

MID-VALLEY fellowship

releasing the power of hope

*Hope does not
disappoint us,
because God has
poured out his love
into our hearts
by the Holy Spirit,
whom he has given us.*

Romans 5:5

December 2006

Praying Through the Journey

by Kendra Hanes, Women's Ministry Director

**"He will respond
to the prayer of the destitute;
he will not despise their plea."**

Psalm 102:17

des·ti·tute

"poor enough to need help from others"

Princeton University WorldNet Dictionary

I learned some of the importance of prayer at the early age of six years old. The families from my church were challenged to adopt unreached people groups to cover in prayer. Though I don't remember the name of my family's people group for certain, I can still see the picture we took home that day of an African tribe. My family prayed for them just about every night for at least a year, and I pray for that group to this day. They are strangers to me, yet precious to God. In that light it became difficult to abandon my prayers for them.

Along the same vein, I have been an intercessor for individuals in small groups at Portland Fellowship (Mid-Valley Fellowship's sister ministry). Informed that they will be confidentially prayed for, they have the opportunity to openly submit prayer requests, along with their first name. While more concrete than the nameless tribe from Africa, they are still strangers. Miraculously, I still saw many of my prayers answered. Individuals on the verge of giving up managed to endure. People struggling with sexual addiction would have a week of freedom, a small-seeming but momentous victory. Some rose to great victory in a way that cannot be explained apart from the amazing power of God.

In my own journey of healing, I angrily anticipated an upcoming teaching on femininity. I asked others to pray for me weeks in advance, knowing that I would not want to go and feeling that I ought to go. I was so angry with cultural misrepresentations of femininity that I felt certain of yet another bitter disappointment in what I figured would be a well-intentioned portrayal of what people thought I should be but was not. As I arrived, guarded and cynical, several women informed me they had been praying for me all week. I have no doubt that others had been praying as well. That night I experienced one of the greatest outpourings of God's love and healing that has yet occurred in my life. My walls came down and a most unlikely person prayed the prayer that began the healing of a very deep wound.

The work of prayer can be difficult. When praying for others it sometimes seems as though I am praying for the same thing for the same person week after week and seeing no tangible answer. Yet God sees the heart and often works invisibly. Often after seeing nothing for weeks, suddenly something happens as if overnight. Other times, I look back and see that a person has come a long way from where they started, in such small steps that it was not noticeable along the way. Sadly, sometimes a person chooses to go their own way, away from God. Though continuing to pray, I offer that person to God, knowing that that person's future is in His hands and not mine.

Prayer is a key part of the vision of Mid-Valley Fellowship. Many of those coming to Mid-Valley Fellowship will be destitute – spiritually impoverished, emotionally ravaged, lonely, and afraid. They will be "poor enough to need help from others." Sexual healing is a very difficult journey and the roadblocks are many, yet all these difficulties can be lessened, some even completely eliminated by prayer. Sometimes it seems easier for everyone to just give up. Many individuals struggling with same-sex attractions – and sometimes their family members – are struggling largely in secret. It is important that they have a faith network around them, even one they cannot see. A crucial part of that network is people committed to prayer.

In the book of James we find a key verse for those who are struggling: "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective" (5:16, NIV). Those who seek help will have a chance to confess, to pray, to receive healing in community with one another. They also need a wider community to lift them up in prayer.





Website Updated

Our website:

www.midvalleyfellowship.org
has been updated & expanded

Check it out!

Pray With Us

May the Lord raise up researchers, doctors, nurses, and tens of thousands of caring people to make the light of Christ shine through mercy. Freely we have received. Oh that we might freely give. Show us how to love men and women living with HIV/AIDS in Oregon and beyond.

Are You Interested?

If you are interested in having a staff member speak at your church, youth group, college, or fellowship group, contact us by phone or e-mail.



Prayer Requests

- Meeting location for mentoring & groups
- Future participants
- Prayer intercessors
- Financial support



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We are seeking to enlist those who will dedicate themselves to prayer for this ministry, both for those of us in leadership and for participants. Many of you are praying already, and we are incredibly grateful for that. Whether you are just beginning to pray for Mid-Valley Fellowship or it is a continuation of your prayer for us, we would like to know who you are. In addition, we would appreciate the opportunity to share more of the needs and answers that come along the way through more regular updates. Some of the ways you can partner with us in prayer are:

Monthly – Each month, there is a brief list of prayer requests in the newsletter of current needs and upcoming opportunities.

Weekly – On a weekly basis, you can receive a more specific list of prayer needs and praises.

Participants – As participants contact Mid-Valley Fellowship, confidentially partner with them in their healing through prayer.

Group Meetings – In the future, attend group meetings, partnering with those ministering by lifting up leaders and participants.

Please consider partnering with us in prayer. On your Response Card:

- Write "Prayer Team" on the card
- Indicate how you will partner with us in prayer from the list above
- Indicate how you would like to receive updates (mail or electronically)

If you receive the newsletter via e-mail, simply reply to the e-mail with the above information.

We firmly believe in the power of prayer, and that God "will respond to the prayer of the destitute" and "will not despise their plea." For all of our needs, we know that God hears us, empowers us, and will not ignore us. Join with us on this journey and see firsthand how God will work in the lives of people.

World AIDS Day Prayer Meeting



On Friday, December 1st, Portland Fellowship will be hosting a gathering to pray with and for the men, women, and children living with HIV/AIDS in Oregon and around the world. Join us as we ask the Lord Jesus Christ to raise up the Body to live out the Gospel with compassion, courage, and truth.

Where: Old Mt. Olivet Church, 1743 NE 1st, Portland, Oregon

When: 7:00pm - 9:30pm

For more information or questions, please contact Steve Baliko at Portland Fellowship (503.235.6364 / steve@portlandfellowship.com).

If you are interested in carpooling to Portland, please contact Duan (541.928.2164 / duan@midvalleyfellowship.org).

Thank You for Your Generosity

Another year is drawing to a close and often that gives us pause. We look back at what the last year has held and forward to what the next may hold. For Mid-Valley Fellowship, it has been a short year, but a very eventful one. We officially came into existence at the end of August, and God has already blessed us with some amazing things. Your generous financial gifts enabled us to bring Sy Rogers for a visit, communicate with you through monthly newsletters, and create our website to reach people now and in the future. Next year, we desire to be of service to local ministries and add a part-time paid staff position (currently staff are volunteer). Thank you for your financial support. Please know your gifts will be handled with integrity and applied wisely to the work God is doing in the Mid-Valley.

