

REDEEMER

R E P O R T

MARCH 1997

EASTER SERVICES PLANNED

Orchestra of the Redeemer to Debut

As in years past, there will be two Easter morning services, at 9:30 a.m. and 11:15 a.m. on March 30th. The 6:00 p.m. service will remain at its usual time. Each service will feature special music. In the morning the Redeemer choir will be joined by the Orchestra of the Redeemer, under the direction of Miriam Burns, in performance of Beethoven's *Hallelujah* from *The Mount of Olives* and Vaughan-Williams' *Antiphon*. Mark Oswald from the Metropolitan Opera will sing "Rise, Heart, Thy Lord Is Risen" from *Messiah*.

The evening soloists will be Michelle Jennings, Kimberly Ju-Juan and George Merritt. There will also be testimonies of changed lives in celebration of Jesus's resurrection power poured into the lives of his people. (See related article.)

An Easter sacrificial offering will be taken (in addition to the regular offering) for meeting mercy needs. This is a meaningful part

of Easter celebration for many people, so come prepared to give to the needs of others in proportion to the generosity with which God has given to us.

Maundy Thursday Service and Supper March 27

Redeemer's celebration of the Last Supper will be held at 7:00 p.m. at All Souls Church, at 80th and Lexington. Prior to the service, at 6:15 p.m. there will be a recital by the string quartet, which will perform Haydn's "Seven Last Words of Christ." The service will also include communion and a reenactment of footwashing. Child care will be provided from 6:00 p.m. until the end of the service.

Following the service will be a soup and bread fellowship meal downstairs in the fellowship hall. Tickets for the supper cost \$7.00 and will go on sale March 9. If tickets remain, they will be sold at the door following the service.

EASTER TESTIMONIES SOUGHT

One of the best-loved traditions at Redeemer is the Easter Sunday evening testimonies. If you have a testimony of God's grace and resurrection power affecting your life in the past year (or recently) that you would be willing to share, please let us know. In particular, if you have come to faith in the last year or had your faith significantly renewed, then you are in a position to encourage the rest of the congregation.

If you would prefer your testimony to be anonymous, we can arrange to have someone else read it. If you are able to read it yourself, please limit yourself to 3-5 minutes. You will be given editorial help in preparing your testimony. You may leave a message at 808-4460 x 10, or fax your testimony to 808-4465 (attention to Kathy Keller for both faxes and messages.)

EASTER OFFERING FOR HOPE FOR NEW YORK

Easter Sunday Redeemer will again take a special offering for the needy of New York City. Once a year the whole church is given the opportunity to participate in the Easter Sacrificial Offering, which is distributed to ministries of mercy which feed the homeless, tutor children, teach English to immigrants. etc., through our sister agency, Hope for New York.

In a city like New York, with a vast range of human needs, it is vi-

tal to the health of our church that we reach out to the less fortunate with deeds of mercy as well as words of eternal life. Once a year, we do that corporately through the Easter Sacrificial Offering. Contributions are made at this one offering to Hope for New York. If your company encourages your participation in the United Way fund, you may designate Hope for New York as the recipient by noting the code number: 019933. You may also double your gift through your

company's Corporate Matching Gift program (speak to someone in the Human Resources department where you work for the company forms.)

To maximize the effectiveness of the financial contributions, we also send out volunteers who give of their time and talents to help our ministry partners utilize their funds most effectively. Look for volunteer opportunities in the weekly bulletin and in the twice annual Ministry Fair.

"Each service will feature special music."



DIVERSITY OF REDEEMER BOTH A BLESSING AND A CHALLENGE

One of the first things to strike a person walking into Sunday worship at Redeemer is the diversity of people who are there. God has blessed us with a congregation that reflects the demographics of Manhattan pretty closely. We rejoice in that diversity, because it shows that the gospel is the one message able to unite people of every background.

On the other hand, almost no one can walk in and say immediately "Hey, these are my people!" (Well, maybe 20-30somethings singles and Asian students can...) For the rest of us, however, finding peers with whom to socialize, fellowship or just hang out with represents something of a challenge. Do not despair! There are Home Fellowship Groups of practically every composition imaginable. How do I get involved in one? Contact Kris Wedemeyer at the church office

(808-4460 x13). Or, even better, stop by the RedeemerLink table immediately after the Sunday services where Kris will be (with other Link volunteers) to set the wheels in motion to find a place for you right then and there.

You're looking for a racially mixed group of people committed to working through relationship issues? We've got a group for you. Working mothers of small children? Yep. Stay-at-home moms? Uh-huh. College students? You bet. Medical professionals? Artists, musicians, dancers? Yes, indeed. Businessmen and women, ladies-who-lunch, couples in their 40s and 50s with high pressure jobs? You got it. People recovering from divorce, false intimacy, homosexuality, etc.? Sure thing. Left-handed adult children of South American missionaries? If enough of you come forward, we'll form the group!

VOLUNTEERS SKILLS WORKSHOP

If you are already a volunteer with one of our Hope for New York mercy ministry projects (or if you wannabe!), come to our evening workshop on Monday, March 17th. Held at the Lamb's building (130 West 44th) from 6:30 — 9:30 p.m., you'll get to choose from two workshops that interest you and which will help build your skills as a volunteer. Here are some of the workshops we've planned:

- Sharing your faith as well as your time
- Understanding the poverty subculture
- Why we serve: a framework for mercy ministry
- Avoiding burnout (or apathy) in serving others

The workshop fee of \$8 covers your refreshments, coffee break and seminar materials. Please register with Redeemer front desk (808-4460 x 10) or call Yvonne Dodd (ext.22) with your questions.

THE PROBLEM OF PIOUSBABLE

BY KATHY KELLER

Most of us are familiar with the term "psychobabble" to describe the often meaningless mix of psychological terms, talk-show wisdom, and self-help mantras which passes for conversation in some circles. Let me coin a term to describe a similar ill which is found only in Christian circles: piousbabble.

Piousbabble is a mixture of words and phrases which, used individually and with care, might be inoffensive, but swirled

together and poured out in an unthinking stream, constitute a subcultural jargon.

Listen to these phrases through the ears of a secular person, totally unacquainted with Christianity: "Accept Jesus into your heart;" "pray the sinner's prayer;" "come under conviction;" "have a quiet time;" "washed in the blood;" and even "Praise the Lord!" While it is possible for well-meaning believers to use language like this as a sincere expression of their thoughts,

it is usually evidence that they have lost touch with unbelievers.

Piousbabble thrives by inflating normal language. Every talk becomes a "message" and every enjoyable experience becomes a "blessing." Inspired sermons are "anointed" and strong impulses occur because of "a leading of the Lord." There is usually no sinister motive behind this kind of word substitution — it is merely the accepted lingo of the tribe.

However, there is a darker

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REDEEMER REPORT

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Redeemer meets Sunday at
HUNTER COLLEGE AUDITORIUM • EAST 69TH BETWEEN PARK AND LEXINGTON
services at 10:30 • 6:00

Correction—Biblical View of Women's Issues

Last month interested readers were encouraged to attend the evening sessions of "A Biblical View of Women's Issues." However, the date for those classes to begin was mis-stated. Classes will begin following the evening service on Sunday, May 4, at 7:30 p.m.

Women's Breakfast Held March 16

Sunday, March 16 the Women in the Church will hold a breakfast for all women worshipping with Redeemer. The breakfast will be held in Hunter College's Third Floor Cafe from 8:45 until 10:15 a.m. Tickets will cost \$8.00 and will be on sale in the East Lounge following both morning and evening services. Tickets will also be available at the door, but an accurate count for the caterer would be better served if you buy your ticket ahead of time. The menu will include fruit salad, assorted quiche, assorted bagels and pastries, juice, coffee and tea. The pastoral wives will be introduced at the breakfast.

Relationship Ministry to Hold Events March 17 and 31

The Relationship Ministry will hold a seminar on "Commitment phobia: Part 2" on the evening of March 17 at 7:00 p.m. at the Church of the Advent Hope, 111 E 87th Street. On March 31 (same time and place, two weeks later) there will be a renewal communion service for couples and a talk on the subject of "Mutual Submission."

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THE PROBLEM OF PIOUSBABBLE

side to some word choices. The temptation to "baptize" one's own ideas and plans with divine approval powerfully appeals to us insecure and immature humans. Unless you are an Old Testament prophet or a New Testament apostle, the words "the Lord has told me" don't belong in your mouth. Yet how often believers fall back on these pious-babble phrases to bolster their own self-esteem. If God gave me my idea, you can hardly have the temerity to disagree with it!

Dick Lucas, the eminent Anglican pastor, is a firm opponent of what he calls "pious froth." He tells the story of a man who began every discussion with the words "I've really prayed about it and the Lord has shown me..." He finally replied, "Well, I've prayed about it, too, and the Lord has shown me the exact opposite." A short, but mind-cracking silence ensued. "Now I guess we'll just have to discuss the is-

sue like rational human beings," Lucas concluded, and they did.

Because we are trying to obey Paul's admonition in I Cor. 14:23-25 to speak in language that will be intelligible to the unbelievers who are sure to be present, we work hard to comb piousbabble out of Redeemer's corporate vocabulary. It still occurs occasionally, either through a slip of the tongue of some otherwise concerned believer, or from the mouth of a newcomer who was disciplined in another tradition.

What a pity, however, it is to see new Christians, who have come to faith at Redeemer from secular backgrounds, begin to pick up piousbabble under the impression that it distinguishes them as maturing believers. Rather, they should look at our Heavenly Father, who, when he desired to communicate, did not do so in some heavenly jargon, but with the Word Incarnate, Jesus.

1997
ALL-CHURCH
USHER TRAINING

Our motto: Life's Great,
then you Usher!

Attention all ushers, usher captains, usher coordinators and those who want to join the usher team!! Please come to the 1997 All-Church Usher Training, Sunday, March 16, from 1:00 - 2:00 p.m. in the auditorium.

Learn:

- *how to do the offering in the balcony....alone*
- *how to count people in the auditorium when you're only 5'2"*
- *how to get people to sit in the center of an aisle*
- *how to keep track of an offering basket*
- *how to keep people from jumping over our "crime scene" tape*
- *how to keep the Domino pizza delivery man out of the auditorium during prayer*
- *how to unfold one-inch square \$1.00 bills from the offering basket*
- *500 polite ways to say "We're so sorry it's too hot/cold, but we can't adjust the temperature in here"*
- *the secret to Joyful Ushering*
- *the rewards of a committed Usher*
- *what it feels like to be treasured as a valuable member of an Usher Team*

We promise to make this hour count! Meet the current usher captains and coordinators and enjoy all the leftover mini-muffins you can eat!

*"Learn:
how to
keep people
from
jumping..."*

MEMBERS RECEIVED BY PUBLIC PROMISE AND BAPTISM

- Christine Kang
- Stephanie Crane*
- Michele Talarico*
- Maria Lee*
- Miriann Lee

** Adult Baptism*

Infant Baptism

- Charles Quinn Peebles

REGISTER NOW FOR
INTERNATIONAL
MISSIONS
RETREAT
MAY 16-18

The second annual International Missions Retreat is scheduled for Friday through Sunday, May 16-18 at Wisdom House in the foothills of the Berkshires. Last year people were thrilled with the accommodations, which are plain but very pleasant, and were especially pleased with the great food.

The speaker this year is Jerram Barrs, who is an internationally known speaker and teacher and the director of the Francis A. Schaeffer Institute at Covenant Seminary. In addition to his teaching, there will be time to meditate and pray in a setting which is conducive to making friendships, relaxing and reflecting.

Space is very limited and the retreat was sold out early last year. Look for reservation information in the Redeemer bulletin or phone Carol Ward at (212) 808-4460 x 32.