



PORTLAND
fellowship

Dear Fellowship Partners and Friends of PF,

update june 2025

Over the years, I've come to understand that serving at Portland Fellowship requires resilience and a thick skin.

I still clearly recall my very first speaking opportunity. At just 23 years old, I was invited to speak at a liberal Presbyterian church in Bend, Oregon, during the fall of 1993. After presenting my testimony, a mom of a gay son stormed up to me, stuck her finger in my face, and angrily declared, "This talk and your inability to accept yourself is why gay youth are killing themselves!"

Two years later, in October of 1995, I was invited to appear on The Geraldo Rivera Show in New York City. As I shared about transformation for those struggling with unwanted homosexuality, the studio audience erupted into a wave of vocal antagonism, blending both disapproval and mockery.

The following March, in 1996, I spoke at a public symposium at Portland Community College. During the Q&A session, an openly gay man unleashed a torrent of insults, and for the first time in ministry, I felt the chilling possibility of physical harm.

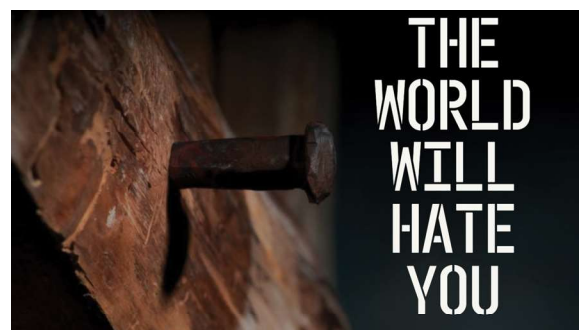
Those are just a few early experiences from the past, but they were far from the last. Over the years, there have been many angry comments, disapproving emails, and confrontations during speaking engagements. Yet, while I've faced personal disapproval, outright discrimination against the practical workings of ministry has been exceptionally rare—until now.

For context, our turn-of-the-century ministry building is equipped with a fire system spanning all four floors. To comply with annual safety regulations, the Fire Marshal requires routine testing of the sprinkler system. As part of this process, I recently reached out to a trusted local business and scheduled an inspection. A few weeks later, on the morning of the appointment, I received an email from the General Manager, which included:

"After careful consideration, we have made the difficult decision to decline partnering with Portland Fellowship. We believe this is in the best interest of both parties...Upon further reflection, we have determined that our core values do not align as closely as we had hoped. We feel that another fire and safety company whose values more closely mirror those of Portland Fellowship will be better positioned to offer a more successful and fulfilling partnership."

I was truly taken aback! It was hard to comprehend why a Fire and Safety company would choose not to prioritize protecting everyone from the risk of fire, regardless of their beliefs or mission. Naturally, I assumed they had viewed our website, and so I responded with the following:

I'm replying with a genuine desire to understand the need to terminate our professional relationship. I'm assuming you looked at our purpose and mission, but I think you may have



"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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a misunderstanding of what we do. We offer support for Christian men and women struggling with unwanted sexual and relational desires. Example: A 53-year-old married man with three children has been giving in to destructive sexual encounters with men. These desires directly conflict with his faith, and he desperately wants support. We offer a place to work through his unwanted desires. There is no shaming or condemnation, just love and support.

We also offer support to parents with LGBTQ identified children—to help them learn to love their kids well, even through differences in beliefs regarding faith and sexuality. Moreover, once we meet the parents, we help them look at their own lives, rather than trying to fix their LGBTQ children. Considering all that, how do these services conflict with your values as a fire & safety company?

Their response came as no surprise:

“While I appreciate and understand your desire for an answer as to why, I do believe our first response was all that was needed. You may not understand our why, but it is our why.”

Facing these types of discrimination and hostility can be disheartening for us all. I imagine you have your own stories. Yet, I’m grateful that through it all, the Lord reminds us of this encouraging truth: *“If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.”* (John 15:18-19)

Our strength is found in Jesus, knowing their anger isn’t aimed at us, but at the truth. Jesus is the Truth, and He reminds us that the truth is undesirable to those who belong to the world. Our strength is also found through you—your prayers, friendship, support, and love are blessings that sustain and encourage us all.

May the Lord bless you, and may the compassion of our Lord Jesus, bring lost, confused, angry, and hurting people to repentance and hope found in Him.

Serving Him and pressing on,


Jason Thompson
Executive Director

June 2025: RHN HOPE Conference



The RHN HOPE 2025 Conference, *Washed*, will take place online June

20-21. Come hear biblical teaching & testimonies of former LGBTQ-identified individuals transformed by God’s love.

www.restoredhopenetwork.org

June 2025: PF Open Group Night

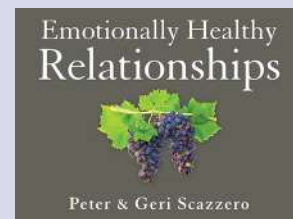


Join us Friday June 27th at 7:00 pm for our

Open Group Night! This is a great opportunity to learn about Portland Fellowship, share your experience, ask questions, and meet new people.

portlandfellowship.com/rsvp.php

July & August 2025: Emotionally Healthy Relationships



This summer we’re offering the *Emotionally Healthy Relationships* series on Tuesday evenings in July and

August, on Zoom AND in-person. Topics include *Clarify Expectations*, *Genograms*, *Integrity*, *Listen Incarnationally*, *Fight Cleanly*, and more.

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