



PORTLAND  
fellowship

Dear Friends,

update june 2020

Like most of the world, the COVID pandemic created a challenge for us at Portland Fellowship. Our Taking Back Ground program was entering its final section when the “stay at home” orders were implemented. We knew the process God started in the lives of His people had to continue, so we migrated our groups online. Meeting virtually in order to grow relationally is certainly not ideal, but we knew that God would continue His amazing, transforming work, regardless of how we connected. True to His promise, God blessed those who continued to put their trust in Him. The following are a few words from this year’s graduates. We pray it gives you a glimpse of God’s work in the lives of those in the TBG program:

*“There is a common phrase in Taking Back Ground that says, ‘unwanted same-sex attraction is not a sexual issue, it’s a relational issue’. This concept is one that continues to challenge me, because I have the proclivity to ‘check the boxes’ to get healed. God wanted me to allow others into my life in order to heal. A leader recently encouraged me with this idea: when you come to TBG, you’re coming from a battlefield with wounds that have become badly infected. These two years of TBG were used to uncover my wounds and deficits and to heal. As I move on, I not only have newfound victory, I have tools to continue the journey, even on the battlefield. I’m grateful for what God has done and I will continue this path of wholeness with God and others.” —Jesse*



*“Throughout the Taking Back Ground program, I have grown in my relationship with the Lord, which has helped me heal from my past, and set up support for me to have continual growth in Him after I graduate from the program. I could not be where I am today without God providing me the gift of Portland Fellowship. From the glorious echoing of the 100-year-old house when we sing worship songs, to the dedicated study of each teaching with the participants, and the intimate partnership of small groups, I will always remember my time at PF as a stepping stone toward holiness.” —Kristy*

*“It took me a long time to believe God actually wanted to adopt me into His family and the possibility of being unconditionally loved. In my brokenness, the idea was ludicrous. How could anyone, especially the all-powerful and the all-mighty, love a sinner such as myself, and even more, want to adopt me into His family? This is by far the biggest and most important lesson God taught me during my time with TBG, and it wasn’t until this lesson was instilled in my soul and heart that the healing started taking place.” —Charlie*

*“Portland Fellowship’s Taking Back Ground (TBG) program was not easy at first. I initially thought it would be something that would just ‘fix’ me so I could get back to living. Little did I know that the discipleship model they have actually drew me closer to Christ Jesus, and did more to further “develop me” as a man in Christ Jesus than to simply fix a vice in my life. While under the leadership and covering of the TBG Program, I was able to address other significant areas of*

*“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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my life, including the reconciliation process for a lot of the unresolved anger I had toward various communities such as the black community, Nigerian community, and community of faith (the church). TBG has undoubtedly been the single most influential instrument that Jesus chose to use to bring about transformation in my life over the past two years. It was unexpected, but I am thankful for it.” —Mario

“As I reflect on the past two years of Taking Back Ground, I cannot help but note the difference between my experience this time and the experience I had when I did the program in 2001-03. My wife commented to me just this week that I seemed to get so much more out of it this time than I did then. She remembers me fighting it and doing it as a drudgery. This time, I was here because I wanted more in my life and my marriage. TBG gave me a grounding that I missed previously. I know that sounds trite, but it’s true. Were there times during the past two years that I wanted to give up? Of course! It’s not easy to make the 100-mile round trip each week to attend. But, God gave me the strength to persist and to persevere. I have met wonderful people whom I know love me and care about me. I’m sad that I won’t see the people I have grown to love and respect after this. However, the process has been great and it was worth every sacrificial moment.” —Russ

“I came to Portland Fellowship two years ago because I knew something in my life needed to change. I had been a Christian for my whole life, but unhealed wounds in my heart were still driving me towards sexual sin. The most meaningful component of the program was our weekly small groups. I credit the ongoing accountability and encouragement I received from these groups as being one of the determining factors in helping me break the cycle of sin and shame that had kept me hobbled spiritually for so many years. I still have a long way to go towards full healing, but sexual “sobriety” is increasingly becoming my new normal, something I never would have thought possible before.” —Ian

As you just read, regardless of the circumstances, God continues to transform lives. Once again, on behalf of the staff, leaders, and participants of Portland Fellowship, I thank you for your love, support, and prayers.

In Christ,



Jason Thompson  
Executive Director

## RHN Conference: HOPE 2.0

This year’s Restored Hope Network annual conference is going online!



HOPE 2.0 will be held on June 12 & 13 and includes live keynote addresses, testimonies, workshops, and a time of Q & A with speakers (Sean McDowell, Joe Dallas, Linda Seiler, etc.).

*\*Special Note: If Multnomah County moves into Phase 1 of reopening by 6/10, we will plan on hosting a watch party for 25 people at the Fellowship House. If you’re interested in attending, please contact us if/when the county moves into Phase 1.*

For registration and more information, please visit [www.restoredhopenetwork.org/hopeconf](http://www.restoredhopenetwork.org/hopeconf).

**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

June 12

### Hope Group

For friends and family of gay or trans-identifying loved ones.

\*This month, we are attending the RHN HOPE 2.0 Conference online.

To RSVP for Hope Group, please go to:  
[portlandfellowship.com/rsvp.php](http://portlandfellowship.com/rsvp.php)

June 12-13

### RHN HOPE 2.0 Conference

**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)