



PORTLAND
fellowship

Dear Fellowship Partners,

update June 2005

Do you remember graduating from high school? For me it was a mixture of emotions that needed sorting through. I remember being excited that I would not have to go back to that same building each day and sit in class after class (as I'm an experiential learner). But it made me nervous to know I was leaving an environment that had become a part of who I was. This began a short season of anxiety. *Where will I go from here? What will I do next year? Where will I find new friends?*

Many things can trigger anxiety. It's not always easy to determine the root trigger, but usually there is something to be uncovered.

A professor of mine recently pointed out three general contributors to anxiety. The first is a *threat to one's identity*. If I focus on my role as director of Portland Fellowship, making that the primary point of reference for my identity (forgetting I am a husband, a father, a man), then a criticism to my leadership could create deep insecurity and anxiety. A second trigger can be the loss of *significant people*. Many of you know that my first child, Abigail, passed away from heart failure in 2001. I understand full well the pain of losing someone you love and the anxiety that follows. The third contributor is *change*. Even if the change is good, uncertainty about the future is inevitable. These contributors to anxiety are common to all.

At end of May twenty individuals will graduate from the *Taking Back Ground* program. These are men and women who have committed at least two years undertaking a journey towards sexual and relational wholeness. They have desired God and have sought to be known by him. As I sit here writing, I'm looking over the names of the graduates, each person can tell a powerful story about the work God has done in his or her life. I'm seeing the names of people who have been lifted from deep depression, and others who have been freed from self-hatred. Some are no longer confused about their gender, and many who have conquered addictive behavior. It is an incredible blessing to witness God's power and to be a part of each of their lives.

Also at the end of May, our interns will have successfully completed the Upper Room Intern Program. These six men and one woman have become a real part of my life and the life of Portland Fellowship. The Fellowship House has never felt so alive as it has this year. I love each one of them and desire God's best for them.

As both of these programs come to a close there is both excitement and uncertainty as to what the future holds. Some will be more anxious than others, but all will be experiencing loss and separation. I look forward to seeing some of them come back next year to serve on our leadership team and I look forward to hearing the news of where God is leading the others. We all know the journey is not finished; it's just that the scenery will change a bit.

I'm thankful we have a Father who knows all of what we are going through. He knows where we are going. He knows that change and loss will produce a measure of anxiety, and yet He doesn't leave us to our own defenses. Instead, he says, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."



Our interns completed the Upper Room on May 26th

"He has sent me to bind
up the brokenhearted to
proclaim liberty to captives,
and freedom to prisoners."

ISAIAH 61 : 1

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Pray for the participants and interns that have completed this part of their journey. Please petition God to lead each of them into a deepening walk with Him. And offer with us a prayer of thanksgiving for the awesome work of God in each life here at Portland Fellowship. Thank you and bless you for your faithfulness to us.



Jason Thompson
Executive Director

Summer Session: Tuesdays 7-9 pm

July 5th thru Aug 31st

Somewhere in the past (probably as recent as yesterday) we have all settled for less than God's best in our lives. This summer we will have the opportunity to challenge some of those choices and look ahead to the adventure, the joy, and the strength that is ours by God's design. The men of Portland Fellowship will be exploring the DVD series Wild at Heart, while the women are reading and discussing the new book, Captivating. Join us for nine weeks of fellowship, prayer, small group conversations, and encouragement. Our groups will operate on an open format but please sign-up by calling or emailing the office prior to June 15th so that sufficient materials can be ordered. If you have questions please contact Steve Baliko or Catherine Chapman for further details.

Coming to Seattle



Focus on the Family's next Love Won Out conference is scheduled for June 25 in Seattle, Washington. Please call 1-800-A-FAMILY (232-6459) or visit lovewonout.org for more information

Focus on the Family is promoting the truth that homosexuality is preventable and treatable: "a message routinely silenced today. We want people to know that individuals don't have to be gay. That's why we've developed a one-day conference for those looking for answers on this often-divisive issue. Whether you are an educator, parent, concerned citizen or even a gay activist, Love Won Out will inform, inspire and offer you hope."

prayer / praise

Pray for Laura, Steve, Joshua, Michael, Philip, Matt and Sean as they finish the Upper Room Internship Program and continue to apply all God has shown them this past year. Also, begin to pray for next year's interns as they prepare to be a part of next year's program.

We ask for your prayers in ongoing financial support through the summer months.

Please pray for the PF staff. The past several months have reminded us that spiritual warfare is indeed a reality in this ministry. Pray that the summer months will bring much needed rest, refreshment and encouragement for the coming year of Taking Back Ground and the Upper Room Internship.

The 2004-05 Taking Back Ground program came to a close last month. It was another powerful year giving, evidence that God works in the lives of humble men and women. Pray for those leaving the program, that the abiding presence of God would seal the work done in their lives.

portland fellowship is a nonprofit, 501(c)3 nondenominational organization. We are exclusively supported through private donations, support services, and offerings. Thank you for your gifts.

events calendar

June 3

Leadership Appreciation Dinner
PF staff will serve a special dinner to our Taking Back Ground Leadership Team. 6 p.m.

June 7, 14, 21, 28

Open Group
For questions about Portland Fellowship or to hear from men and women walking in freedom, come to our open group. 7 p.m.

June 10

Family and Friends Group
For those who have a loved one involved in homosexuality and want guidance, encouragement, and support.
Second Friday of each month: 7 p.m.

June 26-July 1

Catherine, Drew and Jim will be attending the Leanne Payne Conference in Wheaton, Illinois

Check website for additional updates at www.portlandfellowship.com