



PORTLAND
fellowship

Dear Friends,

update august 2015

It has been 11 years since I was introduced to the work of Portland Fellowship. Over the past decade my involvement and role in the ministry has changed. Initially, I found myself at PF as an Upper Room intern, then as a volunteer, an employee, a friend of the ministry and now I'm currently in my second year as a board member. I have remained connected to Portland Fellowship because I am convinced that a beautiful marriage of love and truth radiates from the core of this organization's mission year in and year out. The light that shines out into the world is one that is firmly rooted in the calling of God to seek and save the lost...the power source is no one other than the Lord God, Himself.

Many things have changed at PF, including new staff, new programs and new innovations using the latest technologies, but the commitment to God and an ongoing commitment to men and women in need has not wavered in the slightest. This steadfastness is easy to take for granted. A hallmark of faithful perseverance is that it does not draw attention to itself.

Something that *is* drawing a lot of attention are the dramatic changes happening at all levels of government and culture. These changes involve significant shifts in how things are perceived, yet they are nothing new in what Christians have encountered throughout the ages. It is easy to get caught up in opinions in the news, on Facebook or around the office lunch table, but opinions are not the source of hope, life or change. These words may even be a source of fear that starts to creep into our hearts when we focus too much on the clamor all around us.

My encouragement to all of us is to listen to God's Word. "May God arise, may His enemies be scattered; may His foes flee before Him. May You blow them away like smoke—as wax melts before the fire, may the wicked perish before God. But may the righteous be glad and rejoice before God; may they be happy and joyful. Sing to God, sing in praise of His name, extol Him who rides on the clouds; rejoice before Him—His name is the Lord. A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in His holy dwelling. God sets the lonely in families, He leads out the prisoners with singing; but the rebellious live in a sun-scorched land....Praise be to the Lord, to God our Savior, who daily bears our burdens. Our God is a God who saves; from the Sovereign Lord comes escape from death." (Psalm 68:1-6, 19-20)

God *always* speaks a better word. His words can be difficult, piercing, exposing and undoing. They can also be refreshing, joyful, hopeful and wonderful. Often they are all at the same time, because we need words that bring change *and* words that bring hope.

At Portland Fellowship we rejoice in the rock-solid, unchanging, unalterable words of life that God offers to all who come to Him. Month after month in these newsletters, you see the evidence of God on the move in the lives of broken people (as we all are). We exalt in the fact that we have a Savior who is not content to leave us as we are, and calls us to a redemption that only He can accomplish in us.

You, the supporters and advocates of Portland Fellowship, have been an integral part of allowing the work of this ministry to have the reach and influence that it has in the lives of so many. There are countless men, women and families that are incredibly grateful that you are one of the strands of the lifeline that they asked for, received, and held on to when they contacted PF.



Steve Baliko serves on the PF
Board of Directors.

"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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People continue to ask for and need this type of support. But when loud messages blaze across all media platforms, messages that declare that changes cannot happen and should not even be considered...when this is the loudest word, people in need can feel very alone. Portland Fellowship is a refuge that exists to be a mouthpiece for the better word that God speaks. People are asking all of us—staff, supporters and board members alike—will you faithfully endure these turbulent times and continue speaking God’s better word?

There is a temptation at times like this to feel lonely, angry or helpless. Certainly many of the people who have come to Portland Fellowship over the past 30+ years have felt that way, too. And God speaks His better word to all of us: “All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God. Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.” (2 Cor 4: 15-18)

As a member of the board of directors, and as a man whose life has been amazingly impacted by Portland Fellowship, I implore you to listen to God’s better word for your heart and life. We can exchange the tug of anger, loneliness or despair for a spirit of power, love and self-control (2 Tim. 1:7). Let me invite you to take four direct action steps in response to this month’s newsletter:

- 1) Pray boldly for the PF staff, participants and board.
- 2) Give generously and invite others to do the same.
- 3) Talk to pastors, friends and family about the work of PF.
- 4) Write to Jason and tell him (and the staff) what you appreciate about the steadfast work of Portland Fellowship.

In the Love and Power of Jesus Christ,

Steve Baliko,
Board of Directors
Portland Fellowship

Director’s Report: South Korea

Serving the Lord comes with many wonderful opportunities and surprises. Recently, I was invited to go to Seoul, South Korea, with only a few weeks’ notice. I was not entirely sure all that was in store for me and neither did my host, but I was open and willing to be available as the Lord led. Overall, I spoke fourteen times in five days. This included church services, support groups, public city events, an interview for local television, a youth forum at the national assembly, a pastor’s seminar and an event with university professors.

There were two events that I graciously declined. One was an anti-gay event with thousands of Christians stationed across from the “Queer Festival”. They asked me to speak on stage, but because I was unsure of the tone of the event, I declined. The second was a rally to remove their mayor, who supported the “Queer Festival”. Stepping aside from this event allowed for a spontaneous conversation with a young man struggling and seeking help.

Each time I spoke, I emphasized two important points: First, that God is still transforming lives for the sexually broken and second, that we must be full of grace and compassion, for it is the compassion of God that leads us to repentance. Thank you for supporting PF, which affords me the time to be available to the Lord, wherever He may take me.

—Jason Thompson, Executive Director



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

tuesdays in august Summer Series:

The Gender Question

Videos and group discussions on
Biblical masculinity & femininity.

7-9 pm at the PF house.

august 14

Hope Group

For Family and Friends.

Dinner will be provided.

6:30 pm at the PF house.

august 28

Hope Home Groups

Opportunities to connect with
other family members for prayer
and support. Call office for info.

tuesdays in september

Leadership training for
Taking Back Ground and
Home Group leaders.

**Speakers, counseling, youth
support and personal support**
can be arranged through the office.

Check website for additional updates
at www.portlandfellowship.com