

Dear Fellowship Partners,

update April 2007



PORTLAND
fellowship

It's simple, it's intense, it's profound.

Each year on Saturday evening of our *Taking Back Ground* retreat, participants, alumni, staff and volunteers respond to the work of the Holy Spirit by surrendering something that continues to stand in the way of a deeper relationship with God. It's simple because all we're doing is making a choice. It's intense because those choices will change our lives. It's profound because God meets each of us in that surrender and begins or continues to change our hearts and minds. The symbolic items left at the foot of the Cross might represent doubt, pride, lust, and unforgiveness. As each person lays down his or her symbolic item, many come forward to pray and offer thanks. We are all in this together.

I am very thankful that this work is shared by many. I enjoy the support of other exodus ministry directors, my staff, and countless volunteer leaders, without whom there would be no *Taking Back Ground*, no Surrender Service, no Spring Retreat, and no Portland Fellowship. Most who know me, know that I am not built to work alone, and glad of it. It's a joyful thing, and a healthy thing to be part of a team. And I believe everyone else who engages in this ministry would say the same thing: it's good to work together – to be partners together.

I'd like to redeem this much-misused word: *partner*. I'd like to restore that word – which too often has come to mean “unmarried persons living together” – to its original sense: *a person who shares with another in an action or endeavor*. And I'd like to invite you to become, if you have not already, a *partner* with us at Portland Fellowship.

Consider, if you will, what it means to be partners with each other.

First, being ‘partners’ will mean that we do different things, but for the same purpose. Let's restate that purpose: we are here to offer hope to those who struggle with unwanted homosexuality. We are that part of the church's ministry that helps those who, because of the preaching of the Gospel, know they need help to find freedom from same-sex attraction. This ministry demonstrates that the Gospel is not condemnation, but transformation. What we do, I believe, is essential if the church is going to proclaim, as it should, the teachings of Scripture concerning sexual purity. We provide a means to that end.

Being ‘partners’ means that we will need each other. The Apostle Paul, describing different ministries in the church as various parts of the body (1 Cor. 12:12ff) gives us a picture of how interdependent we all are. “...all parts should have equal concern for each other.” I sometimes notice how large projects sometimes can be held up by one person not doing his or her part. And it's a joy to see everyone functioning in his or her ministry, making *Taking Back Ground*, or a Spring Retreat, or our annual Conference come together.

I'm equally grateful for those who cannot be present. PF is similar to a missionary organization in that much of the work is done by a few in the field, but that work requires the interest and support of many others whose connection will be by mail, checkbook, and by time in prayer — and by helping spread the word to others who would come alongside us.

Conversely, I must confess I feel a loss when a supporter of this ministry becomes silent. Of course, there may be a good reason, but all of us depend so much upon that support – financial, of course, but also the friendship that it represented through the partnership. Obviously, we treasure your support and we will feel a loss when it is missing.

And too, being partners means that we receive the same rewards. Ultimately, God will greet all of us who labor in his fields with the indescribable joy of being in his presence. There are also rewards in the present for



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

ISAIAH 61 : 1

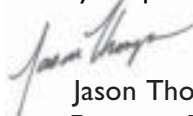
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us who do His work. Here is where I wish our partners in this ministry **could be** present, to hear and see what I see. A sample from just the last month:

- A couple, whose marriage was nearly wrecked by a homosexual affair, stands together in worship.
- An intern begins to lead a sexual addiction recovery group in a local church.
- A young man who has ended a year-long pattern of anonymous sex goes in for an HIV test. A staff member of PF is there, at the clinic, to administer his test and pray with him.
- Late into the evening men and women go forward to confess sin and seek God's healing for: anger towards parents, infidelity in marriage, neglect of their children, attachment to money...
- A young man comes in the door at PF for the first time, scared, unsure what will happen, but hoping, just hoping that somehow he can be free of this thing that shames him.

And so much more. I wish there were a way for our partners in this ministry to be there when these things happen. And I'd love for more people to share in the joy of being a partner. If you are not yet a partner in this ministry, I invite you to become one. If you are, God bless you richly. We at PF are very aware that none of this would happen without you.

Thank you for your partnership,



Jason Thompson
Executive Director

equality ride - april 5

Jason Thompson and Drew Berryessa were invited by George Fox University to train and encourage students, faculty and staff as they prepare for a visit from Soulforce's Equality Ride.

Soulforce was founded by Mel White, a ghost writer for several Evangelical leaders including Billy Graham. The purpose of Soulforce is "freedom for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people from religious and political oppression through the practice of relentless nonviolent resistance."

Equality Ride is a group of young gay affirming adults seeking to communicate a message of inclusion and acceptance of homosexuality in private Christian schools. Although George Fox recognizes homosexual behavior to be immoral, they have graciously accepted Equality Ride to the school for a civil dialogue among students and faculty.

Portland Fellowship will not be present on April 5, but rather our approach is to prepare those who will be hosting each rider. Please be in prayer for the George Fox community as they demonstrate God's love without compromise.

special thanks

to Chanda, Pam, Carol and Jimmy for serving our participants and leaders at our recent retreat.

to Pastor Pete Luedemann and the people of Beautiful Savior for providing the space and promotion for our seminar.

to all churches that helped promote our seminar event.

to Denise Pfaff and Andrea Medlock for providing ASL interpretation for our seminar.

to Georgene Rice of KPDQ and her continued support of Portland Fellowship.

prayer

Please pray for the new participants that will be starting taking back ground this month.

Please pray for provision for this ministry, that the Lord would bring new, ongoing financial partners to PF.

Please pray for our staff and leadership team, that, as we serve our participants, we would be protected and sustained by the Lord.

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 calender

april 10

National Leadership Teleconference
Jason hosts this monthly call

april 3, 10, 17, 24

Taking Back Ground
Discipleship program for men, women, and wives impacted by same-sex attraction. 7 p.m.

april 12, 19

Upper Room Intern Program
Interns will be studying website design and other tasks related to starting a new ministry.

april 20

Family and Friends Group
For those who have a loved one involved in homosexuality and want guidance, encouragement and support. 7 p.m.
NOTE: This group is now being held on the third Friday of each month.

Counseling and youth support
Can be arranged through the office.

Check website for additional updates at www.portlandfellowship.com