



PORTLAND  
fellowship

Dear Friends,

update october 2023

This month marks eleven years since I first began my discipleship journey at Portland Fellowship. Like many Christians who secretly struggle with unwanted same-sex attraction or gender confusion, I had successfully kept my internal conflict hidden for years. I was actually serving as a missionary in another country when everything fell apart—I almost had a sexual fall with another man, and I could no longer avoid my struggle.

Thankfully, through a connection with my home church pastor, I found Portland Fellowship. It was incredible! Here was a ministry where brave men and women were openly wrestling through their deepest desires, wounds and doubts. As someone who had never personally experienced such a vulnerable and truth-filled community, I was both terrified and full of hope: If God could do a healing work in these people's lives, maybe He could do the same for me!

As I look back on how the Lord met me in those early years of Taking Back Ground and the Upper Room Community, I am overwhelmed with gratitude. There were so many lies, wounds, fears and doubts I had to process, yet God patiently provided me with amazing mentors and healthy church friends who spoke truth and grace into the wounded areas of my heart. It wasn't a switch that was flipped, but over time, the Lord slowly began to heal and restore my identity, my security in my masculinity, and my relationships with both men and women. And His healing work continues to this day! *"...being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."*—*Philippians 1:6*

God also provided for me financially throughout my discipleship process here at PF. I was struggling to find a job, but I was also dealing with culture shock (Portland is definitely weird!) and the shame I felt confronting my unwanted same-sex attraction. Now, how did God provide for me financially? Was it through an inheritance? Savvy financial investments? A hugely generous one-time gift? While those would've been amazing means of provision, God instead sustained me through faithful, sacrificial monthly supporters.

These brothers and sisters intentionally came alongside me and diligently gave towards God's work in my life. At the time, this was hard for me to accept—I wasn't out here evangelizing on the streets or working in ministry. I was just a broken, unemployed Portland transplant who was trying to follow Jesus and surrender my life to Him. And as embarrassed as I was to receive help (because I had nothing to "show" for it), today I am so thankful for those people's sacrifice, investment and trust in God's work in my life.

Fast-forward eleven years: I'm now on staff here at Portland Fellowship, but the Lord's provision remains the same. We continue to be amazed at how God provides for our needs as a ministry through the sacrificial, consistent giving of people like you. Every month, we see so



"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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many supporters giving faithfully towards God's healing work here at Portland Fellowship, and we are humbled.

In an effort to connect more personally with our supporters, this month, we are launching a new giving program called "Fellowship Partners". This program is a way for you to intentionally support God's work in people at Portland Fellowship (like so many did for me eleven years ago!). Additionally, the program will allow us to connect with you more intentionally. As Fellowship Partners, we will be sending you short video updates that give personal, candid, and behind-the-scenes reflections on our lives and this ministry work. These will include confidential testimonies, prayer requests, and speaking updates from PF staff and volunteers, and also from participants who are walking through the discipleship process. Our hope is that, beyond our newsletter and social media updates, you will learn how your generous giving impacts lives through Portland Fellowship.

One of our Taking Back Ground alumni, Mark\* (*name changed for privacy*), recently shared this with us:

*"I am forever grateful for what PF did for me when I needed someone to help me understand that there was an alternative to embracing a gay identity. I remember my first PF meeting and thinking, 'Wow, there are others who struggle with this thorn (as I called it), and don't want to pursue that life.' It was my first glimmer of hope that I needed, since I was in the process of deciding between following God or pursuing that lifestyle."*

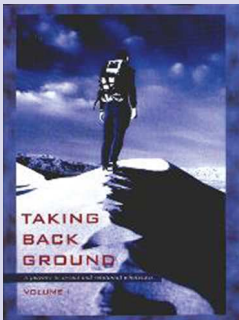
If you would like to intentionally partner with participants like Mark in their discipleship journey, and receive personal and confidential video updates, would you consider becoming a Fellowship Partner? We would love to deepen our connection with you in this way. To become a Fellowship Partner, you can log into your account at [www.portlandfellowship.com](http://www.portlandfellowship.com) and click on "**Make a Pledge**".

Thank you for your prayers, your encouragement, and your generous support of God's work here at PF. We are so grateful for your partnership as we stand in this gap together.

In Christ,



Patrick Silvis  
Program Manager



### **Taking Back Ground 2023-2024**

This is the last call to sign up for our 2023-24 Taking Back Ground discipleship program! TBG is for Christian men and women struggling with unwanted SSA, and we also offer a group for wives.

We are offering both in-person and Zoom group options. To learn more and register, visit [www.portlandfellowship.com](http://www.portlandfellowship.com) or call us here in the office, 503.235.6364.

### **Hope Group 2023-2024**

This year, we are moving our Hope Group for friends and family of LGBTQ loved ones to a weekly meeting! Join us Tuesday evenings (either in-person or on Zoom) as we process how to relate to our loved ones with both truth and grace.

To register, visit [www.portlandfellowship.com/friends\\_family.php](http://www.portlandfellowship.com/friends_family.php)



**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**  
**& Hope Group**

Discipleship programs for Christians struggling with unwanted SSA, and for friends & family of LGBTQ loved ones. 6-8:30 p.m. PST

**october 2**

**KathyGrace Speaking**  
Westgate Church—Edmonds, WA

**october 9**

**KathyGrace & Amy Speaking**  
Table Community Church

**october 14**

**Jason Speaking**  
423 Communities—Leaders Meeting

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

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