



PORTLAND
fellowship

update June 2008

Dear Fellowship Partners,

During a recent trip from Sisters to Portland, Oregon, I drove through a windy desert, a sunny canyon, a snowy mountain pass, and arrived at a city in the throes of a brilliant spring. I was struck by how fast weather can change and how quickly you can travel from idyllic conditions to ones that just might threaten your life. Modern travelers can check the internet or tune into their favorite radio station for local conditions but what about the state of our souls? I know in my everyday life I can be thrust into varying types of weather generated by the clash of brokenness and redemption that swirls around me and inside my heart. For each of us, the scene can vary hourly: the day might begin with peace...waking up at sunrise with a cup of coffee and the Word, or it can begin tumultuously with crying children or roommate conflicts followed by jumping into the car just to hurry up and wait in the doldrums of a traffic jam. Once we get to work or school there may be an immediate demand for us to navigate through narrow deadlines or the unexpected moods of co-workers or classmates. The end of the day may seem like a long awaited oasis, then moments later a call from a friend might launch the evening into an enjoyable conversation or a frustrating argument. In life there are few storm reports that prepare us for the daily uncertainties that most certainly show up.

Jesus was not immune to the storms of his day. He saw them occurring in his hometown, amongst his disciples, around his teachings and, ultimately, from his enemies. And yet in every circumstance Jesus weathered these encounters with the grace, wisdom and poise of One who understood that situations need not dictate our response. Even at the center of the fiercest tempest He responded with forgiveness and grace in spite of exhaustion, pain, and a long list of justifiable reasons for retaliation. Our Savior demonstrated the richness of His character by refusing to sin under ultimate duress.

He didn't arrive at the Cross without preparation. It wasn't a fist-clenched determination that allowed him to respond in purity - it was utter dependence on God. That same ability to depend on God is available to us. But just as it was for Jesus, that strength doesn't just show up when we need it. It must be cultivated, pursued, and practiced. Even though none of us have or will live sinless lives, we can live lives with our eyes focused on Jesus who perfects our faith.

Portland Fellowship doesn't know how to predict the weather either, but we do know how to provide tools, skills and resources for men and women to walk through the variety of rainy and sunny days we know are on the horizon. The struggles that come with choosing to walk away from same-sex attractions can be met with the same intentional turning to God that we see Jesus doing time and time again.

One of the ways we'd like to offer these resources is through our annual Summer Series called Deeply Rooted. This eight-week course is a foray into the world of Spiritual Disciplines. We



photo credit - Tom Kirsch

“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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know that Jesus practiced a wide range of disciplines throughout his earthly ministry. His followers through the centuries have done the same. There is no exhaustive or magic list but we've created a series of classes to lead us through rich opportunities to meet and see God in our daily lives. This year we are offering the following Disciplines: **Naming** (recognizing and living in the world God created); **the Word** (loving the Bible as our source and litmus test for truth); **Action** (doing the good and the difficult we are given to do); **Prayer** (conversing with God day and night); **Waiting** (cultivating patience to watch and see what God will do with things out of our reach); **Mourning** (grieving the real sadness that we encounter in our lives, as well as, bearing pain with and for others); **Gratitude** (thanking God in creative ways for every miraculous way He provides); **Celebration** (rejoicing!). Deeply Rooted is open to current participants, alumni, people checking out the program for the Fall and friends of Portland Fellowship new and old. Please contact the office if you are interested.

May God bless you as you pursue his heart this summer. Knowing that God has given us everything we need for life and godliness, my prayer for each of us is that we will continue to cultivate a relationship with Jesus that will truly and peacefully weather every day with deep gratitude.

Thank you for your continued prayers and encouragement,



Steve Baliko,
Upper Room Program Co-Director
Living Well HIV Support Coordinator

Visit www.pfhope.com
to see how you can share
Portland Fellowship
resources with local churches.

reach truth

Stay tuned for the exciting introduction of a brand new resource for the young and old desiring to walk free from same-sex attractions. The Reach Truth website will provide weekly interactive lessons and videos, daily devotionals, and contact with a mentor who will give feedback and support throughout the entire process.

Next month's newsletter will feature a full explanation and coincide with the July 1st launch of reachtruth.com. We know God will link this resource to people who are seeking help and to churches who will be able to utilize it as a tool for assisting those struggling in congregations locally and nationally.

reserve the date

We are hosting a concert at PF. Connie Mitchell will share of God's remarkable grace during and beyond the loss of her husband Scott (former PF Board Chairman) who was tragically killed by their son Jonathan. Join us for an evening of music, hope and redemption.

Saturday, July 12 - 7:00 p.m.

prayer

...for Daniel, Josh, Jason, and Rick as they join the ranks of Upper Room Alumni and for the next class of Upper Room Interns as they prepare to join us in September.

...for the PF staff team as we plan and pray for God's continued growth and guidance of this ministry.

...for our fantastic leadership team as they take a well deserved break for rest and rejuvenation.

...for courage and strength for all the men and women considering participation in *Taking Back Ground* this fall.

...for continued thanksgiving for all of the lives changed and impacted for God's glory this year! AMEN

...for the Reach Truth Internet program. for it's completion, funding, and local, national, and global impact.

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

June 3, 10, 17, 24

Open Group

Open to all who are interested in learning more about the work of Portland Fellowship. A time for support, sharing, and Q/A. Call office for details. 7 p.m.

June 20

Family and Friends Group

Monthly meeting for those who have a loved one involved in homosexuality and want guidance, encouragement, and support. **Third Friday each month 7 p.m.**

June 7

Salem Alliance Church

Steve will be sharing his testimony and about the work of PF with the church's Mosaic Fellowship group. 6:15 p.m.

July 12

Intimate Concert and Testimony with Jodi Penner and Connie Mitchell. Dessert will be provided. Please RSVP. 7 p.m.

Check website for additional updates at www.portlandfellowship.com