



PORTLAND  
fellowship

Dear Friends,

update april 2018

It was such an honor to attend the 2018 Taking Back Ground retreat last month along with Portland Fellowship participants, fellow leaders, volunteers and alumni. I entered into the weekend with excitement and anticipation knowing that, as always, God was up to something good. The annual TBG retreat provides a great opportunity for each of us to step away from the busyness of daily life, take time to reconnect with the Lord and fellowship with one another. I am always encouraged by how many participants, volunteers and supporters say (especially at the end of the retreat) that they experience a very special kind of love in the midst of this community that allows them to be open, vulnerable and transparent. I feel the same way!

The setting of the retreat was the beautiful Camp Tadmor in Lebanon, Oregon, which is nestled in the foothills of the Cascade Mountain Range. Magnificently tall trees lined the many hiking trails and pathways surrounding the lake by our cabins. I am so thankful for the sunshine that broke through the clouds, the fun and laughter we experienced while playing board games and archery tag, and for the time we spent in small groups learning and growing as we explored the book of James. It was a great blessing to sing songs of praise together and hear testimonies of God's goodness during meals and around the campfire.

As I reflect on this retreat, I am reminded of Jesus' words: "By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35). There are so many ways that we are called to love each other: by serving, by comforting and encouraging others, and by giving of our time and talents, just to name a few. This retreat provided a space in which we could show love and be loved in healthy ways as we grow together in community and in relationship with Christ. I am humbled by the many ways I witnessed this community's love. It was evident as we uplifted and prayed for each other. It was in the efforts of volunteers and participants cleaning dishes, arranging chairs and serving coffee, and it was also in the blessings we offered one another at the close of the retreat.

The weekend was structured around a surrender service, which is always a powerful reminder of God's love for us, His desire to restore and redeem our broken places and to continue the healing work of Christ in our lives. During the surrender service, TBG participants are invited to lay down an object at the foot of the cross that symbolizes something that gets in the way of their relationship with God. The object may represent a behavior, an unfruitful way of thinking or maybe a person or object they've loved more than Him. This act of surrender represents a turning away from the idol and turning back toward Christ. It is a declaration that the participant is choosing to put the idol down for good and love God—which Jesus says is the most important commandment (Matthew 22:37-38). At the close of each surrender, the leaders gather around, lay hands on the participant and pray for their strength and perseverance as they live a surrendered life.



*TBG leaders pray  
over participants at  
the 2018 Surrender  
Service.*

*"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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Making this step of faith and genuinely surrendering an area of our lives can be scary and intimidating, especially when it's done in front of others. Yet, each time we step toward God by pushing through the discomfort and fear, we become more aware that there is freedom in the act of surrender. It is freedom from the past, freedom from things that limit our growth, freedom to be a new creation and the freedom to follow Christ with all our heart.



2018 TBG Retreat

This entire retreat weekend is a beautiful reminder that we are not alone in our struggles when we're a part of the Body of Christ. We have a Savior who loves us and has told us that He will lighten our load when we cast our cares upon Him (*Matthew 11:28–30*) and that He desires to set us free (*Luke 4:18*). Yielding to the Lord takes commitment, and we are reminded that we must take up our cross daily to follow Christ (*Luke 9:23*). Surrendering is a first step in the process of healing. It is the beginning of a changed life. We can also see that there is a community of leaders, friends and supporters praying for us and supporting us along the way. Thank you for continuing to intercede for and partner with the exciting transformational work that Jesus continues to do at Portland Fellowship.

In Christ,

Roy Graves  
TBG Leader

## Married Couples Conference: Marriage Redeemed

Tuff Stuff Ministries is hosting a married couples conference in Lake Oswego on April 7th called “*Marriage Redeemed–Hurt to Hope to Healing*.” Marriages become broken when a spouse engages in inappropriate sexual behavior that results in betrayal and trauma for their partner or spouse. There is hope and healing available, and this conference will be an encouragement and resource for those couples seeking to restore their marriage. For more information, call 503-310-2754 or email [dmiller@icmusa.org](mailto:dmiller@icmusa.org).



## Restored Hope Conference: Hope2018



As part of Restored Hope Network, Portland Fellowship participates in their annual conference. This year, Hope2018 will take place on June 15-16 in Washington, D.C. Keynote speakers include Debora Barr, Julie Stern Roys and Dr. Michael Brown. There will also be multiple breakout sessions and times of worship and fellowship. For more information about registration, please visit [www.restoredhopenetwork.org](http://www.restoredhopenetwork.org).

**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 april Taking Back Ground

Discipleship program for those struggling with unwanted SSA.  
7-9:30 pm at the PF house.

### thursdays in april Upper Room Community

Intensive discipleship program.

### april 13 Hope Group

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

**april 18 & 25**  
**The Well Community Church**  
Patrick and Cynthia Beaudry will be sharing their testimonies with the youth group at The Well.

**april 27-28**  
**Golden Hills Seminar**  
Jason and KathyGrace will be training pastors and leaders in Brentwood, CA, on how to use Taking Back Ground.

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

Check website for additional updates at [www.portlandfellowship.com](http://www.portlandfellowship.com)