

# REDEEMER

R E P O R T

FEBRUARY 1998

## Part 2 - Rebuilding Neighborhoods RENEWING THE CITY

BY TIM KELLER

*Redeemer has always had the aim of serving our city by making a difference in the very quality of its life*

This spring we are undertaking a major capital fund campaign, but as with so many things that Redeemer does, we are doing it in an unusual way and for an unusual goal. Instead of raising funds to buy or build a church facility, we are raising funds to move our vision from rhetoric to reality. Redeemer has always had the aim of serving our city by making a difference in the very quality of its life—spiritually, socially, culturally. We believe there are three basic strategies which Christians can undertake that will renew our city: 1) church renewal through planting hundreds of new congregations; 2) social renewal through “church-based community development”; 3) cultural renewal through “pub-

lic discipleship.” The following is a very brief treatment of the second of these strategies.

The cities of the U.S. are still in great peril, despite some optimistic publicity. This is the consensus of both liberal and conservative observers. One conservative wrote recently: “The boomer elites may well be having a good time in tastefully decorated, well-policed urban districts, but for the most part, America’s cities have continued their steady decay....In the 80’s...two-thirds of all new jobs were in the suburbs rather than central cities; by the mid-90’s it reached 80 per-cent.” ‘Whole parts of New York no longer have an economy to speak of,’ notes Cooper Union historian Fred Siegel, ‘Whole boroughs like the Bronx and much of Brooklyn have fallen into

the earth and been forgotten.’” (Joel Kotkin, *The American Enterprise*, Jan/Feb 1998, p.32-33).

Meanwhile, a liberal writes: “The idea that cities [have] come close to reversing themselves is dangerously misleading—[and] ignorant of poverty rates...ignorant of social and racial stratification...What lay behind the fancy wrap of the downtown, the gray areas of abandoned factories and worn-out neighborhoods, [has] been rendered invisible, the Bermuda Triangle of American life.”

There has been a remarkable rising chorus of voices across the political spectrum that asserts that churches can and must be impor-

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## CAPITAL CAMPAIGN BEGINS

### Watch Your Mailbox

Redeemer launched its “Renewed Heart, Renewed Church, Renewed City” capital campaign in January. From now through March 22 we will be sending numerous pieces in the mail describing our church’s vision for the city and the ways that you can help support that vision through prayer, service, and giving. The steering committee of this capital campaign, a lay-led team of about 25 leaders in the church, is working hard to plan and prepare several important events in the coming months. Here is a schedule of some of the key mailings and events so that you can plan ahead:

### Date

Jan 19-Feb 6  
Jan 26  
Jan 26  
Early Feb  
Mid Feb  
Mid Feb  
Feb 22  
Feb 23  
Feb 25-27  
Late Feb  
Early March  
Mar 11  
Mar 22

### Mailing/Event

Special Fellowship Group Video Presentations  
“Q&A Brochure” (Mail)  
CPR Prayer for a Renewed Heart - Advent Hope  
Prayer Guide in Sunday Bulletins  
“Campaign Brochure” (Mail)  
Round-the-Clock Prayer Launched  
Campaign Launch Sunday - Hunter  
CPR Prayer for a Renewed Church - Advent Hope  
Leadership Challenge Meetings  
First of Three “Campaign Newsletters” (Mail)  
Ways to Give (Mail)  
Leadership Dinner  
Church-wide Major Event

*Chip Peebles, Executive Director “Renewed Heart, Church, City” campaign.*

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- REDEEMER MUSIC AVAILABLE
- CHURCH FAMILY UPDATE

*MORE...*



tant players in healing social ills, especially those of the inner city. Major articles in journals as diverse as *The New Yorker*, *Business Week*, *The American Prospect*, *Christianity Today* have been devoted to this theme. Generally, the writers are recognizing several advantages that churches have over the traditional social service agencies of the state. First, traditional social service agents almost always live outside of the community of need. Thus the residents become objects to be worked on, not personal subjects and partners in the renewal of the neighborhood.

Second, the traditional approach almost always is reductionistic rather than wholistic. It tends to treat only the physical or social aspects of a family's problem while ignoring their spiritual and moral needs. Since we are whole beings, we cannot deal with the physical aspect of drug abuse without addressing the person's meaning in life.

Third, the traditional approach is individualistic. It treats individuals through fairly clinical one-on-one programs, rather than bringing people into a community which cares for one another. While there is a great deal of disagreement about the relationship of churches to the state in all this, there is little disagreement about the enormous impact that congregations could have if they realized their enormous potential.

In distinction from this approach, the gospel creates a new "model" for rebuilding broken neighborhoods. First, it is neighborhood-based. The service to the community flows out of a coalition and partnership of people who all live in the community of need. Leaders and members of the church live

with, listen to, and partner with people outside the church who are their neighbors to rebuild their common environment. (This matches the gospel. Jesus became one of us and lived among us—John 1:14, 1 Cor.2:1-5; Phil.2:6-8.)

Second, it is wholistic, in two different ways. It sees the person wholistically, meeting spiritual, emotional, relational, physical needs. And it also sees the neighborhood wholistically—not simply providing emergency relief (e.g. soup kitchens) but redirecting social and financial capital back into the community, re-weaving the social fabric. (This also matches the the gospel. Jesus was wholistic in method—mighty in both word and deed, and wholistic in aim—coming to redeem soul and body, to both forgive us and sanctify us—cf. Acts 6:1-6.)

Third, it is church-based. People are provided with a faith-community. This is a place where reconciled economic, racial and family relationships can be modeled and experienced. (This matches the gospel. Jesus came not to create only a group of forgiven individuals, but a "holy nation" a pilot plant of a renewed humanity—I Peter 2:9-10.)

What can Redeemer's part be in all of this? A great deal. As a large center city church, we are somewhat separated from most of the vast communities of need in our city. If we simply grow larger where we are, we will only be able to give money and volunteers to existing ministries to the poor. Such ministries are extremely important. But real renewal will take more than that—it will take not only the renewal of hope and vision for wholistic ministry on the part of hundreds of inner city churches, but it will take the initiating of

scores of new churches dedicated to racial reconciliation and neighborhood renewal.

Through the Capital Fund Campaign, Redeemer is re-inventing itself. Instead of growing into a mega-church, we are redirecting our energy to becoming an agent for the raising up of a whole new generation of leaders and churches that are planted in every kind of neighborhood of the city. We hope to directly help to plant new churches dedicated to Christian community development, like the work Jeff White is beginning now in Harlem. But more than that, we hope through our Church Planting Center to be able to help many other New York City churches mobilize themselves and multiply themselves into becoming faith-communities that seek the peace ("shalom") of the city. (Jer.29:7; Is.58:12; Acts 16:16-18).

## Q & A ABOUT THE CHURCH PLANTING CENTER

**"What is a 'Church Development Center' or 'Church Planting Center'?"**

*Either of these names refers to an institution we want to establish in New York City. It will be a permanent funding, training, and supervision center for the planting of new churches in NYC and other major metropolitan areas.*

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### REDEEMER REPORT

Kathy Keller

Yvonne Dodd

Dave Jacobs

The Redeemer Report is a publication of the Redeemer Presbyterian Church.  
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HUNTER COLLEGE AUDITORIUM • EAST 69TH BETWEEN PARK AND LEXINGTON  
services at 10:30 • 6:00

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# IRON WOMEN: BE A PART OF THE TEAM

BY LYNN STRONG

**W**hen I became a single parent, I didn't at first realize that I had signed up for an Olympic event—the Iron Woman. The event lasts for years. And while most sporting events are physically exhausting, single parenting is also emotionally and spiritually challenging. Here are just a few of the separate events that comprise the Iron Woman Mega-Athalon (but remember, they have to be repeated over and over.....)

- **The Grocery Story Haul:** This is an event that consists of filling your cart with the largest (and therefore cheapest) size of everything that you need—the 25 pound sack of rice, the industrial strength canned vegetables, and the juice containers that are heavier than your youngest child. (Total groceries may not weigh under 150 lb.) For the last lap, you must first place your 30 lb. child on your shoulders, securely grab cart with your strongest arm and hold second child with remaining hand. Distance to home is 1/3 mile, in-

cluding hill and various child distractions. (You may ask, why not take a cab? When you are on very limited funds, taking a cab is never an option, unless you are going to the emergency room.)

- **The Lack-of-Sick-Days Endurance Event:** This is an event that takes place when your children get the flu one at a time. Your first child keeps you up for night after night with a fever, coughing, etc. Just as you think he is getting better, your second child comes down with it. By the time she is well, you have already missed a week of work. The event is completed when you go to work with a temperature of 104 because you have no more sick days left in the year and if you don't show up for work you will not get paid and you will not be able to pay the rent.

The only way that single parents can get through these grueling events is by having a team of supporters behind them. Some people would call this my “support system;” I call them by different names:

- **Cheerleaders**—people I know I can count on to pray with me when I am overwhelmed and really question if I can go on.

- **Coaching Staff**—the elders and deacons and deaconesses that lend emotional support, help with financial assistance and provide counseling support.

- **Trainers**—members of my Bible study and friends at Redeemer who help with baby-sitting and occasionally provide food and other desperately need things.

- **Guardian Angels**—last, but not least, those kind souls who have donated/subsidized retreat weekends and a night out for an overwhelmed, overstressed mom.

What can all of that do to help? Get a mom back to believing in herself, off public assistance and looking forward to a career helping others. If you are interested in helping, you can call Camille LaManna at 718-852-0260. We especially need a monthly meeting space big enough for parents to be in one room and kids in another.

*while most sporting events are physically exhausting, single parenting is also emotionally and spiritually challenging*

## F.Y.I.

### **City Vision and Volunteer Workshop February 1**

Do you want to find out how you can get involved with Redeemer's ministries? Check out the opportunities to volunteer with our mercy ministry, Hope for New York. After both services on Sunday, February 1, we will host our City Vision Ministry Fair so you can explore various avenues of ministry. Volunteers and leaders will be on hand to answer your questions and inform you of specific events. We will also hold volunteer orientation and training classes in the afternoon.

### **Children to Sing At Nursing Home February 8**

On Sunday, February 8, there will be an opportunity for our children to bring some brightness into the lives of others. Beginning at 2:00 p.m., the children will be singing and making valentines at DeWitt Clinton Nursing Home. Prior to leaving for the event, they will have a pizza lunch (\$2.00 each) at 1:00 p.m. downstairs in the “C” level. For more information, call Goldie Anderson, 808-4460 x 14.

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## CHURCH PLANTING CENTER

**“How will it do that?”**

*Full-time and part-time staff will assess and recruit leaders for new urban churches. They will then help the leaders raise funds, give very high quality and in depth training, and provide extensive supervision and mentoring during the church planting process.*

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# CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

*(If you have news of births, deaths, weddings, or other important occasions in the lives of our members and friends and would like to see them recognized, please e-mail RPCNews@aol.com or write to The Redeemer Report, care of the church office.)*

## **Births:**

Daniel John Sprufero, born September 26, 1997 to Sal and Rose Sprufero.

## **Infant Baptisms:**

Veronica Chloe Aziel Andreades, daughter of Ellery and Mary Kaye Aziel Andreades  
Elizabeth Grace Field, daughter of Drew and Donna Field  
Pierce James Halsted, son of Bruce and Cindy Halsted  
Jesse Jerome Martinez, son of Ernesto and Joy Martinez  
Tobias Christian Whitford, son of Tom and Chris Whitford  
Devon Halle Caine, son of Richard & Kathleen Caine  
Ian Seungwon Pak son of Jin & Young-ah Pak  
David John Acevedo, son of John & Melanie Acevedo  
Melissa Ann Woodford, daughter of John & Susie Woodford

## **Adult Baptisms:**

Denise Aruna Sirkisoon  
Richard Chow  
Wai Kit Cheung

## **New Members:**

John Barger  
Lingmei Lin Choong  
Thomas Dula  
Clare Gutteridge  
Suzanne Kang  
Kara Kline  
Holly Krueger  
James Krueger  
Rebecca Mace  
Scott Strickman  
Neva Strom  
Jennifer Billings  
Richard Chow  
Rosemary Burnette  
Robert Tauriello  
Denise Sirkisoon  
Avery Chin  
Stephanie Chin  
Howard Reenberg  
Frank Kim  
Anne Kim  
Kate Johnson  
Wai Cheung  
David Rivas-Christie  
Karen Chung  
Bambi Francisco

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## CHURCH PLANTING CENTER

**“Why do we need a ‘Center’ to do this?”**

*The leadership of Redeemer has a proven track record for planting urban churches, but they can only give a small fraction of their time to it now. A Center with full-time staff and full training structure would enable us to a) plant churches at 4-8 times a greater rate, and b) serve other urban churches (both in New York and elsewhere) besides Redeemer with our gifts.*

**“What do you mean by serving other churches?”**

*Increasingly, churches and leaders around the world are contacting Redeemer and asking us for help in starting urban churches. Currently we cannot give them anything but very limited and informal advice. Closer to home, there are hundreds of churches in New York City who could be planting thousands of new congregations if they had training, support and encouragement. With a Center, we would be in a position to give that aid.*

**“How does this fit in with Redeemer’s vision?”**

*Redeemer’s vision is not just for a great church, but for a great city. We have decided that we will best serve the whole city if we refrain from becoming a mega-church and instead put our energies into raising up a whole new generation of new churches and leaders. The capital fund campaign will raise money to help us do this. Its funds will go A) to Redeemer becoming a multi-site church, and B) to the Church Development (Planting) Center.*

# REDEEMER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN NEW JERSEY?

BY JIM OM

**Y**es, you are reading correctly! The leadership of Redeemer has noticed the development of many strong fellowship groups in New Jersey as well as an increasing number of New Jersey residents getting involved in our church's ministries. However, many people from the Garden State have found inviting friends and neighbors to Redeemer "challenging." Therefore, we are bringing Redeemer to them, through church planting in Northern New Jersey. Are you interested yet? If not, read on.

Did you know that parts of Hudson County are more densely

populated than Brooklyn, Queens, and the Bronx? Did you know that Bergen County is the fifth wealthiest county in the country, but is within a 10 minute drive from two of the most poverty stricken cities in the U.S.? Did you know that over 800 New Jersey residents are registered on the Redeemer database? Did you know that over 200 Redeemer attendees come in from New Jersey every Sunday? Did you know that dozens of New Jersey Redeemer leaders are praying for an outward facing Gospel-centered church to be planted in their communities?

If you want to learn more, if you want to help get our first church

plant in New Jersey started, if you are willing to bring friends and neighbors to a Gospel-centered church, then come to our special luncheon, where you will hear more about Redeemer's vision for New Jersey and will have the opportunity to ask questions and make comments.

This special meeting will be held on Sunday, Feb. 22, 1998 at 1:00 p.m. in the 3rd floor cafe of the West building, following the special presentation for the Capital Campaign. The cost of the luncheon is \$7 at the door and children under 12 can eat for free. We hope to see you there.

*...many people from the Garden State have found inviting friends and neighbors to Redeemer "challenging." Therefore, we are bringing Redeemer to them...*

## REDEEMER MUSIC BECOMING AVAILABLE

BY TOM JENNINGS

**O**ver the past several years I have been frequently approached by home fellowship group leaders, musicians, pastors, and music directors wanting access to the more than five hundred original worship songs, jazz arrangements, string quartets, brass quintets, and other pieces composed at Redeemer since its inception in 1989. However, two factors have prevented us from honoring their requests. First, the music is in handwritten form. Second, the proper copyrights had

not been secured to protect the work of the composers.

In October of 1997, Redeemer hired Chris Hughes as part-time Director of Music Publishing. Chris has served as the drummer for the evening service and composed numerous classical and jazz pieces. Chris is also the Director of Music at North Shore Community Church, our sister congregation on Long Island. For the past few months, Chris has been using computer music programs, addressing legal issues, and evaluating our music li-

brary.

In February, the first two collections of music will be available: a book of 15 worship songs (*You are My Fortress, Be Still My Soul, Open My Eyes*, and others) with a companion tape, and a book of eight hymn arrangements for piano and solo vocal (including *Jesus, What a Friend for Sinners* and *Amazing Grace*), also with a companion tape. To obtain copies, check the weekly bulletin board for information or call the Redeemer music office at 808-4460, ext. 25.

## THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF BROKENNESS

BY KATHY KELLER

**F**or a while, it was quite a fad to talk about the value of "brokenness." There were books like *The Wounded Healer* and much head-nodding about how the virtues of compassion and sympathy could only be learned if one first confronted one's own frailties and failings. I haven't heard much talk about how wonderful it is to be broken recently, and I'm guessing it might have something to do with the limitations of the concept. Being "broken"—that is to say, being made

painfully aware of previously unsuspected depths of corruption, selfishness, and vileness in your heart by falling into serious sin (usually sin which is publically exposed)—has a limited value unless it is followed by the restoration which only grace and forgiveness can accomplish.

To be relieved of the notion that I am somehow more wonderful than my neighbors, peers, friends, and (especially) my enemies, is, of course, a valuable lesson. No one can be a successful human being (or lover or friend or neighbor or Christian) if one

is under the impression that he or she is made of superior stuff. However, merely having the stuffing knocked out of you (the usual result after a close encounter with your own sinfulness), does not automatically make you a better person. To arrive at the humility, gentleness, and wisdom that can make a broken person so much more useful (to God) and attractive (to other sinners), there must first be restoration.

By restoration I do not mean a superficial healing of the wounds

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## BROKENNESS

which have been ripped open. The shock of discovering just what an abysmal sinner you are must be treated with the even greater shock of discovering the depths of God's love and grace extended to you. When you thought you were only a little, mousy sinner, God's forgiveness may have seemed a fairly tame thing to you. Now that you know you are a big, roaring sinner—willful, arrogant, and self-indulgent—Christ's payment for your sin on the cross takes on its true appearance of unmerited, unearned grace.

Dave McCarty, an elder at the New Life Presbyterian Church in Fort Washington, where our family worshiped when we lived in Philadelphia, said something to me years ago that has never left me. We were discussing identifying and training the first officers at Redeemer, and he said, "Most churches make the mistake of choosing for officers people who are competent, confident, and successful, because they think those men and women will be good leaders and shepherds. In reality, what you really want in a spiritual leader is a man or woman who has been broken by a knowledge of their own sin, and then restored by an even deeper knowledge of God's grace."