



PORTLAND
fellowship

Dear Friends,

update october 2015

When I came to Portland Fellowship after doing missions in Latin America, I was excited to use my Spanish, but quickly realized there weren't many opportunities in Portland proper. God's timing is perfect, however, and I'm excited to share now what God is doing through our partnership with our brothers and sisters in South America. This past month we had the privilege of hosting Veronica Izaguerre, one of the leaders of *Camino de Salida*, our sister ministry in Guayaquil, Ecuador.

Veronica's visit to Portland Fellowship was very encouraging. At our first Leadership Training night, she shared how the parents group in Guayaquil faithfully prays for our ministry every Monday, without fail. How humbling! It reminded us of Paul's letter to the Ephesians: "For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers" (Ephesians 1:15-16). Our Upper Room participants were challenged by Veronica to keep running the race and not get distracted, discouraged or give up. She reminded us that just like God came through for Joseph, Daniel and Elijah, He can come through for each of us on our difficult journeys. In the same vein, Veronica shared testimonies of people in their ministry who have walked out of homosexual and even transsexual lifestyles, people who are now living committed lives to Christ. If God can do that with people in Ecuador, we know He can do that here in the United States! At Hope Group, Veronica encouraged the friends and family present to pray like Hannah did, committing our loved ones into the hands of a sovereign God. "If your son or daughter is still alive," she said, "there's still hope, because we know that with life comes hope." Veronica's final exhortation to the Hope Group was to keep fighting the good fight—just as a boxer can't quit until his manager throws in the towel, so too we must keep fighting, because our manager (God) hasn't thrown in the towel for us or our loved ones.

In addition to encouraging our leaders and participants, what Veronica shared with those of us on staff was very edifying and hopeful. We learned that we are not alone in facing increasingly negative social and legal pressures: in Ecuador, ministries like *Camino de Salida* are experiencing more scrutiny from both religious and secular sectors, who reject the claim that people can experience change in their sexuality. This sobering news brings us into prayerful solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Guayaquil. At the same time, Veronica shared with us that after Brazil outlawed any ministry remotely resembling reparative therapy several years ago, today they are changing some of those laws because of the scientific evidence and testimonies of people who have successfully left a homosexual lifestyle. This is extremely encouraging for us here in the United States, to hear and know that man's laws are not infinite nor are they permanent, and to know that God is still at work in countries hostile to the Good News of His transformational power.

Although I'm still new on staff, it has been amazing to learn and hear the stories of God's faithfulness and provision for Portland Fellowship over the years. Veronica's visit helped me get a greater glimpse of what God has done and can do through the faithful partnership of supporters like you. Did you know that when Jason visited *Camino de Salida* in Ecuador three years ago, his teachings and encouragement there helped solidify their leadership team and gave them a greater vision for their ministry? Veronica and her sister Elsa volunteer their time to the ministry in addition to working full-time jobs, and they run their programs in a small downtown office. After Jason visited them, they added two new male leaders to their team and now have dreams of building their own ministry house to run a residential program similar to the Upper Room. Veronica's visit here was born out of the initial contact with Jason in Ecuador, something only made possible by your faithful prayers and support.



Some PF Leaders and ministry partner Veronica Izaguerre (center).

"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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One of the aspects of our partnership with *Camino de Salida* I'm most excited about is the sharing of Spanish resources. *Camino de Salida* uses our **Taking Back Ground Year 1** manual, and they have plans to translate and publish our **Year 2** manual. With the **Year 2** manual in Spanish, *Camino de Salida* will be able to offer better training, discipleship and encouragement through their groups in Ecuador and Colombia. Veronica and her team are also helping us compile resources for a Spanish page on our website, where we will be able to offer both TBG manuals and other resources for Spanish-speaking ministries, pastors, churches and individuals.

Camino de Salida runs a weekly online radio program, where I had the opportunity to share my testimony and talk about transformation in Christ. While it's humbling enough to try and share in a second language, I was also struck by how it's only through His grace that we're able to partner with this ministry in Ecuador and proclaim His transformational power to the nations. I'm deeply grateful for the opportunity to participate in this great work of sharing the Good News with those who are broken and walking in darkness. God is the same here in Portland as He is in Ecuador (*Hebrews 13:8*), and it's exciting to know that we have Ecuadorian brothers and sisters in Christ who worship the same God alongside us.

Thank you for faithfully praying for Portland Fellowship and for supporting the work God is doing here and around the world. God continues to surpass my hopes and expectations for Portland Fellowship, and we are committed to staying the course and remaining faithful to Him. As the Lord opens doors to partner with ministries like *Camino de Salida*, rest assured that our hearts remain centered on Christ and on His transformational work that we continue to see in the lives of people coming through our programs. May you also be encouraged that your partnership with Portland Fellowship goes beyond the walls of our ministry house and impacts the lives of countless people around the world.

In Christ,

Patrick Silvis
Program Coordinator
Portland Fellowship

Program Update: Upper Room Community

Meet the final member of our 2015-2016 Upper Room Community!

Trevor Ebert

I have lived my whole life in Vancouver, WA, and thoroughly enjoy the Northwest. In my childhood, I began to deal with inappropriate sexuality at an extremely young age. I am sure my misbehaviors and poor academic performance in elementary school were results of this early trauma. As I got older, things improved somewhat, but ultimately I found myself dismissing the God that I know truly exists and has authority in my life. This didn't last long, however, for the reality of His goodness and my total need became all too real. This led me to Portland Fellowship, a year of Taking Back Ground, Living Waters and now the Upper Room Community. I am sure that I will grow in unexpected ways this year and that the Lord will provide me with insight and an increased desire to seek Him.



Portland Fellowship Matching Grant

There's still time! An anonymous donor through the National Christian Foundation has come forward to offer a matching challenge grant up to \$50,000. This means that when you donate a special gift in any amount to Portland Fellowship, your contribution *doubles*. This opportunity will continue now through the end of November 2015, and it's a great time to invite your church body or friends to partner with us in this amazing work! To respond, you can mail the matching grant response card back with a check, or donate online by signing in to your profile at www.portlandfellowship.com. We are truly grateful for this anonymous donor and for each of you as you consider your partnership with us.

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 october
Taking Back Ground
Wives Group
Solid Ground

Discipleship programs for men and women struggling with SSA, Wives and TBG alumni.
7-9:30 pm at the PF house.

thursdays in october
Upper Room Community
For Family and Friends.
6:30 pm at the PF house.

october 9
Hope Group
For Family and Friends.
Dinner will be provided.
6:30 pm at the PF house.

october 30
Hope Home Groups
Opportunities to connect with other family members for prayer and support. Call office for info.

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

Check website for additional updates at www.portlandfellowship.com