

Homosexuality in the Adventist church is a delicate subject. Unconditional love has always been a difficulty in our intellectual church, and Seventh-Gay Adventists certainly falls outside of the church's 'approved narrative'.

International filmmakers Stephen Eyer and Daneen Akers—at Avondale as part of the Manifest Creative Arts Festival—present a touching film that teaches about learning to love even when differences exist.

It is too easy to let our fear of the unknown, rather than love and validation, inform our relationship with the gay community.

But in hearing the stories of earnest people seeking God, we have to trust that people are finding their own relationship with God, alien though it may be to us. Seventh-Gay Adventists depicts the experiences of three gay couples that have both love for their church and one another in common.

The film is such a listening space about the experiences of gay Seventh-day Adventists who would not normally have an opportunity to speak in a manner so open and vulnerable.

The documentary itself is richly written and filmed—emotionally touching in parts, delightfully ironic in others. It raises hard, searching questions about how we minister (or don't) to those who fall on the margins of 'our' society. How can we show love to a group of people whose youth are four times more

When Love is Hard

Mitchell Strahan

likely to commit suicide than if they were straight, and double that if they were raised in conservative Christian environments? How do we stand up for the rights of a marginalised people, to make them feel valued regardless of their circumstances?

Wider than that, how do we understand and interact with people who fall outside our definition of 'normal'? Not only the gay community, but others: how do we minister to soldiers, to boat people, to the wealthy 1%?

Romans 13:8-10 tells us that the sum total of our existence is love. Regardless of human distinction, we are called to be God's love to our human family.



"What Mummy and Daddy made a film about." In one word, Stephen and Daneen's young daughter sums up the film.



Mitch is terrible with deadlines, and one day wants to put blue Gatorade in a Windex bottle and walk around drinking it.