

# REDEEMER

R E P O R T

MARCH 2005

## REDEEMER'S 2005 VISION SERVICE: OPENING A NEW CHAPTER

BY:CREGAN COOKE

On February 16th our church community took time to celebrate the vision of Redeemer and look at what new initiatives and plans will unfold in the years ahead. Since its early days, Redeemer has always considered itself to be not just a church but the origin and hub of a movement of churches that renew New York City socially, culturally and spiritually through the Gospel. Wednesday's worship service was a celebration of how far God has brought us in the journey of this vision, but also a look ahead at what we hope to do through the vision in 2005 and beyond.

### A Celebration

It was inspiring to hear three testimonies of people who came to Christ through the ministry of Redeemer and how God transformed their lives and placed them in areas of ministry that they never would have expected, and how He continues to use them to live out Redeemer's vision for the city in their vocations, social groups and families. In the main address Dr. Keller shared some perspective on Redeemer's journey to this point and how Redeemer is entering a new chapter in its story.

### A New "Chapter"

In its first Capital Campaign of 1997, Redeemer determined not to purchase a building. To become a movement it was important that we not be identified with a single building in just one neighborhood. As a result of that first campaign, Redeemer has spread into different neighborhoods and has begun planting churches all over the city.

Today we face new challenges to our vision. How can we provide support services to keep families in the city long term? How can we better engage our city through the arts, now that we have such a talented and growling artistic

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## EASTER SACRIFICIAL OFFERING: SUNDAY, MARCH 27TH

In the tradition of the ancient church, each year at Easter Redeemer receives a special offering for the relief of the poor, which goes to our mercy ministry, Hope for New York (HFNY).

This offering is used by HFNY to support faith-based organizations throughout New York City who are serving the poor and disadvantaged. Last year, the offering was used for the following projects:

- Construction of affordable housing in Harlem
- Expansion of a mobile outreach bus serving the homeless
- Mentoring programs for children and youth in Chinatown and Washington Heights
- Support of medical services for the homeless

- After school and day camp programs in Harlem
- Support of a food pantry serving Chinese immigrants
- Renovation of a multi-purpose room in a homeless shelter
- Bible and ESL classes for Russian immigrants
- Support of a maternity home in Brooklyn
- Christmas gifts and parties for children in Washington Heights, The South Bronx, The North Bronx, Lower East Side, Manhattan and Bushwick, Brooklyn.

This is just a sampling of the projects supported by the special offering. What makes HFNY unique, however, is that each of these programs was not only supported financially, but also with volunteers who sac-

rificially contributed thousands of hours of service. These volunteers put their faith to work, making the Gospel a powerful, living presence that touches thousands of lives in our city.

Please pray about your sacrificial gift this Easter. A special offering will be taken during all Easter Services.

You may also mail a donation, making checks payable to "Hope for New York," 1359 Broadway, Suite 410, New York, NY 10018. You may also make a donation online using a credit card by going to [www.hfny.org/support](http://www.hfny.org/support). Details for gifts of appreciated securities may be found at the same web address.



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• DEBT REDUCTION WORKSHOP • INTER-ARTS FELLOWSHIP • WORSHIP AND ARTS EVENTS • OFFICER TRAINING PROCESS

# HABITAT FOR HUMANITY VOLUNTEER INTERVIEW

BY: EMILY MCWHORTER

*Recently, I caught up with Mark and Amy Bennett to ask them a few questions about their volunteer experiences with Sandtown Habitat for Humanity through Hope for New York. Amy has attended Redeemer since 1991 and Mark has attended since 1995.*

*Sandtown Habitat for Humanity is a non-profit Christian housing organization in the Sandtown-Winchester neighborhood of West Baltimore whose purpose is to rebuild the vacant housing, increasing homeownership and improving the health of the community. By having affluent and poor, black and white, urban and suburban people working together in partnership, Habitat serves to build new relationships and an increased sense of community as well as new homes.*

*Sandtown Habitat rehabilitates and builds houses in partnership with homeowners using mostly volunteer labor and private funding, selling the completed homes at cost to low-income families on a 20-year mortgage with no interest charged. More than 200 homes have been built using this model! (Excerpt from www.sandtownhabitat.org )*

## **When did you both start volunteering?**

AMY: We started volunteering at Sandtown in 1996. We had just started dating. With Mark's encouragement, we went together.

## **Do volunteers need to be experienced in construction?**

AMY: No experience is required. Anyone is eligible to work.

## **What does the week of volunteering in June with Habitat look like?**

AMY: We leave on Sunday after the morning service and drive straight down there. Sunday evening there is a service in the church that hosts us in a suburb of Baltimore. Then we all go out to dinner. We sleep in the church basement in classrooms – guys in one room and girls in another. We meet in the morning at 7:00 a.m. for a brief devotional, and then we drive to the work site. There is a morning worship service at 8:00. Then volunteers get their work assignments. They break for a half-hour lunch. Habitat provides the lunches, and

the workday ends around 4:00. We clean up, and then we come back to the church to make a meal. Usually people from the church invite us out for a pool party and barbeque one night. The other nights we cook.

## **What are your best memories of working with this ministry?**

AMY: I think it is spending time together preparing the meals each night and talking over the day. There is a real sense of community, and we have a lot of fun.

## **What could a volunteer actually accomplish within the week?**

AMY: The week in June that we go is called the Building Blitz Week. They have about 200 volunteers that come in from all over the country. Habitat probably has 30 houses going at one time, all at different stages of development. Some people are painting, some are doing carpentry, or masonry, or demolition or landscaping. All different kinds of things are happening at once. It's not glamorous. It's dirty work, and it is usually hot and humid.

MARK: There is also a real opportunity for leadership development. If you have a strong personality and great organizational abilities, Habitat likes people to serve as house leaders in each house.

## **What impact do you feel you have made in Sandtown?**

MARK: Showing up. The most important part of what we are doing is showing up at the work site. If you can commit yourself for the whole week you can make a difference. Even volunteering for

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## REDEEMER REPORT

Kathy Keller  
Carl de Prado  
Fred Liedtke

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[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

*“It is finally time to purchase property in order to strengthen our movement in the city.”*

community? How can we provide services to our neighbors, no matter what they believe, that make their neighborhoods good places to live? How can we create weekday community-building ministries that are more human scale than our very large services but not as small as a home group? How can we regularly bring people together within their vocational fields in order to renew their professions through the integration of faith and work? How can we put in place the extensive training and discipleship programs necessary in a church with thousands of people when we only have weekday access (at the new offices) to meeting space that seats 100?

The only response to these questions is that we must over the next 12 to 15 years buy 2, 3 or more buildings in Manhattan that will become community centers for all these ministries, as well as providing worship space for our various congregations. Since we constantly face the possibility of losing our leases with the organizations that rent to us, we do not want to bequeath that kind of instability to the next generation of leaders. Add that to the stewardship issue — the almost \$1 million dollars we now pay annually in rent — and we have

concluded that it is finally time to purchase property in order to strengthen our movement in the city.

To that end (but not just that end) a new Capital Fund Campaign will be launched later in 2005 to raise funds for both acquiring property and also to further fund the development of existing and new ministries like the Redeemer Church Planting Center, Hope for New York, the Faith & Work Center, and many other ministries.

### **A Vision That's Reality**

What was plain during the entire service was that Redeemer's vision isn't just a future hope, but it is a present reality that God continues to work through to cast light and hope across the city. What makes the vision a reality are its people. God has blessed Redeemer with numerous people who give freely of their time, talent and finances. Those great contributions are manifested in the continual growth of existing ministries and the development of new ones.

### **Make it Yours**

A critical part of the message Dr Keller presented at the service was that now more than ever before Redeemer needs the many people

in its community to step up their commitment to the vision. It is the new commitment of people who merely attend Redeemer worship services and the increased or sustained commitment of those who are already involved that will bring us to the realization of the vision. If more people offer up their time, talent and finances for God to use in furthering His kingdom here in the city, the greater the effect our vision will have on the city.

Dr. Keller specifically challenged people who had been coming regularly and call Redeemer their church, but who are not members, to become members. He went on to say, “If you are a member, but are not in a fellowship group, join a group. If you believe in Redeemer's vision, but have not yet found a place to serve, volunteer for a ministry. Whatever level you are at, consider how you will put your roots down further.”

It is truly exciting to look ahead and imagine what God will do through the people of Redeemer. This year's vision service served as a testimony to the vision's future potential and an open invitation to be part of it.

## EASTER EVENTS

### **GOOD FRIDAY**

Friday, March 25

#### **Three services:**

- 5:30 PM All Souls Church, 80th and Lexington
- 6:30 PM Ethical Culture Society, 64th and Central Park West
- 7:30 PM All Souls Church, 80th and Lexington

### **EASTER SUNDAY – SPECIAL SERVICE SCHEDULE**

Sunday, March 27

#### **Five services:**

- 9:00AM Ethical Culture Society, 64th and CPW
- 9:45AM Hunter College, 69th and Park
- 11:30AM Hunter College
- 5:45 PM Hunter College
- 7:00 PM First Baptist Church, 79th and Broadway

BY: EMILY MCWHORTER

one or two days really helps.

## **What stands out to you most about the people you work and serve alongside?**

MARK: Going down there and developing relationships is a big part of what we do. You develop friendships with the people who live there, you develop friendships with the staff and you develop friendships with the people of the Redeemer team. I think going away for a week on a short-term mission trip is a lot about team building. So we try to really get to know one another. We want to encourage people who are part of Redeemer to grow in God and also to grow in relationships with each other and the people who live in Sandtown.

## **How many Hope for New York volunteers participate?**

AMY: That depends on the year – anywhere from eight to 20. We raise funds to take down there, so the

more people we have, the more we can help this community. It is great to show up, but it is also great to bring a wallet full of checks! Hope for New York pays all of our expenses through a grant so all of the money we raise goes directly to Sandtown Habitat for Humanity.

## **What has kept you committed to working with Habitat for the past 9 years?**

AMY: Spiritually there have been tremendous benefits. Friendships have been wonderful. Making an impact. Seeing a difference. Being faithful to one particular pursuit.

## **What have been some of your greatest challenges in volunteering?**

AMY: Whatever frustrations you have or impatience you feel is being witnessed publicly, and you are working with people you don't really know in hot, humid conditions. That can be challenging.

## **Why should other volunteers take a week off of work and join you this June to help out with the Sandtown project?**

AMY: It's an exciting opportunity to change lives – your own and others.

MARK: It's a way to really experience the gospel – and not just to read about it or think about it or have a meeting about it, but to be in a place where you are living out the gospel in a practical way. That's really what it is.

Editor's Note: This year, HFNY volunteers will be serving in Sandtown from June 19 to 24. If you are interested in joining the team, please contact Amy at amybenett@earthlink.net

To learn more about volunteering, or to make a donation, please go to [www.hfny.org](http://www.hfny.org)

## **KELLERS SPEAK ON MARRIAGE APRIL 1**

**In a world where the divorce rate of Christians rivals that of the secular culture, one has to ask, "Is my marriage different than my neighbor's? Do my friends see anything unique and exceptional in my marriage?" As Christians, the obstacles to exhibiting God's glory in marriage relationships are endless - but so are the opportunities. How do we access God's power to live out a marriage characterized by repentance and forgiveness? As the years pile on and the disagreements turn deeper and more damaging, how do we reclaim God's grace and promises?**

With that in mind, Redeemer is offering an evening of teaching by Tim and Kathy Keller on Christian marriage in our secular world. The discussion will include practical applications about healthy attitudes toward one another, husband/wife roles, sex, and how to counter isolation with community.

**Join us on Friday, April 1, from 7:00-9:30 p.m. at First Baptist Church, Broadway and 79th.** The evening will include a male/female breakout session as well as Q&A. To register, visit the Redeemer website or call Ellen at 718.784.8709. For married people only.

There is limited childcare available for children ages 5 and younger. Because of the space constraints, please consider finding alternatives at home. If childcare is still needed, call Ellen at 718.784.8709 to reserve space.

## DEBT REDUCTION WORKSHOP

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**Redeemer's counseling, diaconate and stewardship departments are jointly offering this new 2 hour workshop to help you:**

- Learn what the Bible says about debt
- Create a practical plan for getting out of debt
- Create a long term plan for staying out of debt

You have two opportunities to attend in March:

**March 17th (Thursday) at the Redeemer offices at 1359 Broadway from 6:30 – 8:30PM**  
**March 20th (Sunday) at Hunter College from 12:15- 2:15PM.**

Also, our next all day personal financial workshop is scheduled for Saturday, April 9th at the Redeemer offices. Earning, giving and saving will be discussed, as well as basic budgeting and record keeping.

To register log onto our website at [www.redeemer.com/stewardship](http://www.redeemer.com/stewardship), or email William Jin at [William@redeemer.com](mailto:William@redeemer.com). You can also call William at 212.808.4460, ext 198.

## INTER-ARTS FELLOWSHIP

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**Redeemer's Inter-Arts Fellowship is for anyone working in the arts, design, media, or entertainment.**

It's a place to get to know others in our community, look more deeply into how our faith impacts our work, share our work, and encourage each other in our faith.

The gatherings begin at 7:00PM at the Redeemer offices, 1359 Broadway, 4th floor (between 36th and 37th)

Topics for upcoming meetings are:

March 18: Peace  
April 29: Discipline  
May 20: Beauty

For more information, visit [www.faithandwork.org/arts](http://www.faithandwork.org/arts), email [arts@redeemer.com](mailto:arts@redeemer.com), or call 212-808-4460 x158.

## WORSHIP AND ARTS EVENTS IN MARCH

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**OPEN FORUM: *La Bohème: The Perils of Love***  
**Sunday, March 6**

Two performances – 5:00PM and 7:00PM  
First Baptist Church, 79th and Broadway

An abridged performance of Puccini's classic opera about young artists in Paris falling in love and facing tragedy. Lecture by Tim Keller and a question and answer session follow. Childcare, up to age 6, will only be available at the 7:00PM performance. Free admission.

**CONCERTS at 315**  
**Tuesday, March 8 at 7:00PM**

Theater 315  
315 West 47th Street

Our new concert series continues with nine Redeemer songwriters presenting original works at the intimate Theater 315. \$5.00 admission

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## OFFICER TRAINING PROCESS

BY: TUCK BARTHOLOMEW

Redeemer members have the important responsibility of nominating and electing individuals to serve our congregation as Deacons, Deaconesses and Elders. In November you nominated the following individuals who have agreed to go through officer training:

### Deacon

Brad Winslow  
Eric Stiller  
Kaleb Chang  
Jeremy Larsen  
Jerry Dienes  
Joshua Sherman  
Justin Cassity  
Roger Spivak

Julia Choi  
Laura Pfortmiller  
Mariam Mathew  
Marie Sclafani  
Susan Kushner

### Elders

Cade Newman  
John Austin  
Karl Wolf

### Deaconess

Brittany Williams  
Jessica Collins Anderson

Please be praying for the nominees as they go through training in theology, ministry skills, and prepare for their interview and examination in April where they will be assessed in terms of their character, Christian life, theological understanding and readiness to serve the church as an officer. The current elders will then determine which individuals will be presented for election at the April congregational meeting. If you have questions about the nominating, training and evaluation process please contact: Tuck Bartholomew, [tuck@redeemer.com](mailto:tuck@redeemer.com).