

# REDEEMER

R E P O R T

SEPTEMBER 2004

## “RED” AND “BLUE,” NEW YORK CITY

BY: TIM KELLER

A July 13, 2004, *New York Times* story compared the “Two Americas of ‘Fahrenheit’ and ‘The Passion of the Christ.’” The article pointed out that most of the top grossing theaters for the Michael Moore movie “Fahrenheit 9/11” were in NYC, LA, Chicago, Boston, San Francisco and other urban areas of the “blue states”—

those which voted Democratic in the last presidential election. Meanwhile most of the top grossing theaters for the Mel Gibson movie “The Passion” were in suburban areas and in “red” southern and midwestern states that voted Republican. No surprise there.

But there was a surprising fact amidst all the figures.

*“For both films, the top theater was Empire 25 in Times Square, and theaters in Greenwich Village and West Nyack, N.Y., were in the top 50.” Interesting! How did the journalist account for it? She wrote “But even in the New York metropolitan area, the ticket buyers’ profiles make for sharp contrasts. The area’s other top theaters for “Passion” were in Elizabeth, N.J.,*

*(continued on page 3)*

## MIKE MARCEY IS UNABLE TO TAKE EXECUTIVE PASTOR ROLE

Those of you at the congregational meeting last May were excited to learn that we were calling a new Executive Pastor, Mike Marcey, to begin serving this fall. I am writing this letter to you to tell you that, to our disappointment, Mike won’t be able to join us.

Though he was quite excited about Redeemer and his new

role with us, this summer he informed us that he had come to see the need for a long overdue sabbatical, a break from the pastoral ministry that has shaped the last 30 years of his life. As difficult and painful as this was, both he and his wife, Sally, believe it is a good and necessary decision.

Despite our acute disappoint-

ment, we believe that God is working both in Mike’s life and in Redeemer in this. We will re-engage a vigorous search for someone to fill the role of Executive Pastor as soon as possible. Pray for Mike’s refreshment and direction during this time and for our search.

In Him,  
Tim

## BE A PART OF IT

BY: KATE JOHNSON

I was walking up Broadway one evening in May - just past Columbus circle, when I noticed a young mother and her son — a cute, dark-haired little boy about 8-years-old

dressed in a cherry red tee shirt and baggy black shorts. As he gazed up at the Trump Tower, he excitedly exclaimed to his mother. “MOM — I LOVE this place. I LOVE this place.” I

couldn’t help smiling at his declaration because inside I often react the same way as I walk the streets of Manhattan. I love New York City.

I love the fact that I can

*(continued on page 2)*



### INSIDE:

- HOW HOME FELLOWSHIP GROUPS CHANGE THE CITY
- REDEEMER’S CENTER FOR FAITH AND WORK

stand on Fifth Avenue and hear people speaking in different languages as they pass by. I love the fact that I don't have to drive anywhere but can take public transportation, or just walk to work through Central Park if I feel like it.

I love Redeemer, too. In 1996, when I heard Tim Keller explain Redeemer's Vision for the city, I knew that this was where I wanted to be, involved in a church whose purpose was to "ignite a movement of the Gospel."

Recently, Redeemer surveyed its four congregations. Did you know that of the 3,100 people surveyed, only 15.29% said they volunteered for a ministry? This surprised me. I would have thought the rate to be at least the Pareto Principle benchmark of 20%. (20% of the people do 80% of the work.)

According to 2004 Barna

Research statistics, 24% of church attendees volunteer for some ministry. Those filling out the survey at Redeemer responded at less than 16%. We need to understand why this is.

I guess there are many reasons: we live in a transient city, people travel so much that they find it harder to commit to anything regularly. Many people find they are so busy they barely have time to attend church - let alone serve in a ministry.

This is where the challenge lies, because in the body of Christ we have no greater calling than to serve. Jesus demonstrated this time after time with his disciples. It is then logical to see ourselves serving and renewing this city-that-never-sleeps as part of a higher calling.

In the June newsletter, Cregan Cooke wrote about seeking God's direction for finding the area of ministry

God is calling you to serve. If we are truly going to realize our vision for transforming the city of New York with the Gospel of grace, more people at Redeemer have to catch the vision of serving.

We have to be careful that the culture we live in - the culture of "what's in it for me" - does not dominate our worldview. After all, we're the Church of the Redeemer, not the Church of the Consumer. Of course, there are seasons of time when we need to rest just as Jesus had times of service, then rest. I think it's safe to say that there wouldn't be as much burn out of volunteers if more people shared the load.

Are you helping Redeemer Presbyterian Church to realize its vision for New York City? Don't you - as Frank sings - "want to be a part of it?"

What is your part?

## HOW HOME FELLOWSHIP GROUPS CHANGE THE CITY

Community is an element of Christian life that we often stressed at Redeemer. We hear about the early church in the book of Acts, and are inspired by the example of the apostles. We understand philosophically the import of Jesus' teaching that everyone "will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:35). Yet does being in close fellowship with other Christians actually make a tangible difference in

the life of the city, in the life of the church, and in the life of individuals? Yes! Consider the results of our congregational survey taken earlier this Spring.

The survey shows that Home Fellowship Groups are the critical source of volunteers for Redeemer's ministry to the poor. Hope for New York is Redeemer's partner ministry for alleviating suffering for the poor of the city. According to the survey, 58% of HFNY's

volunteers from Redeemer are Home Fellowship Group members. This figure is more impressive when you consider that only a third of Redeemer attendees are in fellowship groups. It becomes more impressive still, when you consider that only a fifth of all fellowship group members serve Hope for New York (~7% of the congregation). So we learn: a.) Redeemer's ministry to the poor is dependent largely on

*(continued on page 3)*

### REDEEMER REPORT

Kathy Keller  
Carl de Prado  
Fred Liedtke

The Redeemer Report is a publication of the Redeemer Presbyterian Church.  
OFFICE • 271 MADISON AVENUE • SUITE 1600 • NEW YORK, NEW YORK • 10016  
(212) 808-4460 (phone) (212) 808-4465 (fax) [www.redeemer.com](http://www.redeemer.com)

HUNTER COLLEGE AUDITORIUM  
East 69TH (Between Park & Lexington)  
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

and in Whitestone and Astoria, Queens, [but] for "Fahrenheit" the other top local theaters were on the Upper West Side and the Upper East Side and in Midtown Manhattan." Her theory, in other words, was that there is a 'red' New York City and a 'blue' one as well. But that doesn't ring true if 'red' means Republican and 'blue' means Democrat. Democrats overwhelmingly outnumber Republicans in New York City. What is really going on?

The article's writer did not have the proper categories to 'read the data' as it were. In New York City (and other major U.S. cities) black, Hispanic, and Asian Christians, leaders, and churches are leading a spiritual and social urban renewal that is truly 'off the

radar' of the press and the pundits. They tend to vote Democratic because of the Democrats' historic record supporting racial justice, but they are heavily Catholic and evangelical. It is mostly the smaller number of urban white, well-off, and educated people who fit the mold of 'secular liberals.'

Ethnic and immigrant Christians are planting churches in major cities at an amazing rate, but these movements will be much more concerned about the poor and social justice than Republicans ordinarily have been and at the same time much more concerned to uphold classic Christian moral and sexual ethics than Democrats ordinarily have been. Yes, it was all the grass-roots non-white Christians

who made "The Passion" a big grossing movie in New York City, but that doesn't mean they were Republican. In general, the burgeoning non-white and immigrant populations of U.S. cities simply do not mirror the 'blue' and 'red' polarizations of the rest of largely Anglo America. And this is good! Biblically thoughtful Christianity has never fit neatly into current political categories like "Democrat" or "Republican" — nor should it!

Big things are happening in the major cities of the West! The new spiritual, religious, social, and political arrangements of the future are going to happen there (that is, here!) first. Who would want to be somewhere else?

## HOME FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

CONT. FROM PAGE TWO

the participation of HFG members and b.) There is a huge opportunity to grow Redeemer's service to the poor by:

1. Encouraging more people to join fellowship groups
2. Encouraging more fellowship groups to serve the city together.

The survey also shows Home Fellowship Groups are essential to the life of Redeemer as a church. Joining an HFG increases by 50% the likelihood an attendee will consider Redeemer his or her "home church." It also increases by ~30% the likelihood someone will have attended Redeemer for more than two years. More remarkable is the correlation between HFG involvement and membership.

Of Redeemer attendees who are not in fellowship groups, only 7% become members. Attendees who also are in fellowship groups are five times more likely to become members (34%). There is a strong correlation with stewardship as well.

Finally, the survey shows that Home Fellowship Groups seem to be "city-stabilizers," meaning, they influence Redeemer attendees to stay longer in the church and in the City. While 27% of those who have attended Redeemer 1-2 years are involved in a Home Fellowship Group (HFG), the number rises to 36% for those who have attended for 3-4 years, and 44% for those who have been at Redeemer for more than 10 years. Either those who stay in the city longer feel a greater

need for small group fellowship over time, or those who are in HFG feel more able to stay longer in the city. In either case, HFGs are an important ingredient for making life in the city viable long-term.

Fellowship Groups encourage believers to live out their faith more actively in New York. This makes intuitive sense: you are more likely to live out your ideals when you have people encouraging you, praying for you and holding you accountable to do so. Yet only a third of Redeemer attendees are part of a regular home fellowship group. It is time to grow. This fall, for the first time, all of Redeemer's home fellowship groups will be listed online. To join, find one in your area, and contact a leader.

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
NEW YORK, NY  
PERMIT NO. 349



## REDEEMER'S CENTER FOR FAITH AND WORK

CFW will offer 5 different classes (5 weeks each) this year after both morning worship services. The classes are an opportunity to discuss the practical working out of the Christian faith - both our successes and our failures - and are led by professionals (doctors, lawyers, journalists, artists, business people, etc.) within the Redeemer community.

### **Classes after West Side Morning Service WORK: Theology, Theory & Practice**

Sept 19 - Work As Partnership with God  
Sept 26 - Success & Failure  
Oct 3 - Trusting God  
Oct 17 - Who Cares About Character?  
Oct 24 - Meaning and Mission

### **Classes after East Side Morning Service VOCATIONAL DECISION MAKING**

Sept 19 Finding Your Niche  
Sept 26 - Moving Thru Life's Changing Seasons  
Oct 3 - Discerning His Will  
Oct 17 - Biblical Calling  
Oct 24 - Fulfilling Your Potential

### **FINANCIAL SERVICES GROUP**

#### **Sept 12th 12:10-2:10PM**

Fall Reception "Welcome to the Jungle"- a lively panel discussion where the somewhat veteran finance types share their "lessons learned" for those of you who are new to the profession and/or new to NYC. RSVP at [finance@redeemer.com](mailto:finance@redeemer.com)  
Lunch will be served (\$5 donation).

**Nov 5th 7PM Banking Panel**

**Jan 28th 7PM Tim Keller talks on "Money"**

### **EDUCATORS**

#### **Sept 12th 12:10-2:10**

Fall Kick-Off Reception Lunch and reception, plus a panel discussion by educators working at the college, High school, Jr. High, primary, and pre-K levels. RSVP to [educators@redeemer.com](mailto:educators@redeemer.com)

**Nov 5th 7:00PM - 9:30PM Tim Keller talk to Educators**

**Jan 16th Educators Group - Special Program**

### **MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS**

#### **Sept 12th 12:10-2:10PM**

Fall Medical Fellowship Reception  
All medical/healthcare professionals are welcome. Lunch will be served (\$5 donation). RSVP at [medical@redeemer.com](mailto:medical@redeemer.com)

#### **Sept 19th 2:00-3:30 Fellowship of Christian Optometrists (FCO)**

Fall Kickoff Reception -Speakers Leslie and Brian Sumner will talk about serving the city thru Bowery Mission and we will be developing programs for eye care missions to Mexico and pediatric vision screening here in the city. All eye care professionals-We need you! For more info contact [FCOMNY@yahoo.com](mailto:FCOMNY@yahoo.com)

**Oct 8th 7 PM Medical Fellowship Dinner Meeting -** Tim Keller will speak to the on the integration of our faith and the practice of medicine.