

REDEEMER

R E P O R T

DECEMBER 2004

WHY I TEACH SUNDAY SCHOOL

BY: STACY BARTHOLOMEW

You are a pastor's wife who cannot play the piano—that's why you teach. Wrong. You have three kids in the children's ministry program, and it is only fair that you volunteer. Not a bad reason actually, but wrong again. I teach Sunday School because I am often overwhelmed by the busyness of life; I grow discouraged by my sin and the sins of others, and one of my frequent prayers is that God will give me a front row seat into His work in someone's life, that I might not lose heart.

This year, that front row seat is in a classroom of fourth and fifth graders, where the Holy Spirit shows up week after week, in ways both great and small, revealing God's continuing and mighty work in an often overlooked corner of his kingdom. Each week brings new insight for all of us. "You mean the big

fat books are called the Major Prophets because they have a lot of pages, and the skinny ones are called the Minor Prophets 'cause they don't have as much stuff?" Well, that is one way to put it!

In teaching, as well as parenting, I have learned two things. First, children experience every struggle I too encounter, though not always in degree or kind. They struggle with fear and greed; they crave approval and want desperately to be loved; they grow discouraged by their own sin; they mourn over friends who do not know Jesus, and they worry about the future. Sound familiar?

The second thing I know is that God's word meets children and changes them the same way it changes me. Last week our group gathered in a circle on the floor, each sprawled around his or her own Bible, each searching

a different Psalm, practicing "seeking God," asking ourselves what each particular Psalm revealed. During his turn one young man looked up and said, "Sometimes I just want to feel like I matter, like I am important. This Psalm tells me that no matter how I feel, God says I am important to him and that makes things different."

There are moments when the Infinite draws very close and startles those of us who make a life out of talking about just such events. I knew that his insight was not from me. "You are right," I whispered, "It does matter."

Children are capable of conversion and deep faith. Could the front row seat into God's transforming work which you are so diligently seeking be found down the hall, in the Children's Department? Come and see.

GIFTS THAT KEEP ON GIVING

Following all Redeemer services in the month of December, the Worship and Arts Department will be selling CD's that benefit various ministries.

These CD's include:

Christmas of Hope, which benefits Hope for New York and which features over 100 Redeemer musicians; and Steve Sacks' jazz CD, *Look to the Sky*, which supports the work of the diaconate.

All other recordings support the Arts Ministries. There are jazz recordings by the 6:30 band, Russ Nolan, Terry Silverlight, and Bill Holcomb, classical recordings by James Markey and organist Walter Hulse, and rock CD's by Annie Quick and Mark Giacobbe. Also, don't miss Redeemer's worship CD, *New York Hymns*.

All of these items can also be purchased at www.redeemer.com.



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CHRISTMAS AT REDEEMER

Sunday, December 19: Lessons and Carols will be held at all four services with Tim Keller.

9:15 AM at Ethical Culture Society - special music includes a brass choir, jazz quartet, and soloists

10:30 AM at Hunter College Auditorium - The Orchestra of the Redeemer and Choir performing excerpts from J.S. Bach Christmas Oratorio; Miriam Burns, conductor. Soloists include Kyle Pfortmiller, Matthew Polenzani and Heidi Grant Murphy.

5:45 PM at Hunter College Auditorium - special music includes band, dancers, and soloists

7:00 PM at First Baptist Church - special music includes band, string quartet, and soloists

**Sunday, December 26: There will be NO evening services on Dec. 26.
The morning service times will be as usual. Tim Keller preaching.**

HOPE FOR NEW YORK CHRISTMAS EVENTS 2004

HFNY, Redeemer's Mercy Ministry, will host six major Christmas events this year.

This Christmas, please consider how *YOU* might help to make the holiday a special time for those we serve. Donations of toys, funds for Bibles and Clothing and especially your time are greatly appreciated.

His Toy Store

This year, we will operate three "toy stores" where families in need may come and "shop" for toys for their children. We count on *YOU* to donate new unwrapped toys, and our volunteers - that's *YOU!* - set up a store where parents shop for the perfect toy for their children. We also hope for donations of books and other learning materials and each child will receive a Bible. Please deliver new, unwrapped toys to the Redeemer Church offices. To volunteer, contact: HisToyStore@hfny.org.

Washington Heights, Saturday, December 4th

North Bronx, Saturday, December 11th

Brooklyn, Saturday, December 11th

St. Paul's Christmas Party

Every year, HFNY sponsors a dinner for homeless men and women. Volunteers plan and serve dinner for over 325 people! Guests receive a hot dinner, short message, entertainment, a Bible, long underwear, hats, scarves, gloves and referrals to faith-based programs serving the homeless. They experience unconditional love and acceptance from volunteers (that's right, *YOU* again!) who serve this special meal.

Wednesday, December 15th.

Contact: stpaulxmas@hfny.org

Angel Tree

Christmas can be a very disappointing time for children whose parent(s) are in prison. HFNY will be working with Prison Fellowship to host two Christmas parties for these families. *YOU* (I know, I know) buy a gift and give it to a child, only the gift is "from" the parent in prison! Our volunteers, that's . . . (okay, maybe I'll stop now), also plan a huge party for the children! We need gifts and volunteers! Please contact: Cray713@aol.com

Washington Heights/Inwood, Sunday, December 5th

Lower East Side, Sunday, December 5th

CENTER FOR FAITH AND WORK

We are having three Christmas Parties for artists:

Musicians and Dancers-Friday, December 3

Visual Artists- Friday, December 10

Writers- Saturday, December 11

Those working in Theater/Film/TV may attend either December 10 or 11...or both!

All of the parties will be on the Upper West Side, in the homes of ministry staff and volunteer leaders. **Please visit www.faithandwork.org or contact arts@redeemer.com or 212-808-4460 x158 for more information.**

STEWARDSHIP CORNER

BY: DAVID BISGROVE

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

(John3:16)

This verse, familiar to many, reminds us that sacrificial self-donation is at the heart of who God is. God gave his only Son. Christ gave his life. Why? So that we might inherit the eternal riches of life with God and his people. It is not surprising then that God, through his word, constantly challenges his people to respond to His grace with the same kind of sacrificial generosity. (2 Cor 8:7-11; Matthew 6:19-21).

As Redeemer's fiscal year winds to a close, we once again are asking our members and partners to consider their part in helping us make known in New York City what the Apostle Paul calls the 'glorious riches' of life with Christ. At the date of this printing, we need approximately \$1.8M in November and December to secure the year-end balance

necessary to proceed with the approved 2005 Vision Budget. Therefore, please prayerfully consider your investment in our mission. I have listed below several ways you can give to Redeemer Presbyterian Church.

1. Place your checks/cash into the offering plates on Sundays.

2. Mail your checks (please don't send cash) to the church office. Our new address is 1359 Broadway (4th Floor) New York, NY 10018

3. You can donate stocks and mutual funds and other 'property' that often provide you with a double tax benefit (assuming the investment has appreciated and that you have held the stock for more than one year.) By donating appreciated securities you avoid the capital gains tax faced when selling the stock, and the church pays NO capital gains tax when it sells the donated security. (For more information on this method see redeemer.com to read

the section entitled "Donation of Stocks and Other Assets" under Stewardship) You should check with a tax professional before initiating any transfer of securities. If you would like to donate stock you can initiate the transfer through your broker and request that the shares be transferred to:

Charles Schwab

Account Name: Redeemer Presbyterian Church
Account Number: 7354-3138
DTC #: 0164

Please call or email David Bisgrove (david@redeemer.com) if you are considering this kind of gift in order to assure the sending of a receipt.

4. If your bank has automated bill paying you can set up for Redeemer Presbyterian Church to receive electronically generated checks, allowing you an easier way to be systematic in your giving.

Thanks again for your ongoing participation in our ministry.

EDUCATORS GROUP—"Martin Luther King: Man of Faith"

Sunday, January 16, 2004 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM, First Baptist Church, Broadway and 79th

Join us on this holiday weekend as we discuss the aspects of King's life and person that aren't typically presented in our public schools. We'll have dinner together and finish in time to join the West Side evening worship service at 7:00PM.

RSVP to educators @redeemer.com by January 12.

FINANCIAL SERVICES GROUP

Friday, January 28, 2005 7:00 PM - 9:30 PM

Tim Keller talking on "Money: Benefits and Costs"
Don't come alone! Bring a colleague and enjoy a thought-provoking evening.
Register online (\$10) at www.faithandwork.org

REDEEMER REPORT

Kathy Keller

Carl de Prado

Fred Liedtke

The Redeemer Report is a publication of the Redeemer Presbyterian Church.

OFFICE • 1359 BROADWAY (BETWEEN W. 36/37TH STREETS) • FOURTH FLOOR • NY, NY 10018-7102
(212) 808-4460 (PHONE) (212) 808-4465 (FAX)

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

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SPECIAL OFFERING: DIACONATE MERCY FUND

Sunday, December 12, 2004

Once a year the Diaconate receives a special offering to supply the funds for the Redeemer members and regular attenders who are under its care. Please prayerfully consider contributing to this vital ministry that supports men and women who are experiencing financial, physical, social and spiritual crises.

Thank you in advance for your generosity.

“But just as you excel in everything — in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us — see that you also excel in this grace of giving.” (2 Corinthians 8:7)