

fellowship

MID-VALLEY

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

August 2008

A Journey of Conversations

by Duan Walker, Executive Director



I am often asked how the ministry of Mid-Valley Fellowship is going, which seems a logical question for the director of the ministry. However, the question is also a challenging one for two reasons. First, how do I summarize a series of experiences and conversations to communicate what has been happening in the life of the ministry? Much of our efforts focus in areas that are intangible, so quantifying them can be somewhat difficult. Secondly, we value the confidentiality of those coming to us for support, advice, or perspective, which makes sharing a story very delicate. However, this month, I thought I would relay some conversations that are representative of what we are doing as a ministry. Some details have been omitted or altered to respect the confidentiality of the conversations, but the substance has been retained.

Partnership

The most common conversation I probably have is with the post office box: "What will you contain today?" Some days it is empty, but many days it contains notes of encouragement, gifts from donors, or perhaps some random piece of mail. I am always blessed by the encouragement notes and by those who faithfully give each month. They are reminders of God's faithfulness financially and relationally. The random bits of mail also offer occasional comic relief.



Thankfully, conversations about partnership in the ministry of Mid-Valley Fellowship are not confined to the mailbox. In the last couple months, we have been preparing for our annual benefit dinner in October. Part of that process is enlisting leadership donors who will underwrite the cost of the evening and invite their friends to the dinner. Their partnership will enable us to share our ministry purpose and vision with many new potential partners all at once. I have been blessed to see that process unfold as people generously contribute to the future of MVF. The evening will be an exciting event, and there are still some great opportunities to be a leadership donor. Contact us to learn how.



There are many ways to partner in the ministry of Mid-Valley Fellowship. A couple recent conversations with local pastors caused me to think more about this. They shared their support for MVF and, at the same time, uncertainty about how to partner with us in ministry. In the next few months, we plan to share some very tangible ways you can partner with us in communicating a message of hope to those impacted by homosexuality.

Support

In addition to conversations about partnership, I also have the opportunity to offer support to local pastors facing difficult situations in their church or ministry group. Such was the case with a recent conversation. A ministry leader was working very hard to resolve a situation in a healthy and helpful way but was hitting a wall. We met and discussed the situation in detail, and I gave some outside perspective and advice. After chatting for a couple hours, the ministry leader felt more equipped for the situation, and we left the conversation open for further dialogue.



I also occasionally have the privilege of a coffee or lunch with a youth pastor. It seems that many high school students are faced with how to interact with peers who have identified themselves as gay, in addition to potentially experiencing their own questions or confusion about sexuality. Conversations with youth pastors are usually a very open, honest

interchange, focused on the challenges their students face and how MVF can come alongside in partnership with the youth pastor. That support can take the form of speaking with their group and offering training to staff, among other things.

Communication

Communication is a priority for us, so we value opportunities to share in differing contexts from leadership teams and small groups to church services or other large group gatherings. Through various avenues, we are able to facilitate a conversation that challenges common perspectives and shares a message of redemption for those impacted by homosexuality or any other issue. Recently, I visited a church and taught our 3-part series (Homosexuality 101) in a Sunday School class. It provides the framework for an interactive conversation that can ultimately take the group into whatever is on their minds as it relates to homosexuality. My most recent visit was no exception with great interaction from the group in attendance. As we journeyed together, a conversation began that will hopefully continue in the future. It was also a blessing for me to see another part of the Body of Christ, outside the context of my local church.

Volunteers

We have some great volunteers that make the ministry of Mid-Valley Fellowship possible. While our Taking Back Ground volunteers are taking a much-needed break for the summer, our board members continue to serve. In addition to regular meetings, some have taken on special projects, and we get to interact about those. They have also brought additional perspective on things we do as a ministry. One focus they have at the moment is developing partnerships. In addition to working on the benefit dinner, they are brainstorming effective ways to increase awareness of MVF in the Christian community.

On a personal level, I enjoy interacting with pastors and ministry leaders, who are my peers in the area. Being able to chat with people who can relate with some of the things I experience is helpful for me. Many of them have been or are in similar situations to those I face. This is another blessing from God.

Have I had a conversation with you? I would love to get to know you, share with you more about the ministry of Mid-Valley Fellowship, and let you know how you can be a part. Give me a call or drop me an e-mail. I would enjoy hearing from you.

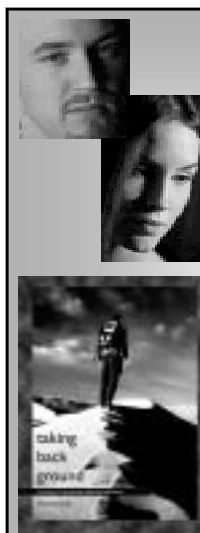
Sy Rogers Video & Discussion Series

August 6th - What Works
Corporate & Individual Responsibility in Recovery

August 20th - Relapse Prevention
How to Avoid Becoming a Statistic

Everyone is Welcome

Group Starts at 7:00pm
1495 NW 20th Street, Corvallis



Struggling with Homosexuality?

Discipleship & Support Program Resumes in October

For More Information:

Call: 541.928.2164

E-Mail: duan@midvalleyfellowship.org

Visit: www.midvalleyfellowship.org

Pray With Us

Father, thank you for the blessings and challenges from this last year. We feel lavished upon and strengthened in the process you have placed before us. Thank you for those who have come alongside in the work you are doing. May they be blessed in their journeys as well. Align our hearts with yours as we enlist others to partner in this work. Prepare their hearts for the path you have before them. In our serving, may we reflect you above all.



Cultivating Hope



October 25, 2008
Benefit Dinner

MID-VALLEY
fellowship
releasing the power of hope

PO Box 3141, Albany, OR 97321
www.midvalleyfellowship.org
541.928.2164

Duan Walker
Executive Director
duan@midvalleyfellowship.org