



PORTLAND
fellowship

Dear Friends,

update august 2018

The Taking Back Ground graduation is one of my most favorite things at the Portland Fellowship. Everyone gathers to celebrate those who have completed the two-year program—leaders, participants, friends and family all come to eat together in celebration for those graduating. In the presentation of the certificates, leaders share encouraging words with each graduate about how they've grown throughout the two years of TBG. It is such an amazing time!

The night before, I always begin to think about the person(s) graduating from my group. *What will I say about her? How have I seen her grow? What has changed about her from when she first started until now?* Then, I remember when they first arrived: scared; elusive; afraid to speak, but thinking they are there to learn how to help others; looking for the “formula” or “fix” so they can just move on. Some were challenging—questioning what felt like everything I said, or they “already knew that” or the things suggested were just too hard. I also remembered their stories, the heart-breaking, gut-wrenching, horrible stories of abuse, abandonment and rejection. They were desperate, discouraged and hopeless.

But then I begin to smile, because I also remember how she overcame: How the Lord met her and revealed His love for her. How He told her who she was in the midst of the storm. How He revealed the truth to her and set her free from things that held her in the place of darkness. I remember the kindness and grace the Lord showed to her where there wasn't any before. Yes, she may have been a hot mess when she arrived, but that is not how she left. *These are the things I remember and will encourage her with.*

On the night of celebration, my heart is pounding as I get up to present the certificate. I want to share all that is in my heart, and I hope I don't look like a blubbering idiot at the same time—doesn't always work out that way, though. Of course, my co-leader comes out with this eloquent encouragement and seems to say all the right things. I have come to realize that it doesn't matter if I stumble over my words or if I'm eloquent; the women are still changed, and I am changed by them. *She is still leaving different than she came.*

After the women, we honor the men who have completed TBG. Conversations come flooding into my mind. I think about each of them, and how our chats changed throughout the program. I remember talking with them at the retreat and before TBG began each Tuesday night. Some were angry, some were lost, some were desperate, and all would tell me they were broken. They were tired of struggling. Though I only heard pieces of their stories (and the pieces I heard were horrific), I could understand how they got to where they were. As each one comes up to receive their certificate, I remember how I got to see the Lord working in them, and see the men they are becoming. By the end of the program, I've witnessed real changes in the men.



Kathy Grace is
PF's Women's
Ministry Leader.

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

ISAIAH 61 : 1

post office box 14841
portland, oregon 97293
telephone 503_235_6364
fax 503_235_3896
e-mail pf@portlandfellowship.com
portlandfellowship.com

As I was driving home recently and thinking about this year's TBG graduation celebration, I wondered: *If a bill like the Californian bill AB-2943 came to Oregon, how would it affect TBG? How would it affect the Portland Fellowship?* For those who are unfamiliar with AB-2943, in short, it is a proposed law that would prohibit the sale or promotion of services constituting sexual orientation change efforts to individuals. Essentially, if a similar bill were to pass in Oregon, PF could no longer charge a fee for Taking Back Ground, TBG books or any of the online programs. As I thought about this more, I began to panic....no, I was panicked. I said out loud, "Lord, what would happen to PF?!" I felt the answer come into my heart: Psalm 103: 2—"...and forget not all His benefits."

The next day, I read through Psalm 103. It is packed with benefits: The Lord forgives, heals, redeems and crowns us with lovingkindness and tender mercies. He satisfies our desires with good things, so that our youth is renewed like the eagles. The Lord executes righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed. As I read through the rest of the Psalm, I remembered all the times I have received the benefits of the Lord. I remembered the benefits others have received as they followed Him. I came back to verse 6—"...righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed." I realized that it doesn't matter what bill passes, what becomes legal or illegal, the benefits of the Lord will always remain. I encourage you today to remember all that He has done, "...and forget not all His benefits."

Thank you so much for your continued prayers and support for the ministry of Portland Fellowship. Though the culture continues to change rapidly around us, we are proud to partner with you in proclaiming the freedom and transforming power of the Gospel.

In Christ,

KathyGrace Duncan

Women's Ministry Leader

Taking Back Ground & Upper Room Community Applications



We are currently accepting applications for both our two-year Taking Back Ground program and our nine-month Upper Room Community residential program. These powerful programs are changing lives! Upper Room begins in September and TBG starts the first Tuesday in October, both running through May.



There are several ways you can help us promote these amazing opportunities. First, if you or someone you know is desiring a deeper discipleship process in the area of same-sex attraction, please contact us! Also, pray about asking your pastor if you can share with your church or small group about Portland Fellowship's programs for Christians struggling with unwanted SSA. Consider as well sharing PF's posts on your personal Facebook page. Finally, please join us in praying for the Lord to lead the brokenhearted who desire healing to His ministry here at PF.

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

We are offering Sy Rogers' video teaching series, *Lessons Learned*. Discussion & prayer follow the video teachings.
7-8:30 p.m.

august 10 Hope Group

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

august 14-16 Reach Truth Rewrite

PF Staff are taking a few days away to revise the Reach Truth online program for youth.

***sometime in august* PF Work Day**

Specific date & time will be published on our Facebook page.

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

Check website for additional updates at www.portlandfellowship.com