

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

April 2010



Releasing the Power of Hope

by Duan Walker, Executive Director

As we contemplate what to share in the newsletter each month, the first question we ask is, "What do we want to communicate?" That really ties in with a bigger question: "Why do we exist as a ministry?" At the end of the day, it all comes down to one thing – one message we endeavor to communicate: Hope. The importance of that message is reflected in the fact that it is part of our logo – tied to our identity as a ministry. We exist to "release the power of hope." But what does that mean?

The Message: Hope

Hope is "confident trust with expectation of fulfillment." When we hope, we look toward something beyond our current situation with the confidence that whatever it is can happen. Much like faith, hope is intangible and can often seem illogical. And yet, we need hope in our lives. We yearn to look beyond ourselves — beyond right now — toward something else. That is the essence of hope.

If we have experienced hope or the result of hope (comfort), we are challenged to share that with others. II Corinthians 1:3-4 puts it this way:

All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us.

As a ministry, we understand the hopelessness and struggle with homosexuality, and God has done a work in us. He has comforted and given hope in our lives. He has walked with us through the difficulty and the mess — sometimes through the care of others, sometimes through direct intervention. Now we have the incredible opportunity and responsibility to share that message with others — a message of hope and comfort.



The Power of the Message

Hope has incredible power. If there was no faith or hope in life, civilization would never advance. Inventors would not believe or hope that their invention could change the world long enough to make it through everyone else's doubts. We would never have the many amazing things that seemed inconceivable five, ten, or twenty years ago.

The same is true in our lives. Without the hope of something beyond a life controlled by bad habits, addictions, or a lifestyle, we would not be motivated to grow. As Christians, if there was no hope for a deeper relationship with God, why cultivate that relationship? Hope (or lack thereof) directs our lives. With accurately placed hope, we believe in something greater or beyond our frame of reference and have strength to move forward. We are not disappointed. Romans 5:5 says, "Hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us."

Your Part in the Message

If no one ever communicated hope, it would be as if it didn't exist. That is one of our biggest challenges as a ministry: How do we effectively communicate a message of hope to those impacted by homosexuality? Many in the Church do not hear a hope-filled, redemptive message about homosexuality, either from unawareness or discomfort with the topic. In the silence, we hear messages in schools, the media, and increasingly in churches that say, "embrace homosexuality." The greatest hope offered is that of a tolerant society who will celebrate the homosexual lifestyle. Is that really a message of hope that will not disappoint us?

In the absence of a redemptive conversation about homosexuality, those impacted end up in a place of hopelessness and futility. The mother with a son embracing the gay lifestyle, the husband trying desperately to be faithful to his wife,



the college student following peer pressure to experiment sexually, or the child reaching puberty only to discover they really are different than everyone else. Our silence slams the door on hope. In contrast, communication of a redemptive message throws the door wide open to those seeking hope and points them towards hope that will not disappoint.

You can be part of releasing that hope in the lives of those impacted by homosexuality. There are various opportunities to partner in releasing hope, whether individually or as an organization. Some of those opportunities are:

- **Begin a redemptive conversation in a community of which you are a part.** Learn more about opportunities to have Mid-Valley Fellowship share in your community and champion the idea.
- **Partner financially with Mid-Valley Fellowship.** The ministry of MVF is made possible through the caring support of individuals and churches who believe in what we do and partner with us. Join our team of donors!
- **Volunteer with Mid-Valley Fellowship.** MVF functions because of the effort of our volunteers. Over the course of a 6-month period this last fall/winter, over 200 hours of volunteer time were contributed. Whether stuffing newsletters, doing office work, serving at an event, or walking alongside those struggling, volunteers make the ministry happen.
- **Attend the Pastor & Ministry Leader Lunch on April 21st.** This FREE lunch will be an opportunity to learn more about the ministry of Mid-Valley Fellowship, along with some very practical and accessible partnership options. The details are included below.

We also welcome the opportunity to speak with you further about additional ways to partner. Simply call or e-mail us. Join with us in releasing the power of hope in the lives of those who so desperately seek it.

Host MVF for
Homosexuality 101
at Your Church!



Educational
Interactive
Practical

Homosexuality 101 is an interactive three-part curriculum, intended to fit into a Sunday School or Small Group format. The focus is to educate, give practical advice, and answer questions on this complex and confusing topic.

Contact Us to Learn More
541.928.2164
office@midvalleyfellowship.org

Pastor & Ministry Leader Lunch

Enjoy a free lunch ~ Learn about the ministry
Hear how we can serve you ~ Ask questions about homosexuality

Wednesday, April 21, 2010, 12:00pm - 2:00pm

Flinn Block Hall
in Historic Downtown Albany ~ 222 First Avenue West, Albany

Cost is Free. Please RSVP.

Online: www.midvalleyfellowship.org/pastors

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All communication with Mid-Valley Fellowship is confidential.
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