

# REDEEMER

R E P O R T

SUMMER2004

## HOW TO HAVE BLESSEDNESS, VIA JOHN NEWTON

BY: KATHY KELLER

As many of you who have been praying for me know, the last several years, and in particular the last 9 months, have been a time of sickness, surgery, anxiety and emotional ups and downs for me. I have had Crohn's disease for many years, but until recently it was not much of a problem. I am now living with the reality of a chronic disease, which is thankfully in remission, but also with the trauma of five major surgeries in 7 months, some successful, others not.

During this difficult period, I turned as I usually do in times of trouble to the letters of John Newton (the converted slave trader who wrote "Amazing Grace.") You can find the best

collection of them under the title "The Utterance of the Heart." A recent reprint has changed the title to "The Voice of the Heart."

Because these are pastoral letters, sent to people to whom he was ministering, many of them deal with the subject of suffering and affliction. I would like to share with you parts of one letter on the subject of blessedness, or how a Christian can receive joy in this world. I think you would do yourself a tremendous good if you can lay your hands on a copy of this book and make the letters a part of your devotional reading.

"The apostle speaks of a blessedness, which it is the design of the gospel to impart to those who receive it...His

expression has led me sometimes to consider wherein a Christian's present blessedness consists. — I mean that which is attainable in this state of trial...It is no way dependent upon outward circumstances. Prosperity cannot impart it, preserve or supply the want of it; nor can adversity put it out of our reach. I consider not what [we] shall be in Heaven, but what, in an humble attendance upon the Lord, [we] may be while on earth.

I have thought this blessedness may be comprised in five particulars:

In the first place, a clear, well-grounded, habitual persuasion of our acceptance in the Beloved is attainable; and, though we may

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## REDEEMER'S CHURCH OFFICES ARE MOVING IN SEPTEMBER

BY: DAVID BISGROVE & CARL DE PRADO

Moving is one of those demanding events that most New Yorkers face at some time or another. This September Redeemer's staff will face the challenge of packing everything up and moving to a new location. We will be moving from our offices of the last 10+ years at 271 Madison Avenue to our new location at 1359 Broadway

between 36th and 37th Street.

Why are we moving? Our current lease expires in September of this year. So last fall we began a study to explore our options, including staying at our current location. After carefully evaluating the current commercial rental market, the trends in office design, and the less than optimal

office layout at our current location (where we have staff working on 5 different floors), it was decided to look for a new space that would be both more effective and able to serve the growing needs of our congregation.

Our new location will provide us with excellent facilities for both our staff and the congregation.

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The new space will accommodate our entire staff on a single floor, including the Church Planting Center, the Counseling Center, and Hope for New York. The new office has an open floor plan, which will also help foster better communication among ministries and staff. Most importantly, the new space meets the growing needs of our ministries for training and events with a conference center that accommodates up to 100 people.

As we prepare for “The Big Move” there are ways in which you can help. First, please pray

for us as we put the hundreds of details both large and small into place- that we will be able to move on schedule in September.

Secondly, please continue to faithfully support the ministry of Redeemer financially. Our budgeted giving for June through August is approximately \$92,000 per week. These funds are critical in maintaining ministries and programs like our four worship services each Sunday, our Counseling Center, Church Planting, and our general overhead.

Lastly, as we get closer to the

move date, we would appreciate your help in volunteering in various ways during this transition. If you are interested in volunteering your time during the month of September please email [carl@redeemer.com](mailto:carl@redeemer.com). Please give your contact information as well as ways you would be willing to serve, and we will contact you when we have more details on the various ways that you can volunteer.

Thank you for your prayers and generous support of Redeemer’s ministry, and have a great summer.

## REDEEMER ORGANISTS: PLEASED WITH NEW SPEAKERS

BY MIRIAM BURNS

Redeemer East side AM attendees have surely noticed by now the handsome new organ speakers gracing both sides of the Hunter stage.

Gone are the super sized cabinets, housing the blown bass speakers and amps causing those frequent shuddering, buzzing sounds. Over the years the organ itself has required numerous repairs. So it is great to have the organ and new speakers both working optimally.

Redeemer organist virtuoso Walter Hilse comments that the new speakers give a fuller, richer sound to the instrument, but adds that from where he sits, the organist does not get the full

benefit or realization of the new sound system.

James Markey, who subs for Walter, agrees, adding: “It’s wonderful to have the new organ speakers. They really help balance the various registers of the instrument, in particular by providing a solid and full-sounding pedal register. And while we’re continuing to tweak them (in terms of balance and placement), they provide a wonderful, clear sound.”

If you enjoy listening to Walter and Jim play on Sundays, you can also find them playing during the week.

Walter Hilse performs recitals around the tri-state area throughout

the year and has several CD’s available for purchase. His next performance is Saturday, October 2nd at 2:00 p.m. at St. Peters Lutheran Church (Lexington at 54<sup>th</sup> St.), as part of the Basically Bach Festival.

Jim Markey, in addition to being an accomplished organist, also has a “day job” as the Associate Principal Trombone of the New York Philharmonic (the youngest to become a member seven years ago at age 22). He is also a member of Redeemer’s brass quintet, performing at the Hunter AM services. Jim’s wife Liz is a harpist, and has played for the East side AM service on several occasions.

### REDEEMER REPORT

Kathy Keller  
Carl de Prado  
Fred Liedtke

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HUNTER COLLEGE AUDITORIUM  
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services at 10:30AM • 5:45PM

ETHICAL CULTURE  
West 64TH and CPW  
service at 9:15AM

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
Corner of West 79TH and Broadway  
service at 7:00PM

be safe, we cannot be said to enjoy blessedness without it.... They are blessed, therefore, who have such views of the power, grace, and suitableness of Jesus, and the certainty and security of redemption in Him, that they have anchored their hopes, and ventured their all upon His person, work, and promise....

Could this privilege be enjoyed singly, the natural man would have no objection to it. He would (as he thinks) be pleased to know he should be saved at last, provided that while here he might live in his sins. But the believer will not, cannot think himself blessed, unless he has likewise a conscience void of offence....If a traveler was absolutely sure of reaching his journey's end in safety, yet, if he walked with a thorn in his foot, he must take every step in pain. Such a thorn will be felt in the conscience, till we are favoured with a simplicity of heart, and made willing in all things, great or small, to yield obedience to the authority of the Lord's precepts, and make them the standing rule of our conduct, without willfully admitting a single exception....If we trifle with light, and connive at what we know to be wrong, we shall be weak, restless, and uncomfortable.

Real communion with the Lord, in his appointed means of grace, is likewise an important branch of this blessedness. To read the Scriptures, not as an attorney may read a will, merely to know the sense, but as the heir reads it, as a description and proof of his interest: to hear the gospel, as the voice of our Beloved, so as to have little leisure either for admiring the

abilities or censuring the defects of the preacher; and in prayer, to feel a liberty of pouring out our hearts before the Lord...herein is blessedness.

In this way, besides the pleasure, a spiritual taste is acquired, something analogous to the meaning of the word *taste* when applied to music or good breeding, by which discords and improprieties are observed and avoided, as it were by instinct, and what is right is felt and followed, not so much by the force of rules, as by a habit insensibly acquired,,,

[The next few paragraphs have meant a great deal to me. Ed.]

Another branch of blessedness is a power of reposing ourselves and our concerns upon the Lord's faithfulness and care; ...in consequence of this, a peaceful, humble submission to His will, under all events, which, upon their first impression, are contrary to our own views and desires.

Surely, in a world like this, where everything is uncertain, where we are exposed to trials on every hand, and know not but a single hour may bring forth something painful, yea, dreadful to our natural sensations, there can be no blessedness, but so far as we are thus enabled to entrust and resign all to the direction and faithfulness of the Lord our shepherd.

For want of more of this spirit, multitudes of professing Christians perplex and wound themselves, and dishonour their high calling, by continual anxieties, alarms, and complaints.

They think nothing safe under the Lord's keeping, unless their own eye is likewise upon it; and are seldom satisfied with any of His dispensations; for, though He gratify their desires in nine instances, a refusal in the tenth spoils the relish of all, and they show the truths of the gospel can afford them little comfort if self is crossed.

But blessed is the one who trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: he shall be kept in perfect peace, though the earth be moved, and mountains cast into the midst of the sea.

And I have not room to detain you long upon the fifth particular. It belongs to a believer's blessedness to feel his spirit cheerful and active for the Lord's service in the world. For to what other end should he wish to live? If he thought of himself only, it would be better to depart and be with Jesus immediately. But he is a debtor to His grace and love; and, thought strictly he can make no returns yet he longs to show his thankfulness: and if the Lord gives him a heart to redeem his time, to devote his strength and influence, and lay himself out for His service, that he may be instrumental in promoting His cause, in comforting His people—he will account it blessedness.

This is indeed the great end of life, and he knows it will evidently appear so at the approach of death.

John Newton

# AN INTERVIEW WITH HFNY VOLUNTEER BRIAN HUANG

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BY: EMILY MCWORTER

**B**rian has been involved at Redeemer for five years and serves as The Bowery Mission's Hope for New York Team Leader for Wednesday night meal services. Emily is also a Redeemer attendee and a volunteer at the Bowery Mission.

**Redeemer:** What made you want to volunteer?

**Brian:** Basically, the way I've always looked at it is that I'm not any better than the people I'm serving. Some people have it a lot tougher in life, and so this is my chance to help them in the same way that Christ helped people.

**Redeemer:** When did you start volunteering through Hope for New York (HFNY)?

**Brian:** In 2000, I started working with this program called Job Start. Then I started tutoring, and that year was the first time I volunteered at The Bowery Mission. I went with a Redeemer home group that has volunteered there the first Wednesday of every month for the past five years.

**Redeemer:** What is The Bowery Mission?

**Brian:** I think what I associate The Bowery Mission with the most is serving food for the homeless. Also, they have a great program where they help people get back on their feet.

**Redeemer:** How did you choose The Bowery Mission with all the other HFNY opportunities?

**Brian:** I was impressed with how seriously they take their work before God. I saw that they have

an application and thought, "I have to fill out an application to volunteer?" Then I read about how they take their faith seriously, and that impressed me.

**Redeemer:** Can you describe a typical night of volunteering at the Mission?

**Brian:** First, you get there at 6:30 and check in. Then the chef comes out, and gives us directions for serving the food and preparing a few things. Around 7:15 people come in, and we spoon out food and serve beverages. For the most part, the people you are serving are nice. Sometimes people might make a mean comment or something, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't show them God's love. We finish at 8:30, and afterwards might go out as a group.

**Redeemer:** Are there any lessons you feel you've learned from volunteering?

**Brian:** One lesson I've learned is that we are not any different from those men and women at the mission. And when God tells us to share His love with people, He doesn't mean people that look like you or that went to school where you went, but to help the poor and needy. "It's not the healthy that need a physician, but the sick," (Mark 2:17). It's just going to serve food. Then I go back to my nice apartment, and I'm back in my own world. But you know, if I can do something to make this world a little better and show people God's love, I think in the end it helps me more than it helps them. The people are so appreciative. One thing I want to make clear is that it's not a dangerous environment. When you serve,

there are guys in the Mission, in their six-month program, helping out right beside you. It's completely safe. They are the best guys in the world. And being from Redeemer, I don't want to only hang out with educated yuppies (no offense to all the educated yuppies). It's been really great to meet so many different people at the Mission.

**Redeemer:** When you see a homeless person on the street, do you react differently now than before your involvement with the Mission?

**Brian:** It is different. I used to give homeless people money or food. These days, because I see the same homeless people at the same places, I try to strike up conversations and develop a relationship.

**Redeemer:** How would you describe the guests who eat at the Mission?

**Brian:** They have a lot of dignity. They're not just going to take stuff because you give it to them. They are going to ask for salt and pepper and Tabasco sauce. They will ask for the better piece of chicken instead of the piece that doesn't look as good. One night a student from Hunter, who I was volunteering with, saw one of her classmates in line. You definitely see people who are trying to get back on their feet. I saw a couple of bike messengers there, and they've got jobs, but the jobs don't pay them enough money. So they come to the Mission and get something to eat. I've never seen them turn away anyone.

**Redeemer:** Do women come?

**Brian:** Yes, we definitely see women there also.

**Redeemer:** What keeps most people from getting involved with volunteer work?

**Brian:** Probably their own hearts. It's tough. Some people feel intimidated. I think The Bowery Mission is absolutely the best way for people, especially at Redeemer, to get involved. It's safe, it gets you out of that bubble, and you get to see Christ at work. When you're preparing the food, next door in the chapel there is a service that everyone attends. Some listen, and some sleep. But you know what? God's word is being preached, and it is reaching people and helping them. And then they come and see God's love in action.

**Redeemer:** Why do you do it?

**Brian:** I feel like it's a small way that I can serve God.

**Redeemer:** If you could summarize The Bowery Mission in one word, what would it be?

**Brian:** Hope.

**Redeemer:** If someone reading this article wanted to volunteer, what should they do?

**Brian:** They need to send an email to [bowerymeals@hfny.org](mailto:bowerymeals@hfny.org) if they want to serve at the Bowery, or email [volunteer@hfny.org](mailto:volunteer@hfny.org) for other HFNY opportunities. If you stop to consider that more than 4,000 people attend Redeemer each Sunday, if we all spent one night a week volunteering and helping the needy, it would have a huge impact on the city.



## TEANECK NJ CHURCH PLANT CALLS NEW PASTOR

One of Redeemer's daughter churches in NJ – Redeemer-Teaneck – recently welcomed its new pastor, the Rev. Peter Wang, who previously served as Assistant Pastor of Faith Presbyterian Church in Wilmington, DE. Peter was born in the Bronx, grew up in central Jersey, and graduated from the University of Pennsylvania where he met his wife Cedar. He worked for a number of years as a systems and management consultant before doing his graduate theological training at Reformed Seminary.

The Teaneck church has weathered some difficult times in the past year-and-a-half, but now

feels repositioned to pursue its fresh vision of **“bringing the people of Northern NJ into a life-transforming encounter with the kingdom of God.”** You can find out more about the church's vision by visiting its website at [www.redeemerteaneck.com](http://www.redeemerteaneck.com).

As a young church plant, the Teaneck congregation currently has about 75 adults and 25 children in weekly worship.

If you live in or near Bergen County and would like to join in this mission to reach our suburban neighbors, consider checking out this growing community of faith. As a young church plant, Redeemer-

Teaneck could use an infusion of Kingdom-minded servants and ministry leaders in many capacities. To contact the pastor, email [peter@redeemerteaneck.com](mailto:peter@redeemerteaneck.com) or call (201) 833-0390.

Please pray that Redeemer-Teaneck would:

continue to seek after Christ individually and corporately build a strong sense of community in the congregation creatively and boldly build bridges into the surrounding communities

both proclaim and demonstrate the Gospel in every aspect of its ministry

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## NEW EXECUTIVE PASTOR:

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### MIKE MARCEY

#### **New Executive Pastor Mike Marcey will Preach Sunday September 5<sup>th</sup>**

The Rev. Michael Marcey has accepted Redeemer's call to serve as our new Executive Pastor beginning September 1<sup>st</sup>. He will be replacing the Rev. Terry Gyger who has served as Executive Pastor since 1999 and who is transitioning into the role of full-time Director of Redeemer's Church Planting Center.

Mike and his wife Sally planted the Naperville Presbyterian Church outside of Chicago and he has served as its Senior Pastor for the past twenty years. An article introducing Mike and Sally will appear in the September issue of this newsletter.