

REDEEMER

R E P O R T

MARCH 1999

WEST SIDE SERVICE BEGINS FEBRUARY 28

Redeemer's long-awaited west side worship service will begin on Sunday, February 28, in the building of the First Church of Christ, Scientist, located at 1 West 96th Street (96th and Central Park West.) The service will begin at 5:00 p.m., with nursery and child care provided. Tim Keller will preach at the west side site the same as he does at the east side site (same sermon, same number of times, same guy.)

Following the service there will be School of Discipleship classes, tape sales and coffee hour. In fact, Redeemer West will be no different than Redeemer East except for its building.

And what a great building! The First Church of Christ, Scientist, facility is a historic landmark and the sanctuary, which seats approximately 2,400, is beautifully decorated with marble floors, stained-glass windows, and pews made out of Circassian walnut.

If you are a west sider, come celebrate by worshipping with us on February 28.

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INSIDE:

- MENTORING MADE EASY
- ALL CHURCH SPRING RETREAT
- HOPE FOR NEW YORK NEWS
- ELIZABETH ELLIOT - APRIL 24

MORE...



CROWN FINANCIAL COUNSELING COURSE TO BE TAUGHT AT REDEEMER

During the last 17 years our country has experienced unprecedented economic growth. The Dow Jones has grown from 776 to over 9,000. Unemployment is at a record low and personal incomes are at an all time high. Yet 1998 saw a disturbing new record—1.4 million Americans filed for bankruptcy. During the height of the Great Depression only 700,000 Americans filled for bankruptcy protection.

The problem is deeper than just people who cannot stay out of debt. Millions report in surveys that they are unsatisfied with their work and constantly worry about money. The answer is also deeper than just making

more money, spending less or a career change. The root problem is our attitude toward and relationship with money itself.

Crown Ministries is a financial course which has been taught in churches around the world which will enable you to learn God's perspective on money. It is a 12 week course taught in small groups which will examine what the Bible says about finances.

There are over 2,350 verses in the Bible which deal with money, saving, tithing, giving and stewardship, making money and how we deal with it one of the chief topics. Richard Halverson, former chaplain to the United States Senate, said: "Jesus Christ said

[so much] about money because money is of first importance when it comes to a diagnosing a person's true nature. Money is an exact index of our true character. Throughout Scripture we find an intimate correlation between the development of a person's character and how he or she handles money."

On Saturday, March 13, 1999, there will be a 6 hour Leader Training Seminar to train leaders for the Crown Ministries Small Group Financial Study. The training requires approximately 8 hours of preparation and 6 hours of class time. The cost of the material is \$45.00. For further information, call Sean Curry at 212-732-0505.

ELISABETH ELLIOT TO SPEAK APRIL 24

In 1956 five young men serving as missionaries in Ecuador were massacred by the Auca Indians, a stone age cannibalistic tribe. As the American people and the Christian community mourned the loss from afar, the young widow of Jim Elliot faced the realization that her husband, for whom she had waited eight years to marry, was gone, leaving her with a young daughter and a long uncharted journey ahead. Through that experience, and also losing her second husband, Addison Leitch to cancer, Elisabeth Elliot has learned that a quiet heart is the result of something beyond circumstances.

In the subsequent forty-three years, Elisabeth has continued to learn and to share her insights with millions of people through

books, seminars and daily radio broadcasts. The Women In the Church (WIC) at Redeemer have invited Elisabeth Elliot to speak concerning what God has taught her about "Keeping a Quiet Heart" on Saturday, April 24th, at Calvary Baptist Church. This is another in the continuing series of one day in-town retreats sponsored by the WIC, and will run from 8:15 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Whether you are a single mom, a career woman, a student, as housewife, a mother a single woman or just a woman yearning for a quiet heart, we hope that you will come and hear. Registration begins on March 14 at both East and West Side locations. For additional information you may e-mail your questions to Ecseminar@aol.com.

PRE-MARITAL SEMINAR APRIL 10

If you're thinking about a wedding, you should think about this first: Redeemer's quarterly Pre-Marital Seminar will be held on Saturday, April 10, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the church office, 271 Madison Avenue, 15th Floor. The seminar costs \$25 per couple and is a prerequisite for anyone who wants to be married by a Redeemer pastor. The meeting creates an atmosphere that allows a couple to ask frank questions about their relationship. Registration is limited to 25 couples. To register, you must call the church receptionist at 808-4460 x110.

REDEEMER REPORT

Kathy Keller

Buddy Mungo

Dave Jacobs

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

MENTORING MADE EASY

Mentoring—Moses did it for Joshua. Jesus did it for Peter, James and John. It's the fine art of developing a personal relationship in order to pass on skills and values to a younger person. Whether you've been a follower of Jesus for three days or three decades, you can learn the why's and how's of spiritual mentoring at Redeemer's Mentoring Seminar.

On Saturday, March 13, Redeemer is offering a seminar that will explain what a good mentor or mentoree looks like; how to develop a mentoring relationship; and some practical ways to do mentoring. Mentoring can be accomplished through means as simple as a monthly breakfast meeting or a weekly phone call.

The seminar will run from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the Williams Room of the Williams Club, 24 E. 39th Street (between Park and Madison) and will cost \$5. A continental breakfast will be served. Instructors will be the Rev. Tim Pettit, director of church life, and Calla Biondi, a leader in Redeemer's women's ministry.

To register, please call the church receptionist at 808-4460 x110.

ALL-CHURCH SPRING RETREAT

Our annual all-church retreat at the Tamiment Hotel in Pennsylvania's Pocono Mountains will run from Friday night, May 21, through Sunday morning, May 23.

Retreat veterans tell us that Redeemer retreats are a wonderful way to make many new relationships, even if you've only been at Redeemer a couple of months.

Registration is limited and must be done in person after any of the worship services on the West or East Sides on April 11 and 18. Payment must be made in full at registration. The package rate per person is \$135 for triple occupancy and \$160 for a double; the round-trip charter bus costs \$35.

Tamiment overlooks a 90-acre lake and has complete indoor sports facilities. The program will include spiritual teaching, worship, a coffee house, and group activities. For more information, contact Tim Pettit, director of church life, at 808-4460 x141.

ZIP CODE PARTIES SUCCESS

By Debra Christiansen

More than 150 women stormed the registration table in the East Lounge on the first day of sign-ups (a Redeemer record, no doubt). Most of the 33 parties were filled to capacity, so several women even traipsed across town if their area was filled.

Clearly, we struck a chord that touched the hearts of many women. Thank you to those of you who hosted a party, as well as the many who came out to meet their neighbors.

Joy Martinez put many hours into the planning and organizing of this event and to her we are VERY GRATEFUL. If you have any other ideas you would like to see happen, give me a call at 212-481-0375.

HFNY CROSS-CULTURAL VOLUNTEER TRAINING

On Monday, March 8, Hope for New York will offer a training session especially relevant to those who minister in our diverse city. The Rev. Michel Faulkner of Central Baptist Church (at whose facility the event will take place) will bring a keynote address on "Taking the Gospel Across Cultures." If you have been, or plan to be a Hope for New York volunteer, or if you are a leader anywhere within Redeemer, you will find this to be a valuable time. The session will begin at 7:00 p.m. at Central Baptist Church, 92nd and Amsterdam. Contact Ryan Myers at 212-808-4460 x 123 if you have any questions.

PREPARING FOR THE EASTER SACRIFICIAL OFFERING

Leading up to the Easter Sacrificial Offering on April 4, Redeemer will feature testimonies of individuals whose lives have been changed by the gospel through the work of Hope for New York.

One of the disciplines of Lent is to meditate on the sufferings of Jesus, both in his life and in his death. We remember what Dietrich Bonhoeffer in *The Cost of Discipleship* called the "costly grace" of God. He says that "grace is costly because it calls us to follow, and it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ...it is costly because it cost God the life of his Son...it is grace because God did not reckon his Son too dear a price to pay for our life."

In recalling the poverty that Christ brought on himself for our sakes, for centuries the church has remembered the poor with a sacrificial offering as part of the celebration of Christ's resurrection. At Redeemer, that offering goes to Hope for New York, which uses it on behalf of the hurting in the city - children, seniors, the homeless, the addicted and many more.

During Easter we have the opportunity to remember the price that Christ paid to purchase our eternal life. To the degree we understand the price paid and the depths to which Christ went for us, we will understand the magnitude of his love and the height of joy we have in him. From the Incarnation to the Resurrection, Christ invites us to follow in his poverty and to share in his joy.

GLORYING IN OUR WEAKNESS

BY KATHI KELLER

When we read what Paul wrote in I Corinthians 11:30—“If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness.”—it should set off little alarm bells in our modern consciousness. Paul was in the midst of a vigorous defense of his authority as an apostle, which was under serious attack from what he calls “super-apostles” (v.5) Shouldn’t he be assembling a killer resume, highlighting his successes, his strengths, his victories, rather than his weaknesses?

The prevailing assumption in the Christian world today is that if I profess the name of Christ, it is my duty to present a spotless, unblemished, flawless life for the inspection of the world as a way of honoring Christ. To be sure, scandalous behavior secretly indulged in by hypocrites or a defiant embrace of things which God has called sin are a cause for grief within the Christian community and contempt outside of it.

However, I’m talking about the normal day-to-day experi-

ence of the average believer who tries and fails, sins and repents, screws up and tries again. Our instinct, formed by the world, is to cover up, as best we can, our failures and present a smiling front to the world. (“See how great it is to be a Christian! Don’t you want to be one, too!”) This view of Christian behavior substitutes a sentimental, superficial peace for the delirious and outrageous joy of the Gospel.

Paul knew better than we. In chapter 12, verses 9 and 10, he goes on to say “[The Lord] said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me.” The actual fact is that we rob Jesus of his best opportunity to display his grace and his power when we conceal our failures and our flaws.

Once we are willing to drop the pretense that we are pulled-together, polished, and perfect, grace becomes a spring of joy welling up in our lives. What a

relief not to have to pretend to have the perfect marriage, the perfect children, the perfect devotional life! What a relief, not to have to rely on my own performance for my acceptance! Though I continue to aspire to wholeness (and holiness) in those areas, I can finally admit my failures honestly, knowing that God loved me and adopted me as his child even before I myself was aware of my flaws. Furthermore, his power as a savior is more clearly seen in the life of someone who needs to be saved, than in the buttoned-down, air-brushed life of the Christian *poseur*.

Abandoning the pretense of perfection also has the effect of making Christianity attractive to the non-believer. Self-righteousness not only creates a barrier between us and God, it also divides us from our needy neighbors. Only the true humility of facing my daily need for grace makes me an acceptable messenger of grace to the non-believer. So Jesus is more fully glorified by our weakness than by our strengths.