistant professor in the School of Education's Department of Education & Leadership processes with other faculty into

Related Links

- [June 14 Conferring of Degrees Livestream Recording](#)
- [Graduation Weekend Photo Albums • June 12 - 14, 2026](#)

Cervantes served as the commencement speaker on June 14 for La Sierra University's Conferring of Degrees ceremony that took place on Founders' Green beginning at 8 a.m.

The Seventh-day [Adventist university](#) graduated 378 students who earned a total of 381 degrees collectively from the School of Education, the H.M.S. Richards Divinity School, the Zapara School of Business and the College of Arts & Sciences. The Class of 2026 earned 270 bachelors, 79 master's and 16 doctoral degrees. They represented 20 countries and 16 faith traditions, and ranged in age from 21 to 68. Approximately 4,000 family members and friends attended the annual event to cheer the graduates.

EXHIBIT B.9/5: LGBTQ Commencement Speaker Sabrina Cervantes at La Sierra University (June 14, 2026).
Source #2: [La Sierra University Website](https://lasierra.edu/article/la-sierra-celebrates-378-graduates-cervantes-calls-for-grads-to-open-doors/) (June 17, 2026)

Page 2

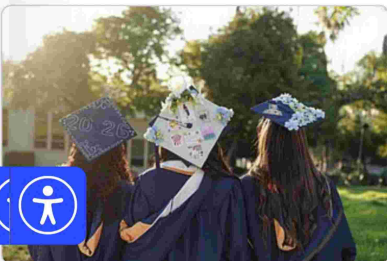
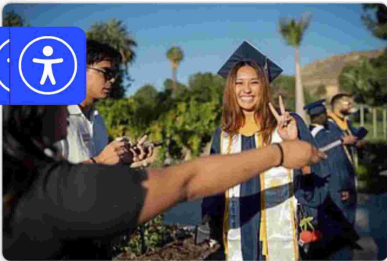
La Sierra celebrates 378 graduates, Cervantes calls for grads to open doors - La Sierra News

<https://lasierra.edu/article/la-sierra-celebrates-378-graduates-cervantes-calls-for-grads-to-open-doors/>

the Conferring of Degrees ceremony.



Torri Marie Lambert, first graduate from La Sierra's new Sustainability & Society program, celebrates on June 14.



In her address titled "Education: The Foundation of Opportunity," Cervantes spoke of the empowering effect of education and the importance of opening doors for others. She shared her personal journey and the impact of education on her life.

She specifically addressed first-generation graduates and former foster youth, noting the significance of their achievements.

"Your accomplishments carries extraordinary significance," Cervantes said. "You walked a path without a road map. You entered spaces that previous generations in your family may never have had the opportunity to enter. You learned lessons no one could teach you, because they had never been given the chance to walk that journey themselves. And despite uncertainty, despite setbacks, despite moments of self-doubt, you persisted. .. because of your courage and determination, you are becoming the example.

"That is a legacy that will outlive this ceremony. That is the power of education. Education remains one of the most powerful forces for change in our society."

She said to the graduates, "Your degree is simply not a piece of paper. It is evidence of resilience, evidence of discipline, evidence of growth, evidence that you are capable of far more than you ever realize today."

"...remember what it felt like to be the person hoping someone would take a chance on you and be that person for someone else..." – *California State Sen. Sabrina Cervantes, Commencement Address*

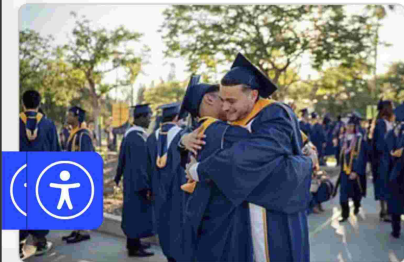
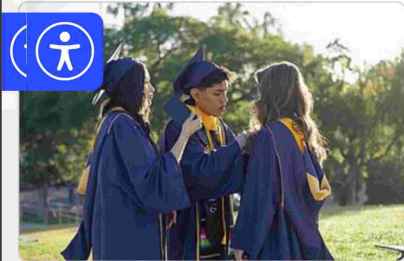
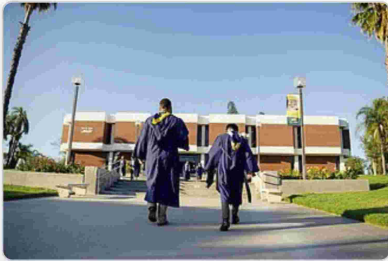
Education gives a choice, she said, and the confidence to pursue opportunities. "Confidence is trusting yourself enough to keep moving forward when the future is unclear," she said.

Cervantes described her pathway following college in which she accepted

EXHIBIT B.9/6: LGBTQ Commencement Speaker Sabrina Cervantes at La Sierra University (June 14, 2026).
Source #2: [La Sierra University Website](https://lasierra.edu/article/la-sierra-celebrates-378-graduates-cervantes-calls-for-grads-to-open-doors/) (June 17, 2026)

Page 3

La Sierra celebrates 378 graduates, Cervantes calls for grads to open doors - La Sierra News

<https://lasierra.edu/article/la-sierra-celebrates-378-graduates-cervantes-calls-for-grads-to-open-doors/>

an opportunity and moved to Sacramento to intern for her hometown assemblymember. “For the first time I witnessed how government decisions affect people’s lives,” she said. In 2016 she ran for office, becoming the first Latina, the first millennial, and the youngest person at the time elected to represent her district.

“Education remains the center of my story,” Cervantes said. “Education taught me how to think critically. It exposed me to new perspectives. It connected me with the mentors who believed in me before I fully believed in myself. It gave me the confidence to use my voice.”

Cervantes encouraged the graduates to open doors for others as they leave their alma mater.

“As you leave La Sierra University today, remember this; your degree is not the finish line. It is a key that can unlock opportunities, careers, relationships,” she said. “...never forget to hold the door open for someone else because there will be a moment in your life when you’re sitting at the table where decisions are being made, decision about who will get an opportunity and who does not. When that moment comes, remember what it felt like to be the person hoping someone would take a chance on you and be that person for someone else.”

La Sierra University President Christon Arthur presented the day’s awards including the Presidential Medallion Award for Distinguished Service to Cervantes, in recognition of her service that reflects La Sierra University’s values.

“Our model reflects to seek, to know to serve. Service permeates everything that we do,” Arthur said in presenting the award. “Our recipient today embarked upon a career of public service and her life exemplifies what we stand for. Her career has been centered on serving others, especially communities that too often feel overlooked, underserved, marginalized, vulnerable.

“Whether advocating for students, supporting working families, or investing in the future of the Inland Empire, our awardee demonstrates that leadership is ultimately an act of service. That spirit of service deeply aligns with who we are.

EXHIBIT B.9/7: LGBTQ Commencement Speaker Sabrina Cervantes at La Sierra University (June 14, 2026).
Source #2: [La Sierra University Website](https://lasierra.edu/article/la-sierra-celebrates-378-graduates-cervantes-calls-for-grads-to-open-doors/) (June 17, 2026)

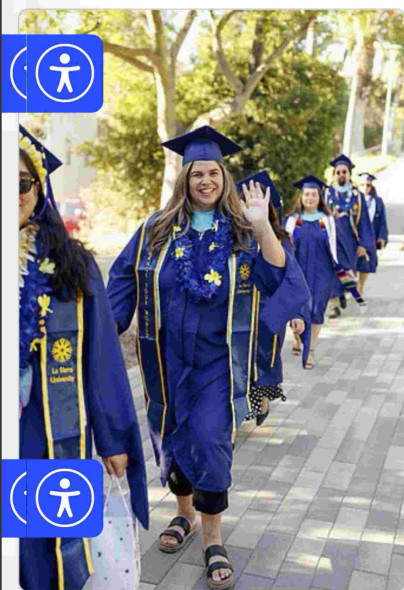
Page 4

La Sierra celebrates 378 graduates, Cervantes calls for grads to open doors - La Sierra News
<https://lasierra.edu/article/la-sierra-celebrates-378-graduates-cervantes-calls-for-grads-to-open-doors/>

Nobuyuki Yano, left, with classmate Telesia Ramsay pose for a photo prior to the processional into Conferring of Degrees ceremony. Yano earned a Bachelor of Arts in art and a biology minor and Ramsay a Bachelor of Science in health science, clinical health studies, cum laude.



California State Sen. Sabrina Cervantes, left, is greeted by La Sierra University President Christon Arthur as she arrives to prepare for the processional into the Conferring of Degrees ceremony on June 14.



“As you leave us after graduation today, the road ahead may not be easy. You will be criticized because you stand with the vulnerable. Stand with the vulnerable anyway.” – La Sierra University President Christon Arthur

“In honoring the senator today, we affirm the importance of servant leadership, leadership that seeks justice, values human dignity and works to create for all opportunities that they do so deserve.”

In remarks to the graduates, Arthur called on them to leave their marks and live with distinction. “As you leave us after graduation today, the road ahead may not be easy. You will be criticized because you stand with the vulnerable. Stand with the vulnerable anyway. You will be criticized because you do the work of justice. Do the work of justice anyway. You will be criticized because you try to lift people up. Lift people up anyway.

“Criticism is not an indication that you are wrong. It simply means you are different. Be different anyway,” Arthur said.

Arthur presented five awards to two graduates, two faculty members and one staff member: Professor of Biology Lloyd Trueblood received the Verla Rae Kwiram Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award; Professor of Counseling Psychology Dora Clarke-Pine the Distinguished Teaching Award; and Biology Department Manager Ryan VanDeventer the Jay J. Nethery Award for Extraordinary Service to Students.

The President’s Award for Outstanding University Undergraduate Student was given to Yannik Gibson, Bachelor of Science in biology and biomedical science graduating summa cum laude, with the President’s Award for Outstanding University Graduate Student going to Joseph Young, Master of Business Administration in Healthcare Management.

Prior to Cervantes’ address, Board of Trustees Chair Bradford C. Newton delivered the invocation and expressed gratitude to God for the graduates and their unique and individual journeys, praying for their future success and positive impact on the world, for God’s guidance, purpose and meaning in their lives. Newton is retiring this August from 18 years of board service

EXHIBIT B.9/8: LGBTQ Commencement Speaker Sabrina Cervantes at La Sierra University (June 14, 2026).
Source #2: [La Sierra University Website](https://lasierra.edu/article/la-sierra-celebrates-378-graduates-cervantes-calls-for-grads-to-open-doors/) (June 17, 2026)

Page 5

La Sierra celebrates 378 graduates, Cervantes calls for grads to open doors - La Sierra News

<https://lasierra.edu/article/la-sierra-celebrates-378-graduates-cervantes-calls-for-grads-to-open-doors/>

including five as chair. Sunday's graduation represented his last official participation in the event.

During Conferring of Degrees, Arthur also noted the presence of philanthropists Dennis and Carol Troesh, and of Surangel S. Whipps, Jr., president of the Republic of Palau.

The Troeshs arrived to celebrate the graduation of their grandson. They are the benefactors of Troesh Conference Center in the Zapara School of Business.

Whipps and 22 family members and friends traveled from Palau for his niece's graduation and that of a family friend. Whipps' daughter, Moded Samantha Surangel, graduated from La Sierra University last year and Whipps served as the 2025 commencement speaker.

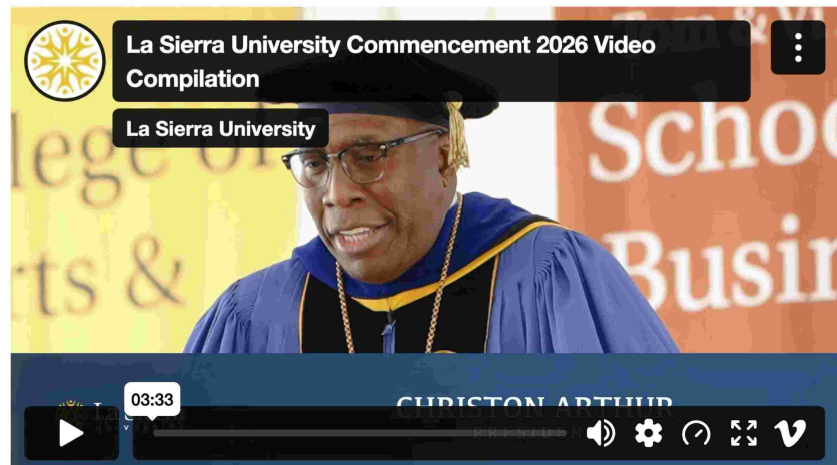
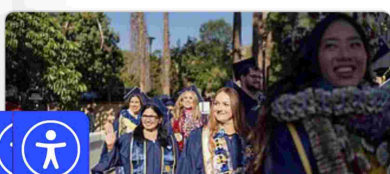
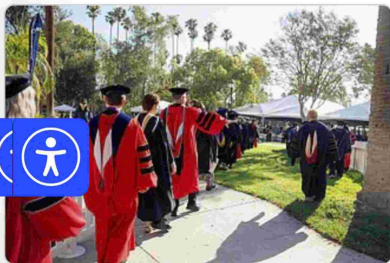


EXHIBIT B.9/9: LGBTQ Commencement Speaker Sabrina Cervantes at La Sierra University (June 14, 2026).
Source #3: [La Sierra University Video](#) (Timestamp: 30:30)



EXHIBIT B.9/10: LGBTQ Commencement Speaker Sabrina Cervantes at La Sierra University (June 14, 2026).
Source #3: [La Sierra University Video](#) (Timestamp: 41:00 - 43:00)



EXHIBIT B.9/11: LGBTQ Commencement Speaker Sabrina Cervantes at La Sierra University (June 14, 2026).
Source #3: [La Sierra University Video](#) (Timestamp: 43:00)



LSU President Christon Arthur's Full Medallion Award Speech for Senator Cervantes

"There's an award, Presidential Medallion Award.

I reserve that award for persons who provide a distinguished service that reflects and represents the values of La Sierra University. And this morning, I am deeply pleased and honored to ask someone whose life is a life of service. As at La Sierra University, our motto reflects to seek, to know, to serve.

Service permeates everything that we do. Our recipient today embarked upon a career of public service. And her life exemplifies what we stand for. Her career has been centered on serving others. Especially communities that too often feel overlooked, underserved, marginalized, vulnerable. Whether advocating for students, supporting working families, or investing in the future of the Inland Empire, our awardee demonstrates that leadership is ultimately an act of service.

That spirit of service deeply aligns with who we are. In a few minutes, you'll hear from her as she gives her commencement address. We're going to invite to join me up front, our Senator Serena Cervantes, to receive this distinguished award from us this morning.

In honoring the Senator today, we affirm the importance of servant leadership. Leadership that seeks justice, values human dignity, and works to create for all opportunities that it does so deserve."

EXHIBIT B.9/12: LGBTQ Commencement Speaker Sabrina Cervantes at La Sierra University (June 14, 2026).
Source #3: [La Sierra University Video](#) (Timestamp: 44:58)



EXHIBIT B.9/13: LGBTQ Commencement Speaker Sabrina Cervantes at La Sierra University (June 14, 2026).
Source #4: [Senator Sabrina Cervantes Instagram Post & Video](#)

Page 1

Instagram

<https://www.instagram.com/reels/DZImEzwyjD7/>

Instagram

Log In

Sign Up

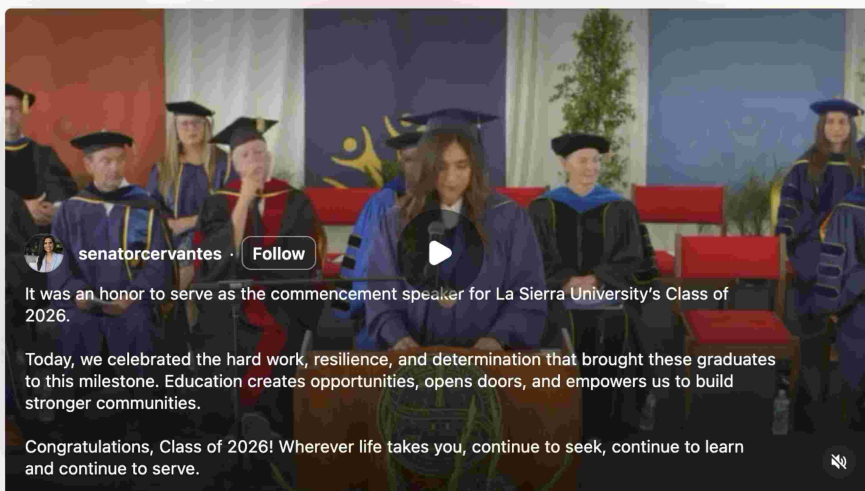


EXHIBIT B.10/1: LGBTQ Commencement Speaker Sabrina Cervantes Background.**PUBLIC PROFILE (1):** Public statements about or by Sabrina Cervantes regarding her own LGBTQ identity.

Date	Source / Setting	LGBTQ statements about or by Cervantes	Source links
2015 Nov. 24	Bay Area Reporter Report on California LGBTQ legislative candidates	<u>Report</u> states: "There are at least 12 gay or lesbian ... candidates seeking state Senate or Assembly seats next year ... New to the candidates list are Sabrina Cervantes, a lesbian ..."	Bay Area LGBTQ Reporter
2019 Dec. 16	Bay Area Reporter Report on California LGBTQ legislative representatives	<u>Report</u> states: "A lesbian assemblywoman in California has made history ... According to Cervantes' office, she is the first openly LGBT California state legislator" <u>Cervantes</u> states: "My wife and I are blessed to welcome our three newborns into the world."	Bay Area LGBTQ Reporter
2022 Dec. 2	Spectrum News Report on LGBTQ profile and Latino Legislative Caucus representative	<u>Report</u> states: "She [Sabrina Cervantes] is the first open LGBTQ female, first Latina millennial, and first Inland Empire lawmaker to chair the caucus." <u>Cervantes</u> states: "My wife and I actually went through this process", referring to legislation affecting LGBTQ parents and adoption rights.	Spectrum News California Legislature Latino Caucus News
2023 June 5	California Assembly Pride Month Resolution (HR 33)	<u>Cervantes</u> states: "As a proud member of the LGBTQ Caucus, as a proud, queer Latina."	California Assembly Video & Transcript
2024 June 3	California Assembly Pride Month Resolution (HR 101)	<u>Cervantes</u> states: "I'm a proud member of our LGBTQ caucus and a proud queer Latina", and "I'm also the mother of triplets who are growing up in a same-sex family."	California Assembly Video & Transcript
2024	Sabrina For Senate Promotion Webpage for her California Senate candidacy	"Meet Sabrina" page states: "She is also the first openly LGBTQ+ Latina to represent Western Riverside County in the Legislature. ... Sabrina and her wife, Courtney, are the proud parents of triplets."	Sabrina For Senate Promotion
2025 Sept. 18	California Senate California Legislative LGBTQ Caucus Vice Chair news	<u>Cervantes</u> states: "As a proud lesbian Latina and mother of three, I know the challenges that LGBTQ+ families face every day."	California Senate News
2026 April 24	Lesbian Visibility Week Public social-media featuring Senators Cervantes and Menjivar promoting their identities as lesbian legislators	Senators Cervantes and Menjivar introduce themselves as lesbians serving in the California Senate and promote Lesbian Visibility Week. <u>Cervantes</u> and Menjivar jointly state: "This week we are visible lesbians. ... The [California] LGBTQ Caucus was founded by four lesbians. Of course lesbians got it done. ... We're still visible lesbians. Visible while presenting bills, visible in committees, visible on the senate floor.... Yes, still visible. ... Happy Lesbian Visibility Week."	California LGBTQ Instagram Video

EXHIBIT B.10/2: LGBTQ Commencement Speaker Sabrina Cervantes Background.**PUBLIC PROFILE (2):** Role of Sabrina Cervantes in the California Legislature LGBTQ Caucus.

Date	Role / Activity	Description	Source links
2002 Founded	California Legislative LGBTQ Caucus Purpose and Context	LGBTQ Caucus states that it was formed in 2002 to provide a forum for legislators to discuss issues affecting LGBTQ Californians and to further equality and justice. It describes California as the first state to officially form a caucus of openly LGBTQ state legislators.	LGBTQ Caucus - About Us
2017 March 30	California Legislative LGBTQ Caucus Membership of Cervantes in 2017	LGBTQ Caucus letter to NCAA lists Assembly member Sabrina Cervantes as co-signer and thus a LGBTQ Caucus member already during her first year in office. Note letter content: “As you may be aware, last year California passed Assembly Bill 1887, which bans California state funded travel to states with laws that discriminate against .. LGBTQ community.” Assembly Bill 1887 states: “(4) The exercise of religious freedom should not be a justification for discrimination. (5) California must take action to avoid supporting or financing discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people.”	LGBTQ Caucus Letter
2025 Aug. 20	California Legislative LGBTQ Caucus New Vice Chair Sabrina Cervantes	LGBTQ Caucus announced August 20, 2025 that Cervantes was unanimously elected Vice Chair effective September 15, 2025. In accepting the position, <u>Cervantes</u> stated: “As a proud lesbian Latina and mother of three, I know the challenges that LGBTQ+ families face every day. I will lift up the voices of our communities as we confront the alarming rise in anti-LGBTQ+ hate. ... I remain committed to advancing dignity, equity, and opportunity for all LGBTQ+ Californians.”	LGBTQ Caucus Announcement California Senate Announcement
2025–Present	California Legislative LGBTQ Caucus Current Members	LGBTQ Caucus official membership page lists Senator Sabrina Cervantes (Vice Chair), with Chair Assembly Member Christopher Ward and its other members.	LGBTQ Caucus Memberships

EXHIBIT B.10/3: LGBTQ Commencement Speaker Sabrina Cervantes Background.**PUBLIC PROFILE (3):** Role of Sabrina Cervantes in LGBTQ-Related California Legislation (partial sample list)

Year / Measure	Cervantes's Role	LGBTQ-Related Subject / Status	Source
2018 - 2026 LGBTQ Pride Months	Lead author / Principal Coauthor / Coauthor	LGBTQ & Pride Month (annual initiatives): AB 2969 (2018, forces governor to annually declare June a Pride Month), HR 41 (2019), HR 51 (2021), HR 114 (2022), HR 33 (2023), HR 101 (2024), SR 48 (2025), SR 116 (2026). All adopted.	AB 2969 (2018) HR 41 (2019) HR 51 (2021) HR 114 (2022) HR 33 (2023) HR 101 (2024) SR 48 (2025) SR 116 (2026)
2019 AB 493	Coauthor	LGBTQ & Teachers: Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning pupil resources and training. Enacted.	AB 493 (2019)
2021 AB 2436	Lead author	LGBTQ & Death certificates: Removed gendered parent labels; required parents' names and relationships. Enacted.	AB 2436 (2021)
2022 AB 2466	Lead Author	LGBTQ & Foster care: Barred placement denial based on parents' sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. Enacted.	AB 2466 (2022)
2022 SB 107	Coauthor	LGBTQ & Transgender care: Restricted out-of-state subpoenas, arrests, and custody actions over gender-affirming care. Enacted.	SB 107 (2022)
2022 SB 923	Coauthor	LGBTQ & Transgender-inclusive health care: Required TGI cultural-competency training and provider-directory standards. Enacted.	SB 923 (2022) Senate Statement
2023 AB 5	Coauthor	LGBTQ & Schools: Required annual cultural-competency training for grades 7–12 teachers and certificated staff. Enacted.	AB 5 (2023)
2023 AB 223	Coauthor	LGBTQ & Transgender Youth Privacy: Required courts to keep minors' gender/sex-identifier change petitions confidential. Enacted.	AB 223 (2023)
2023 AB 760	Lead author	LGBTQ & Colleges: Required affirmed names and gender identity in records unless legal names/gender were required. Enacted.	AB 760 (2023)
2023 AB 1163	Principal coauthor	LGBTQ & Intersex data: Expanded state collection of sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status. Enacted.	AB 1163 (2023)
2024 AB 1955	Principal coauthor	LGBTQ & School Pupil Privacy: Barred schools from requiring disclosure of sexual orientation or gender identity. Enacted.	AB 1995 (2024)
2025 SB 289	Lead Author	LGBTQ & College gender discrimination: Proposed state oversight office for Title IX complaints and campus reporting. Died.	SB 289 (2025)
2026 SR 111	Principal coauthor	LGBTQ International Day: Recognized International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Interphobia, Transphobia. Adopted 2026.	SR 111 (2026)
2026 SB 1328	Lead Author	LGBTQ Campus Support: Extended required campus contacts to branch/satellite sites for LGBTQ+ students/staff. Pending 2026.	SB 1328 (2026) Cervantes Statement
2026 SB 934	Coauthor	LGBTQ & Conversion Therapy: Expanded ban to sexual-orientation or gender-identity change efforts for minors. Pending 2026.	SB 934 (2026)

EXHIBIT B.11: La Sierra University Presidential Medallion Awardee History (1990-2026)
Source: [La Sierra University \(Current website\)](#) / La Sierra University (Archived websites)

Graduation Year (June)	LSU President in Office	LSU Presidential Medallion Recipient	Source Link
1991 - 1993	Fritz Guy	No recipient	--
1994 - 2007	Lawrence Geraty	No recipient	--
2008 - 2009	Randal Wisbey	No recipient	--
2010		Leonard Bailey Pioneering Loma Linda heart-transplant surgeon. SDA-affiliated.	LaSierra University June 15, 2010
2011		Charles Scriven Kettering College president and Adventist educator. SDA-affiliated.	La Sierra University June 21, 2011
2012 - 2016		No recipient	--
2017		Kristen Soares AICCU President (Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities). Not SDA-affiliated.	La Sierra University June 20, 2017
2018		Marilene Wang UCLA surgeon and La Sierra / Loma Linda University alumna. SDA-affiliated.	La Sierra University June 18, 2018
2019		No recipient	--
2020 - 2023	Joy Fehr	No recipient	--
2024	Richard Osborn (Interim President)	No recipient	--
2025	Christon Arthur	No recipient	--
2026	Christon Arthur	Sabrina Cervantes California State Senator. Not SDA-affiliated. LSU President Christon Arthur stated that she "reflects and represents the values of La Sierra University".	La Sierra University June 9, 2026 June 17, 2026

Table notes

The table lists recipients of the La Sierra University **honorary Presidential Medallion** awarded to individuals, as identified in available La Sierra University sources and indexed historical materials. It excludes the medallion worn by La Sierra presidents as an insignia of office and presented during presidential inaugurations and installations. "No recipient" means that no honorary Presidential Medallion recipient was reported on any of the available current and archived La Sierra University webpages that were searched.

EXHIBIT B.12/1: La Sierra University - Administration (1990-2026)Source: [SDA Yearbook](#)

Year	President	Year	Provost
6/1990 - 6/1993	Fritz Guy	N/A	N/A
7/1993 - 6/2007	Lawrence Geraty	N/A	N/A
7/2007 - 6/2019	Randal Wisbey	N/A	N/A
		2016 - 2019	Joy Fehr
7/2019 - 9/2023	Joy Fehr	2019 - 2020	Cindy Parkhurst (Interim)
		2020 - 2023	April Summit
10/2023 - 6/2024	Richard Osborn (Interim)	2023 - 2024	April Summit
7/2024 - Present	Christon Arthur	2024 - 2026	Leslie Martin (Interim)
		2026 - Present	Leslie Martin

Yellow background and bold fonts = Current LSU administrative leaders

EXHIBIT B.12/2: La Sierra University - Administration (2026)
Source: [La Sierra University Website](https://lasierra.edu/about/administration/) (Screenshot: July 2026)

Page 1

Administration - Administration - La Sierra University
<https://lasierra.edu/about/administration/>



[About](#) | [Calendars](#) | [Donate](#) | [Alumni](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Contact Us](#)

Search...

[Academics](#) | [Programs](#) | [Admissions](#) | [Schools](#) | [Resources](#) | [Centers](#) | [News](#) | [Athletics](#) | [Visit](#) | [Apply](#)

[Home](#) > [About](#) > [Administration](#) > Administration

Administration

Board of Trustees

President +

Provost +

Administration

Our leadership at La Sierra University consists of the President, the Provost, the Associate Provost, five Vice Presidents, five academic Deans, and a distinguished Board of Trustees.

Our leadership team includes

- Christon Arthur, Ph.D., [President](#)
- Leslie Martin, Ph.D., [Provost](#)
- Steve Hemenway, M.B.A. Chief Financial Officer
- Norman Yergen, M.Div, Vice President for [Philanthropy](#)
- Bobby Brown, M.Ed, MBA, Vice President for [Enrollment Services](#)
- Marjorie Robinson, M.A., Vice President for [Student Life](#)

Schools Leadership

- Friedbert Ninow, Ph.D., Dean, [H.M.S Richards Divinity School](#)
- Chang-ho Ji, Ph.D., Dean, [School of Education](#)
- John Thomas, Ph.D., Dean, [Tom & Vi Zapara School of Business](#)
- Lora Geriguis, Ph.D., Dean, [College of Arts and Sciences](#)

Board of Trustees

- A distinguished [Board of Trustees](#)



Where academic investigation, Christian faith,
and service to others unite



EXHIBIT B.12/3: La Sierra University - Administration (2026)
Source: [La Sierra University Website](#) (Screenshot: July 2026)

Page 1
President - Administration - La Sierra University
<https://lasierra.edu/president/>



La Sierra

UNIVERSITY

About

Calendars

Donate

Alumni

Jobs

Contact Us



Search...



Academics

Programs

Admissions

Schools

Resources

Centers

News

Athletics

Visit

Apply

 > [About](#) > [Administration](#) > [President](#)

Administration

Board of Trustees

President

Newsletter Message

Presidential Timeline

Inauguration

Provost

×

+

Contact Info

president@lasierra.edu

(951) 785-2020



Office Location

Administration Building Suite 228

President

Christon Arthur

Meet the President, Christon Arthur

Dr. Christon Arthur assumed the role of President of La Sierra University on July 1, 2024. Arthur, a native of Grenada, is the sixth president and first Black president to serve in its nearly 102-year history.

He is married to Carmelita, and they have one adult son, Christon Arthur Jr.

Prior to his arrival at La Sierra, Arthur served in multiple roles at Andrews University; as provost from 2016-2024, dean of the School of Graduate Studies & Research from 2020-2016, and as associate provost from 2012-2016.

Prior to coming to Andrews University, Arthur served as an associate professor of Educational Administration and associate dean of the College of Education, at Tennessee State University in Nashville, Tennessee. Arthur has been an educator for more than 30 years. He worked as both an elementary and secondary teacher. He holds a bachelor's degree in theology from University of the Southern Caribbean (Trinidad & Tobago) and graduate degrees in Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Administration from Andrews University and has completed postgraduate studies at Harvard University's Institute for Management and Leadership in Education. He has also completed the Council of Independent College President's Institute, with a focus on Institutional Mission.

Dr. Arthur is excited to be a part of the La Sierra University community and is committed to the sacred work of caring for each other.

Office of the President

Christon Arthur, Ph.D., President.

[Traci Spedden](#), MBA, Senior Executive Assistant and Board Liaison

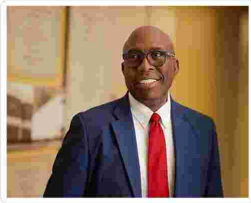


EXHIBIT B.12/4: La Sierra University - Administration (2026)
 Source: [La Sierra University Website](https://lasierra.edu/provost/) (Screenshot: July 2026)

Page 1

 Provost - Administration - La Sierra University
<https://lasierra.edu/provost/>



[About](#) | [Calendars](#) | [Donate](#) | [Alumni](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Contact Us](#)

[Academics](#) | [Programs](#) | [Admissions](#) | [Schools](#) | [Resources](#) | [Centers](#) | [News](#) | [Athletics](#) | [Visit](#) | [Apply](#)

[Home](#) > [About](#) > [Administration](#) > [Provost](#)

Administration

[Board of Trustees](#)

[President](#)

[Provost](#)

[What is a Provost?](#)

[Provost's Office Staff](#)

[Academic Administration](#)

[WASC is Coming!](#)

[Student Academic Appeals](#)

[Assessment](#)

[Committees](#)

[Title IX Employee Annual Notification](#)

Provost

The Provost, the second officer of the university, reports directly to the President and serves as the university's chief executive officer in the absence of the President. As the **chief operating officer** of the university, the Provost supervises the activities of the vice presidents and seeks their consensus in support of mutually developed plans. As **chief academic officer**, the Provost carries broad responsibility for the university's academic programs and ensures the fulfillment of the university's academic goals. The Provost holds both these roles to guarantee that all university activities contribute to the fulfillment of La Sierra's academic mission.

Provost Dr. Leslie Martin joined La Sierra University 28 years ago. She also serves as a professor of psychology with a Ph.D. from the University of California Riverside. Her doctorate is in social and personality psychology with most work focused in the area of health psychology. She has won numerous awards and co-authored more than 50 articles in such journals as the British Journal of Health Psychology and in Vaccine, a peer-reviewed medical journal. Her 2010 book "The Longevity Project," co-authored with the University of California Riverside's Howard S. Friedman, resulted in Leslie's interviews with national media outlets, including Good Morning America and NPR.

Dr. Martin has contributed to La Sierra University by serving on various committees and in leadership roles, such as chair of the Psychology Department, Institutional Review Board chair, Faculty Senate chair, and both College and University Rank and Tenure Committee chair. When not teaching, conducting research, or leading university initiatives, she enjoys her dog, Wonton, advocates for the well-being of animals, or adventures in the great outdoors.



Interim Provost Dr. Leslie Martin

Contact Us

provost@lasierra.edu
 (951) 785-2320
 (951) 785-2319 (fax)

Office Location

Administration Building
Suite 225

EXHIBIT B.13/1: La Sierra University - Board of Trustees (2026)Source: [La Sierra University Website](https://lasierra.edu/board-of-trustees/) (Names in red: Conference/Union/GC representatives)

Page 1

Board of Trustees - Administration - La Sierra University
<https://lasierra.edu/board-of-trustees/>

**La Sierra**
UNIVERSITY

About | Calendars | Donate | Alumni | Jobs | Contact Us

Search...

Academics | Programs | Admissions | Schools | Resources | Centers | News | Athletics | Visit | Apply

Home > About > Administration > Board of Trustees

Administration

Board of Trustees

President +

Provost +

Visit La Sierra

Request Info

How to Apply

Board of Trustees

Board Committees and Meeting Schedule

2026

- September 11 & 12: Board Retreat
- November 11 & 12: Board Committees and Meetings

2027

- February 10 & 11: Board Committees and Meetings
- May 12 & 13: Board Committees and Meetings
- September 12 & 13: Board Retreat
- November 10 & 11: Board Committees and Meetings

The Board of Trustees is responsible for

- Ensuring that the mission of Seventh-day Adventist higher education is fulfilled.
- Appointing the president and evaluating his/her performance with reference to the policies and priorities set by the trustees.
- Adopting policies and priorities for the advancement of the university.
- Providing the financial and other resources necessary to achieve trustee policies, including participation in fundraising.
- Defending the university from influences which interfere with the achievement of its mission.
- Safeguarding the principles of moral and academic freedom for the community of scholars.
- Establishing sound financial policies, which includes preservation of capital assets as well as stewardship of current funds.
- Serving as advocates for the entire university without losing sight of special school-based opportunities.
- Exercising final authority in a manner to ensure the future of the university.

EXHIBIT B.13/2: La Sierra University - Board of Trustees (2026)Source: [La Sierra University Website](#) (Red names: LSU/Conference/Union/GC employees)

Page 2

Board of Trustees - Administration - La Sierra University
<https://lasierra.edu/board-of-trustees/>

Board Listing

Officers

- Chair: Bradford Newton
President, *Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists*

- Vice Chair: Kim Godfrey
Dental Practice Manager

- Secretary: Christon Arthur
President, *La Sierra University*

Members At Large

- Maggie Blades
Psychologist, *Riverside County office of Education*

- Jeffrey Brand
Physician, *Southern California Permanente Medical Group*

- Leon Brown
Vice President, *Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists*

- Nedd Brown
Dean, *Graduate Medical Education, University of North Dakota*

- John Cress
President, *Southern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists*
- Karnik Doukmetzian
Of Counsel, *General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists*

- Sandra Fermin
Young Adult & Community Pastor, *Loma Linda Filipino Seventh-day Adventist Church*

- Brent Geraty
Attorney & Independent Consultant

- Arnold Gutierrez
Scientist/API Consultant

- Carmen Ibanez
Executive Director, *Pine Springs Ranch/Southeastern California Conference*

- Ed Keyes
President, *Arizona Conference of Seventh-day Adventists*

- Stephen Mayer
Treasurer, *Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists*

- Chris Oberg
Chief Executive Officer, *Path of Life Ministries*

- Jonathan Park
President, *Southeastern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists*

- Sandy Roberts
Executive Secretary, *Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists*

- Zareh Sarrafian
Chief Executive Officer, *Riverside University Health System*

NOTE ON CHRIS OBERG:**Previous La Sierra Lead Pastor**

Oberg was the previous La Sierra University Church lead pastor. During her time there, the LGBTQ Lavender Graduation was launched.

Gender Transition Ceremony

A few months after leaving La Sierra University Church (November 2021), Oberg officiated in a March 2022 "Rite of Transition" of SDA Pastor Kris Loewen into Esther Loewen, who pastored until Summer 2021.

Loewen's own report of the ritual program, lists Oberg as performing the "anointing and renaming" from Kris Loewen into Esther Loewen.

See evidence exhibits regarding the "Rite of Transition" in **Exhibit B.14**.

EXHIBIT B.13/3: La Sierra University - Board of Trustees (2026)
Source: [La Sierra University Website](#) (Names in red: Conference/Union/GC representatives)

Page 3

Board of Trustees - Administration - La Sierra University

<https://lasierra.edu/board-of-trustees/>

- Adrian Serna
Chief Financial Officer for Physician Services, *Adventist Health*
- Victor Tolan,
President & CEO, *B&K Precision*
- JP Willis
Vice President of Education, *Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists*
- Brian Wright
General Manager, *San Antonio Spurs*

EXHIBIT B.14/1: LSU Board Trustee Background (2026): Chris Oberg
Source #1: [La Sierra University New & Returning Trustees](#)

Page 1
Constituents vote eight new trustees, president highlights opportunities, challenges - La Sierra News
<https://lasierra.edu/article/constituents-vote-eight-new-trustees-president-highlights-opportunities-challenges/>



Search... 

Academics | Programs | Admissions | Schools | Resources | Centers | News | Athletics

Visit | Apply

Chris Oberg

Chris Oberg is the chief executive officer of Path of Life Ministries, a nonprofit agency serving unhoused, challenged youth and families in the greater Riverside area. She previously served for 13 years as lead pastor of La Sierra University Church. She joined the La Sierra University Board of Trustees in 2025, filling the vacancy left by the departure of trustee Kent Hansen, where her background and expertise in the higher-ed church community have helped inform and advance the board's work.



EXHIBIT B.14/2: LSU Board Trustee Background (2026): Chris Oberg
Source #2: [Esther Loewen Report on Rite of Transition](#) / [Rite of Transition Program Bulletin](#)

Page 1

Rite of Transition: A Ritual of Rebirth — EstherLoewen

<https://estherloewen.com/writing-blog/2022/3/6/rite-of-transition-a-ritual-of-rebirth>

INCLUSION - BEAUTY - LEARNING - AUTHENTICITY



THERAPY PODCAST SPEAKING BLOG CART (0)

March 6, 2022

Rite of Transition: A Ritual of Rebirth



PC: Madison Gang of [Madison Ave. Photography](#)

For centuries, cultures across the world have created rites of passage to mark significant life transitions. In their most basic form, these initiations solemnize a person's change in societal status. Perhaps most often, rites of passage delineate the end of childhood from the beginning of adulthood. But other times, they are independent of age, and instead defined by religious or civil commitments. Sometimes rites of passage involve formal pageantry, in other instances they are understated, and in a few, they are so subtle so as to be unspoken!

For most transgender people living today, changing gender presentations isn't accompanied by soulful ceremonies and joyful celebrations. Instead, our initiations are often decidedly traumatic: relational estrangement, unemployment, ex-communication, pariah status, and so on. I don't think it has to be that way (and certainly what

I see in my corner of Southern California gives me hope that it won't always). One small change agent might be creating ceremonial rites of passage that will serve as cultural markers: recognizing, validating, and commemorating the profound and often spiritual experience of transitioning.

This work has already begun. In constructing my own "Rite of Transition", I consulted with an array of spiritual leaders who had facilitated such ceremonies for themselves or their congregations. As such, I am indebted to [Maki Ashe Van Steenwyk](#), the [Metropolitan Church of Christ \(MCC\)](#), [Unitarian Universalist Association \(UUA\)](#), [Nadia Bolz Weber](#), Father [Shannon T. Kearns](#), Rev. [Dr. Cameron Partridge](#), Rabbi [Eli Kukla](#), Rev. [Fred L. Hammond](#), and others. For these beautiful generous people, as well as to transgender people who have lived and died before me, I am grateful.

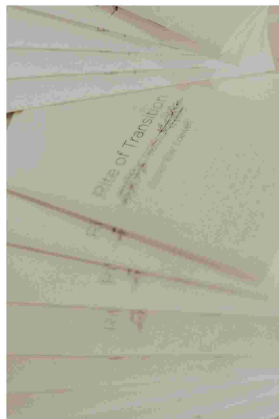
EXHIBIT B.14/3: LSU Board Trustee Background (2026): Chris Oberg
 Source #2: [Esther Loewen Report on Rite of Transition](#) / [Rite of Transition Program Bulletin](#)

Page 2

Rite of Transition: A Ritual of Rebirth — EstherLoewen

<https://estherloewen.com/writing-blog/2022/3/6/rite-of-transition-a-ritual-of-rebirth>

My Rite of Transition ceremony was constructed, of course, with others in mind (I'll get to that below) but first and foremost, I created it for me. I needed this. Unfortunately, living as a transgender person in the 21st Century is fraught with loss, rejection, prejudice, misunderstanding, and outright hatred. I needed this ceremony to emotionally situate what had happened to me, to defiantly reclaim my faith and my calling, to reassert my dignity as a human and as a woman, to mourn the losses, and to receive affirmation from my parents, family, and community. For me, it was a piece of sacred living artwork that demonstrated God's blessing on my transition. Through the ceremony, yet again I experienced Her unconditional enthusiasm for me as Her daughter – the exact person She made me to be.



As I mentioned, I also created the Rite of Transition ceremony for my family and friends. I wanted to give them the gift of accurate contextualization regarding my perception of the sacredness of the trans journey, defusing cultural shame we are taught. My loved ones also had their own grief and to process, while also needing an opportunity to verbalize their affirmations in light of helplessly watching my family and I suffer. This ceremony provided space for us all to safely mourn and celebrate together. I wanted my loved ones to see the beauty that can be the transgender experience if only our culture could grow past its paternalism, misogyny, transphobia, and racism. From the feedback I've received, I think the rite hit the mark.

I am writing about the ceremony here on my blog for several reasons. Space, location, scheduling, and other personal limitations made it impossible to include all those I would have wished to attend back in January. This comprehensive post serves as a substitute to in-person witness.

Second, I created this ceremony for me. But I also created it as a contribution to the cultural lexicon of rites of passages. It would be my greatest honor to know that someone took in the experience I created – and made it their own. If this is you, feel free to reach out to me for additional source files as needed; it would be my privilege to share.

So here it is...what follows are alternating picture slideshows (thanks to [Madison Gang for her beautiful work](#)) and actual text of the print liturgy program that was handed out ([click here for a pdf version](#)). You will notice that many of those in attendance were present via Zoom. Paradox Church did an amazing job of facilitating the technical task of uniting us despite geographical distance.

EXHIBIT B.14/4: LSU Board Trustee Background (2026): Chris Oberg
 Source #2: [Esther Loewen Report on Rite of Transition](#) / [Rite of Transition Program Bulletin](#)

Page 3

Rite of Transition: A Ritual of Rebirth — EstherLoewen

<https://estherloewen.com/writing-blog/2022/3/6/rite-of-transition-a-ritual-of-rebirth>



1 | Welcome & Invitation | *Mandy Cordero*

A rite is a ritual of transformation; a communal exercise designed to change us, and also to bless and integrate changes that have already taken place.

While there are precious few traditional or religious ceremonies marking the journey of transgender people, every spiritual tradition has validated many other transformations with rituals not unlike this one. Today we respectfully borrow elements from Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Indigenous American spirituality, the LGBTQ community, and Elle's family to shape these moments. We express our gratitude to these people, as well as to Paradox Church for hosting us.

This Rite of Transition is a participation in and an initiation into the revolutionary work of the Divine Spirit in the world. This Spirit cannot be controlled; rather, she subverts all attempts at domination, individually and systemically. Jesus taught that this aspect of God's essence blows among us like wind, changing us as she wishes, and ultimately making all things new. Her mothering voice is the one that brought us into existence. And it is their surprising creativity that drives us to our callings on the other side of the wilderness.

The ritual we participate in today is an affirmation of what is already true about Esther's identity: she is enough exactly as she is, loved, holy, beautiful, called, and brave. This ceremony is also an invitation, not only to continue participating in her life as it continues to unfold but to join the ineffable power of the universe as it leans toward grace and peace.

EXHIBIT B.14/5: LSU Board Trustee Background (2026): Chris Oberg
Source #2: [Esther Loewen Report on Rite of Transition](#) / [Rite of Transition Program Bulletin](#)

Page 4

Rite of Transition: A Ritual of Rebirth — Esther Loewen

<https://estherloewen.com/writing-blog/2022/3/6/rite-of-transition-a-ritual-of-rebirth>

And so, as we begin this moment of what we hope will become transcendent, we whisper a prayer to the One who cannot be defined:

We welcome you, Spirit of Life.

Kindle our hearts with the fire of your love.

Shine where you will, tearing down every evil thing

And renew the face of the earth.

[The lighting of the First candle]



2 | The Ash of Loss & Grief | *Rose Benjamin (via video)*

Part of the work of transition is grieving.

We all had a relationship with a person we called “Kristopher”; this person is still with us – and in many ways, even more-so than before. However, many hopes, assumptions, joys, and shared meaning will ultimately pass away because of her transition as Esther. It is good and important to name these losses and express the emotions that accompany them.

The Jewish tradition brings with it a rich heritage of lament. The Tanakh (or Hebrew Scripture) is filled with songs, stories, and poetry demonstrating the essential value of telling the truth about what has gone wrong. It also shows us how God is able to hear and hold the fullness of human experience. As a part of

EXHIBIT B.14/6: LSU Board Trustee Background (2026): Chris Oberg
Source #2: [Esther Loewen Report on Rite of Transition](#) / [Rite of Transition Program Bulletin](#)

Page 5

Rite of Transition: A Ritual of Rebirth — EstherLoewen

<https://estherloewen.com/writing-blog/2022/3/6/rite-of-transition-a-ritual-of-rebirth>

this ceremony, we want to follow in the footsteps of generations of spiritual travelers by acknowledging our grief.

Some of your laments may be singular to you, or even private—to remain unspoken. Others might be cultural, rooted in the patriarchal heteronormative gender roles we all have experienced and suffered under. There are some here for whom the church or religious worldviews have created loss associated with Esther's transition (or with the LGBTQ experience at large). And of course, some of us have lost relationships that we once cherished related to this journey.

All change brings with it some form of loss – but it need not always be violent or traumatic. As we name our pain, express the sadness, anger, and fear that accompany them, we set ourselves up to receive the beauty that can grow in the barren fields of loss.

When you are ready, we invite you to come forward with the vial of ASH your received at the door. As you empty it in the basin, give voice to your losses in a sentence or two, or simply as a silent prayer.

[The lighting of the Second candle]



**3 | The Transgender Journey | Esther “Elle”
Loewen**

EXHIBIT B.14/7: LSU Board Trustee Background (2026): Chris Oberg
Source #2: [Esther Loewen Report on Rite of Transition](#) / [Rite of Transition Program Bulletin](#)

Page 6

Rite of Transition: A Ritual of Rebirth — Esther Loewen

<https://estherloewen.com/writing-blog/2022/3/6/rite-of-transition-a-ritual-of-rebirth>

The candidate will elaborate on the spiritual nature of her transition, the ways in which God has called to this path, and the wilderness from which she is emerging.

Manuscript below:

Precious little of what I have to say today will be new to you. You are present because you have been a part of my journey. You have held me as I've cried, and pored over my loquacious written ramblings. You have spoken words of affirmation and love. And you have believed me.

Thank you. From the very bottom of my heart. Thank you.

Your love has saved me.

Saved us.

My message for you today is embedded in the liturgy itself (much of which is made up of my words, or words that I edited and shaped to fit this unique event). So I won't add a great deal more right now. However, rites of passage throughout many cultures and eras, often include a fete or performance or word from the candidate. Sadly, we have no beds of hot coals to walk across – so hearing me blabber for a few moments will have to do.

Contrary to the judgments of many, I'm still a follower of Jesus. This ceremony, held in a church, is in part, my defiant declaration that although I may be defrocked of my ordination, terminated from my vocation, maligned, and/or forgotten — I am still here — My dignity as a daughter created in the image of the Divine has not tarnished. The Spirit is just getting started with me. I believe this with all my heart. Your presence...in this moment...helps me believe it all the more.

The transgender journey is neither linear nor uniform. Understanding gender dysphoria and gender identity is ultimately a subjective task. For many years, I rationalized away the many different signs and signals of my gender that now give me confidence. It felt safer to come up with 25 unique hair-brained explanations for what I was feeling instead of the one simple and elegant one that clarified them all.

I'm a woman. I always have been. That's the truth – even when I didn't want to see it.

But for me – the question wasn't only relational, psychological, practical, and emotional – it was also spiritual. I needed to sense the blessing of the Creator on my choice, even in the face of the overwhelming evidence and support I had assembled. 2021 was a hard year. It was also a year drenched in moments where the God of love affirmed me as her child, told me she made me this way, and that

EXHIBIT B.14/8: LSU Board Trustee Background (2026): Chris Oberg
Source #2: [Esther Loewen Report on Rite of Transition](#) / [Rite of Transition Program Bulletin](#)

Page 7

Rite of Transition: A Ritual of Rebirth — Esther Loewen

<https://estherloewen.com/writing-blog/2022/3/6/rite-of-transition-a-ritual-of-rebirth>

my best gifts lay on the other side of transition. Not unlike my calling to pastoral ministry, the Divine imperative for me to walk forward on this path became overwhelming. As I look back at the documentation of the Spirit's voice in my life over the past year [show journals], these conclusions feel even more undeniable. For me, transition is a kind of calling.

[Here, I told a couple of stories about the ways in which God spoke to me throughout this process. Both involved butterflies, an image that became the centerpiece of a tattoo I received later in the weekend (the final element of the ceremony).]

On every level then – my transition is Leap of Faith
My subjective but oh so thorough self-discovery
The meat-grinder of coming out of the closet
The unknown – how will society change to accommodate or condemn people like me?

But most of all – transition is a leap into the arms of God
The God is Love
Nature of reality is Love
Universe is Love

Transition is a bet – an all-in – on that benevolence. I have never felt more alive.

[I then poured out the oil into the basin containing the ash.]

[The lighting of the Third candle]



EXHIBIT B.14/9: LSU Board Trustee Background (2026): Chris Oberg
Source #2: [Esther Loewen Report on Rite of Transition](#) / [Rite of Transition Program Bulletin](#)

Page 8

Rite of Transition: A Ritual of Rebirth — EstherLoewen

<https://estherloewen.com/writing-blog/2022/3/6/rite-of-transition-a-ritual-of-rebirth>

4 | The Glitter of Affirmation | *Andrea Farley (via video)*

Transition is ultimately rooted in hope. While many of us grieve what has passed, there is also joy in what is to come. Much of American culture has not yet awakened to the reality (and moreover the beauty) of the transgender experience. Thus, it is easy to conclude that affirming or blessing trans people is anathema. This is especially true for those of us who have histories with the Christian church.

As Esther has testified, her process of transition is first and foremost spiritual; a calling forward into the paradoxical splendor of providence. She has experienced the non-dual reality that Jesus highlights in the famous Beatitude dialogue from the Gospel of Matthew in the Christian Scriptures.

“Blessed (or fortunate, or mature) are those in poverty, grieving, oppressed, and longing for justice,” he says. These sorts of ironic affirmations are not only descriptive of spiritual realities, they are political as well. Jesus was murdered in part for challenging the status quo with teachings like the Beatitudes. He was not the first prophet to be killed for affirming the wrong kinds of people – and he will not be the last.

Today, we invite you to follow in the footsteps of the radically inclusive prophets of our collective pasts: from all cultures, traditions, and religions. When you are ready, please come forward with the vial of glitter you received at the door. As you empty it into the basin with the ash and oil, give voice to your hopeful affirmation, and support of Esther and her family. Please do this in one or two words – or silently as a prayer.

This act may seem risky; it is worth the risk.

[The lighting of the Fourth candle]

[My mother and father each made their own speeches of blessing at this time]

EXHIBIT B.14/10: LSU Board Trustee Background (2026): Chris ObergSource #2: [Esther Loewen Report on Rite of Transition](#) / [Rite of Transition Program Bulletin](#)

Page 9

Rite of Transition: A Ritual of Rebirth — EstherLoewen

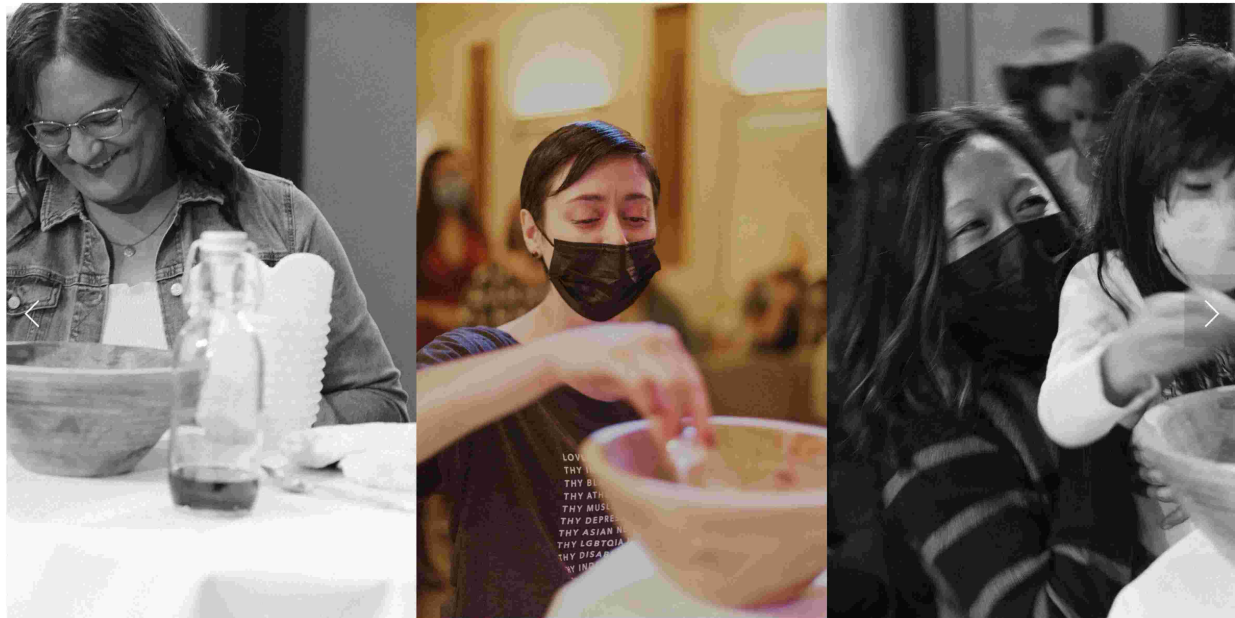
<https://estherloewen.com/writing-blog/2022/3/6/rite-of-transition-a-ritual-of-rebirth>**5 | Anointing & Renaming | Chris Oberg****Minister** (to the candidate):*By what name shall you be known?***Mom & Dad:***The name shall be: Esther "Elle" Elizabeth***Candidate:***My name shall be Esther "Elle" Elizabeth***Minister:***Community, repeat after me: 'Your name shall be Esther. Esther. Esther.'***Community:***Your name shall be Esther. Esther. Esther...'***Minister** [to candidate as she is anointed with the Ash/Oil/Glitter]:*Bear this name as a reflection of your true self.**Share this name as a reflection of Mercy.**Offer this name as a reflection of Justice.**Ash for transformation and glitter for hope.**Bound together with the oil of God's anointing.*

EXHIBIT B.14/11: LSU Board Trustee Background (2026): Chris ObergSource #2: [Esther Loewen Report on Rite of Transition](#) / [Rite of Transition Program Bulletin](#)

Page 10

Rite of Transition: A Ritual of Rebirth — EstherLoewen

<https://estherloewen.com/writing-blog/2022/3/6/rite-of-transition-a-ritual-of-rebirth>*Creation itself bears witness.**You, my siblings, bear witness.**Christ bears witness.**[The lighting of the Fifth candle]***6 | A Queer Communion | Mandy Cordero**

Many religious traditions and cultures use rituals of food to mark spiritual transformation. From Judaism to Hinduism, Christianity to Islam, Buddhism to Folk Religions, and even American Secularism: almost all have commemorated significant changes by feasting, fasting, and or symbolic consumption.

Today as we close, you are invited to participate in a ritual “meal” of glitter cookies and juice. The ritual of Communion (or the Lord’s Supper, or the Eucharist), is traditionally used by Christians as an act of cleansing, commitment to God, and gratitude for grace. It is also sometimes employed as a signal of commitment at weddings, graduations, and baptisms. As we respectfully borrow this imagery today, you are invited to make a vow of fidelity to your communities (big or small), families (chosen or born), and divine source. If you choose to take part in this playful exercise, we invite you to consider committing yourself to the joyful work of queering in the world, and embracing the essence of God: love.

If you are comfortable participating, please make your way forward for a cookie and juice. After you return to your seat, please eat in your own time as you meditate, pray, and quietly make personal vows.

EXHIBIT B.14/12: LSU Board Trustee Background (2026): Chris Oberg

Source #2: [Esther Loewen Report on Rite of Transition](#) / [Rite of Transition Program Bulletin](#)

Page 11

Rite of Transition: A Ritual of Rebirth — EstherLoewen

<https://estherloewen.com/writing-blog/2022/3/6/rite-of-transition-a-ritual-of-rebirth>

[The lighting of the Sixth candle]



7 | Closing Blessing | Elle Loewen

The following prayer is entitled, “*Blown by God toward Newness*”, written by [Walter Brueggemann](#) and published in his book *Prayers for a Privileged People*.

The news is that God’s wind is blowing.

*It may be a breeze that
cools and comforts.*

*It may be a gust that
summons you to notice.*

*It may be a storm that blows you where you
have never been before.*

*Whatever the wind is in your life,
pay attention to it...
and the blessing of God,
Parent, Child, and Spirit,
will abide with you always.*

EXHIBIT B.15/1: Southeastern California Conference - Administration (2004-2026)Source: [SDA Yearbook](#)

Year	President	Executive Secretary	Treasurer
Constituency Session 2004			
2004	Gerald Penick Sr.	Sandra Roberts	Thomas Staples
2005	Gerald Penick Sr.	Sandra Roberts	Thomas Staples
2006	Gerald Penick Sr.	Sandra Roberts	Thomas Staples
2007	Gerald Penick Sr.	Sandra Roberts	Thomas Staples
2008	Gerald Penick Sr.	Sandra Roberts	Thomas Staples
Constituency Session 2008			
2008	Gerald Penick Sr.	Sandra Roberts	Thomas Staples
2009	Gerald Penick Sr.	Sandra Roberts	Thomas Staples
2010	Gerald Penick Sr.	Sandra Roberts	Thomas Staples
2011	Gerald Penick Sr.	Sandra Roberts	Thomas Staples
2012	Gerald Penick Sr.	Sandra Roberts	Verlon Strauss
2013	Gerald Penick Sr.	Sandra Roberts	Verlon Strauss
Constituency Session 2013			
2013	Sandra Roberts	Jonathan Park	Verlon Strauss
2014	Sandra Roberts	Jonathan Park	Verlon Strauss
2015	Sandra Roberts	Jonathan Park	Verlon Strauss
2016	Sandra Roberts	Jonathan Park	Verlon Strauss
2017	Sandra Roberts	Jonathan Park	Verlon Strauss
2018	Sandra Roberts	Jonathan Park	Verlon Strauss
Constituency Session 2018			
2018	Sandra Roberts	Jonathan Park	Verlon Strauss
2019	Sandra Roberts	Jonathan Park	Verlon Strauss
2020	Sandra Roberts	Jonathan Park	Verlon Strauss
2021	Sandra Roberts (out 09/2021)	Jonathan Park (out 09/2021)	Verlon Strauss
	Jonathan Park (in 09/2021)	Patricia Marruffo (in 09/2021)	
2022	Jonathan Park	Patricia Marruffo	Verlon Strauss
2023	Jonathan Park	Patricia Marruffo	Verlon Strauss
Constituency Session 2023			
2023	Jonathan Park	Patricia Marruffo	Verlon Strauss
2024	Jonathan Park	Patricia Marruffo	Verlon Strauss
2025	Jonathan Park	Patricia Marruffo	Verlon Strauss
2026	Jonathan Park	Patricia Marruffo	Verlon Strauss
Constituency period continues until 2028			

EXHIBIT B.15/2: Southeastern California Conference - Administration Current (2026)
Source: [SECC President](#) / [SECC Executive Secretary](#) (Screenshot: July 2026)

Page 1

President - Southeastern California Conference
<https://seccadventist.org/president/>



Jonathan Park

President

Phone: 951-509-2287

Email: Jonathan.Park@seccsda.org

Page 1

Secretariat - Southeastern California Conference
<https://seccadventist.org/executive-secretary/>



Patty Marruffo

Executive Secretary

Phone: 951-509-2290

Email: Patty.Marruffo@seccsda.org

EXHIBIT B.16/1: Southeastern California Conference - La Sierra University Church Pastors (2000-2026)
Source: [La Sierra University Church](#) / Various sources

Year	Lead Pastor	Associate Pastors / Selected Comments
2000	Daniel Smith (since 1994)	Chris Oberg (Family and Children)
2001	Daniel Smith	Chris Oberg (Family and Children)
2002	Daniel Smith	Chris Oberg (Family and Children)
2003	Daniel Smith	Chris Oberg (Family and Children)
2004	Daniel Smith	Chris Oberg (Family and Children)
2005	Daniel Smith	Chris Oberg (Family and Children)
2006	Daniel Smith	
2007	Daniel Smith	
2008	Daniel Smith	
2009	Daniel Smith	
2009	Chris Oberg	
2010	Chris Oberg	
2011	Chris Oberg	
2012	Chris Oberg	
2013	Chris Oberg	
2014	Chris Oberg	
2015	Chris Oberg	
2016	Chris Oberg	
2017	Chris Oberg	
2018	Chris Oberg	
2019	Chris Oberg	
2020	Chris Oberg	
2021	Chris Oberg	
2022	Iki Taimi	
2023	Iki Taimi	
2024	Iki Taimi	
2025	Iki Taimi	Chris Oberg: Voted into Board of Trustees in 2025
2026	Iki Taimi	Associate Pastors: Dewald Kritzinger, Raewyn Orlich, Ben Amoah, Elizabeth McDonald

EXHIBIT B.16/2: Southeastern California Conference - LSUC Current Pastoral Staff (2026)
Source: [La Sierra University Church](#) (Screenshot: July 2026)

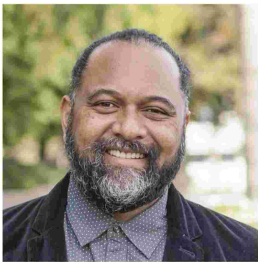
Page 1
Pastoral Staff | La Sierra University Church
<https://lasierra.church/pastoral-staff/>

HomeVisitWorshipServeLa SierraConnectGiveWatch Live

ABOUT US

MEET OUR PASTORS





Iki Taimi

LEAD PASTOR

Iki enjoys laughing, eating, and watching the Lakers. He loves to spend time with people, loves the beach, the city, and the mountains. Pastor Iki's family includes his wife, Melanie, and their two children. He loves being Adventist and growing with others.



Raewyn Orlich

ASSOCIATE PASTOR,
DISCIPLESHIP & NURTURE

Raewyn is excited to focus on how we grow as disciples and nurture relationships. She's grateful for her physician-researcher husband, Michael, and their kids, Eleanor, Eric, and Desmond. She loves meeting new people and getting to hear their stories.



Dewald "Devo" Kritzinger

ASSOCIATE PASTOR,
WORSHIP & MEDIA

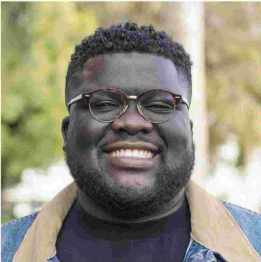
Devo serves as the pastor for worship and media. He is an immigrant from South Africa who now calls La Sierra home. He and his wife, Leilani, have four children who make them crazy/happy. He loves sports and is an Elliptigo enthusiast.

EXHIBIT B.16/3: Southeastern California Conference - LSUC Current Pastoral Staff (2026)
Source: [La Sierra University Church](#) (Screenshot: July 2026)

Page 2

Pastoral Staff | La Sierra University Church

<https://lasierra.church/pastoral-staff/>



Ben Amoah
ASSOCIATE PASTOR,
YOUTH MINISTRY

Ben serves as the pastor for youth ministry. He and his wife have a passion for doing life with young people. He loves food, being with people, and comic books/manga.



Elizabeth McDonald
ASSOCIATE PASTOR,
CHILDREN & FAMILY MINISTRY

Elizabeth serves as the pastor for Children and Family ministry. Moving here from Illinois she's excited to call the La Sierra Community home. In her free time you most likely find her getting in the car and driving to explore new places, shops, and foods.

Keep in Touch

 Facebook

 Instagram

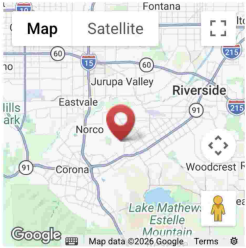
 YouTube

 Email & Text Updates

We use flocknote to send you updates from the La Sierra Church community. Unsubscribe anytime. No spam, we promise.

La Sierra University Church
4937 Sierra Vista Ave
Riverside, CA 92505
951-354-7095

Office Hours
Tuesday-Friday: 10:00am - 2:00pm



Directions via Google Maps

© 2026 La Sierra University Church

EXHIBIT B.16/4: Southeastern California Conference - LSU Church under Southeastern California Conference
Source: [La Sierra University Church \(eAdventist Directory\)](#) (Screenshot: August 2026)

Page 1
La Sierra University SDA Church - eAdventist
<https://www.eadventist.org/search/organization?locale=en&org=ANPMIB>

HOME

CONTACT US

PRIVACY

eAdventist
Login

myEadventist
App login

PERSONNEL
Retirement login

LA SIERRA UNIVERSITY SDA CHURCH

Previously: *La Sierra Collegiate SDA Church*

Address: 4937 Sierra Vista Ave
Riverside CA 92505-3334

Mail: 4937 Sierra Vista Ave
Riverside CA 92505-3334

Map: [Google Maps](#)

Website: [lasierra.church](#)

Phone: 951-354-7095

Email: info@lasierra.church



Pastor: Iki Taimi

Staff: Dewald Kritzinger · *Pastor - Associate*
Benjamin Amoah · *Pastor - Youth*
Elizabeth Grace McDonald · *Pastor - Associate*
Raewyn Jean Orlich · *Pastor - Associate*

Services : Sabbath school: 10:00 AM
Church worship: 9:00 AM
Church (2nd): 11:15 AM

Language: English

Members: 2,669

Type: Church

OrgCode: ANPMIB

Tax# (EIN): 95-1855665

Parent: [Southeastern California Conference](#)

Updated: 02/10/2026 m/d/yyyy



[Request changes](#)

[What's nearby?](#)



North American Division
of Seventh-day Adventists

Ver. 4.3.0 - Copyright © 2026 North American Division