

# REDEEMER

R E P O R T

JUNE 2006

## PRAYING FOR GLORY

BY TIM KELLER

**B**y the time you receive this newsletter, Redeemer's first prayer conference will be just around the corner, on Friday evening, June 2 from 7:00PM to 9:00PM and Saturday morning, June 3 from 9:00AM to 2:00PM. This will be a unique event from which I expect unique blessings for those who attend, our church, and our city. If you have not yet registered to attend, I can't urge you strongly enough to go to it and commit to opening doors into your spiritual life that you never have been through before.

In that vein, I want to talk about prayer and the possibilities it opens up.

### Why we should pray for the Spirit

In November, 1740, Jonathan Edwards preached a sermon "Praying for the Spirit" on the text Luke 11:13—*How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?* He began by pointing out that there are basically two

sets of things that we can pray for. First are 'temporal' blessings—adequate food, clothing, and housing, health and economic prosperity, happy and flourishing families, favor for friends and neighbors. Second are the blessings he calls 'praying for the Spirit'—growing in holiness (1 Thess 4:3), deeper participation in the divine nature itself (II Peter 1:4), having the spirit (awareness, experience, and practice) of sonship (Gal 4:7; Rom 8:15-17), having the light of God's face (Num 6:26; Ps 16:11). We pray so much more instinctively and fervently for prosperity and health than we do for the glory of God and the work of his Spirit. Is it possible to change and if so, how?

### 1. We should pray for God's Spirit in our inner being.

In Ephesians 3:17-19, Paul prays for his readers—a) that the Spirit would empower them in their 'inner being,' b) that Christ would dwell in their hearts, c) that they would

know the love of Christ, and d) be filled with all God's fullness. This is a perplexing prayer! He is praying for Christians. Surely all Christians know Christ loves them, or they wouldn't have saving faith. Not only that, don't all Christians have Christ and the fullness of God dwelling in them? (Col 2:9-10).

What is Paul asking for? Paul is praying that we would grasp the truth of who and what Christ is until it becomes more than a rational proposition, until we come under its power and it affects us from the inside out. For example, do you know God loves you? If you do, why do you get so depressed when others criticize you? But when the truth of God's love for you really "catches fire," when the truth about God's love gets BIG—disturbs and comforts and thrills you—then you will find that criticism doesn't harm you as before. The truth has descended into the heart.

D. M. Lloyd-Jones and many

*Continued on page 3*



#### INSIDE:

- THREADS INVITES REDEEMER TO BE "IN DIALOGUE"
- GOODBYE FROM RYAN TOMPKINS
- SUMMER MINI COURSES
- TIME TO SAY GOODNIGHT
- OPERATIONS: FROM A MINISTRY PERSPECTIVE

# THREADS INVITES REDEEMER TO BE "IN DIALOGUE"

The Arts Ministry's Threads project is entering a new phase of its vision this summer. After two years of working with writers and composers to develop quality stage plays, screenplays, and musicals from a Christian worldview, the Threads team is spending the summer focusing on several significant modern playwrights and their plays. This will also be the first project in the Arts Ministry's new arts "Greenhouse," designed to invite the Redeemer congregation into the creative work being done by our artists.

The "In Dialogue" series will include staged readings of full-length plays followed by conversations between audience and artists about each play's perspective on the human condition. The ensemble of actors (all professing Christians) was chosen by audition from announcements at Redeemer and in *Backstage* magazine.

Threads has held staged readings in the past for the new scripts it was working on, to allow the writers hear their words aloud and get feedback from the audience about the developing plays. The idea for the "In Dialogue" series came from an audience member at

one of those readings who exclaimed "This was almost like seeing the play in the theater!" The "In Dialogue" series will feature well-rehearsed professional actors with scripts in hand, and minimal scenery, costuming, etc.

The list of plays to be included is still being



*Playwright Jay Duffer and Threads team member Phoebe Kmeck get audience feedback at a reading. Photo by George Kmeck.*

finalized, but plays by Tom Stoppard, David Mamet, Craig Lucas, Wendy Wasserstein, and others are under consideration. For up-to-date information about the plays, dates, and locations of "In Dialogue" readings/discussions, visit [www.faihandwork.org/threads](http://www.faihandwork.org/threads), watch the worship service bulletin Events Page and Center for Faith & Work section of the Bulletin Board, or pick up a postcard at the worship service information tables.

Threads will also be featured

prominently in this summer's Christians in Theater Arts (CITA) national conference, to be held in NYC June 15-17. Threads will be doing a reading of one of the new plays under development, *Asleep in the Arms of God* by Redeemerite and Threads team member Jay Duffer. The reading will be held at the Redeemer offices at 3:00PM on Saturday, June 17. For more info on the conference, visit [www.cita.org/nycita](http://www.cita.org/nycita).

The team of Redeemer actors, directors, and writers who run the Threads project began meeting together twice monthly over two years ago. They are: Jay Duffer, Holly Hurley, Luann Jennings, Phoebe Kmeck,

Haley March, Frank Mihelich, Ginny Pike, Kim Prentice, Bryan Taylor, and Misti Wills. Their hope is that Threads will, in time, develop into an independent professional theater company producing plays and musicals out of a Christian worldview.

For more information about Threads, or to find out how you can support their vision, visit [www.faihandwork.org/threads](http://www.faihandwork.org/threads) or email [threads@redeemer.com](mailto:threads@redeemer.com).

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## REDEEMER REPORT

Kathy Keller  
Carl de Prado  
Heather Klein

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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

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others taught that sometimes we receive an infusion (a pouring in) of God's love and reality that goes beyond even the normal confidence that our hearts have. Ordinarily we infer that God is our father by consulting our reason, remembering Scriptural promises, and so on. But sometimes there is an immediate, intuitive enjoyment of this relationship with God. It is the difference between knowing that a man is your father, and having him wrap his arms around you in a big hug. When one of us receives this 'witness of the Spirit' we experience personal renewal. When it is poured out on many people at once you have a revival. One example of this is in the journal of Jonathan Edwards:

*Once, as I rode out into the woods for my health, in 1737, having alighted from my horse in a retired place, as my manner commonly had been to walk for divine contemplation and prayer, I had a view that for me was extraordinary, of the glory of the Son of God, as Mediator between God and man, and his wonderful, great, full, pure and sweet grace and love, and meek and gentle condescension. I felt an ardency of soul to be, what I know not otherwise how to express, emptied and annihilated: to lie in the dust, and to be full of Christ alone, to love him with a holy and pure love; to trust in him; to*

*live upon him; to serve and follow him; and to be perfectly made pure with a divine and heavenly purity.*

## **2. God's presence among his people.**

But we are not simply to pray for personal, inner experiences of God. In Exodus 33 Moses prayed: "If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here. What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?" Moses wants to know God's glorious presence, but not just for himself. He wants the community of God's people to display the beauty and visible reality of God. This is a prayer that the world would be awed and amazed by the evidence of God's power and radiance in believers, that we would become truly the new humanity that is a sign of the future kingdom.

In the New Testament the church is called the 'temple of the Holy Spirit' (1 Corinthians 3, Ephesians 2; I Peter 2. That is an enormous claim. The presence of the Spirit in our lives through Christ is a fulfillment of the promise in the Old Testament that God will indwell his people and show the world the new humanity. Ultimately, times of great spiritual renewal are times in which seekers or visitors can come into a gathering of Christians for worship and immediately sense a love that is so robust and 'thick' you could

almost cut it with a knife.

Dr. D. Lloyd-Jones once said:

*We can preach the truth, we can defend it, we can indulge in our apologetics, we can try to present a great front to the world, but, you know, it does not impress the world. The need is for something so overwhelming, so divine, so unusual that it will...prove that we are indeed...the people of God.*

## **3. The glory of God in the city.**

In Genesis 18 Abraham prayed fervently and repeatedly for God to spare (literally *save*) the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. In Jeremiah 29 God calls his people to pray for the peace (*shalom*) of Babylon. These were violent, pagan societies. Yet we are called to pray for God's glory to be revealed to them. So, lastly, praying for glory must also be prayer for New York City. We are to pray for the glory of God to be seen. God's glory is his *weight*, his *importance*, his *reality*. Many people in our cities believe in a God, but not in a God of glory. You can pray for a neighborhood, a people group, or any other sector of the city. Ask God: *I don't know what they would look like if they knew your glory, if they saw your beauty and importance, but let it be so!* We should pray for these things morning, noon, and night. If as a Body Redeemer does this, the effects will be enormous, I can assure you.

# GOODBYE FROM RYAN TOMPKINS

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These kinds of announcements are always bitter-sweet. Despite our love for New York City and our love for the building of God's kingdom here, Jennifer and I are leaving New York to accept a call to minister in Texas. Trinity Harbor Presbyterian Church of Rockwall, Texas, has called me to serve as their senior pastor. In accepting this call, I am sad to say goodbye to so many good friends, but I am excited to face the challenges that lie ahead. Jennifer, Molly, Charlotte, and I will be relocating to Rockwall in early to mid-June.

Rockwall is a small community that is being swallowed by Dallas expansion. Now the fastest growing area of Texas, and one of the top five fastest growing counties in the United

States, we're excited at the opportunity to minister in this context. The church is just five years old, and hopefully a young congregation and a young minister will have the opportunity to grow up together. It is an added blessing that we will be living much closer to Jennifer's family.

There is one lesson, among many, that I have learned at Redeemer for which I am particularly grateful. Ministry, in whatever capacity or form it takes, is about the people. This shouldn't have come as a surprise to me, but in a world that measures achievement by abstract goals, people can often take a back seat to the achievement of those goals. Jesus tells us that we will be recognized as his disciples by the love that we show to one another (John

13:34-35). I've surely not been the best example of this, but time and again I have had the pleasure to see fellowship group participants and leaders sacrifice to meet the needs of others, demonstrating by the love that they show that they belong to Jesus rather than to the world. Thanks to the fellowship group leaders who have taught me much.

As we transition to Rockwall, we would greatly appreciate your prayers. We have a steep cultural curve ahead of us as we move from New York City to the suburbs and a steep learning curve as I move into my first senior pastorate. Please pray for our transition to Rockwall, that God goes with us and before us, and for strong relationships to be established quickly with the people there.

## THIS SUMMER, TRY SOMETHING NEW...

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Learn to cook a Thai meal...Get an introduction to photography...Pick up a few hip-hop dance moves...learn to play the guitar...go on a guided tour through the MOMA...take an introductory Spanish class...learn more about New York City...discover the best wines in the city for under \$15...and much much more!!!

This summer, Redeemer is launching a pilot program called the **Summer Mini Courses**. The Mini Courses are fun subjects taught *by Redeemerites for Redeemerites*. The classes will showcase the amazing talents of our congregation and provide opportunities for people to get together during a typically empty programming season.

The classes will be held in various venues around the city and will begin in mid-June and be offered until the end of August. Look for the course catalog this June at [www.redeemer.com/summer](http://www.redeemer.com/summer).

Any Questions? Call 212-808-4460 x167.





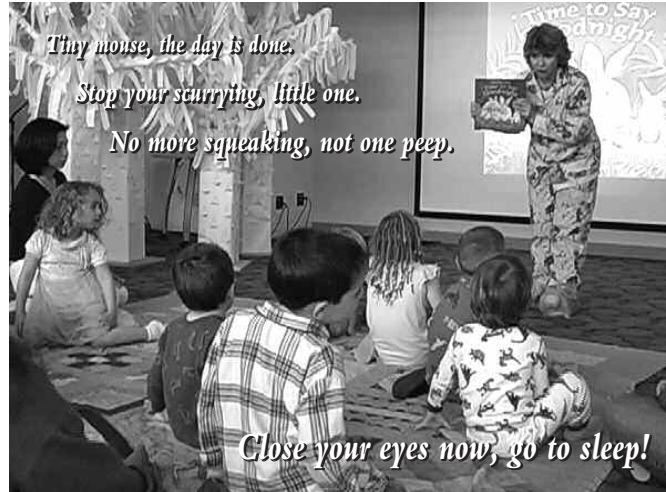
# TIME TO SAY GOODNIGHT

BY CAROLYN LEUTWILER

Hopping bunnies, milk and cookies, pajamas and story time! Twenty youngsters along with their parents had a fun-filled evening at A Pajama Storytime, a Children's Ministries event held at the Redeemer Office on April 21. The main conference room was transformed into a woodland forest with dancing stars in the sky, a forest floor of quilts, and little bunnies, deer, and bears (all in pajamas!). In this setting, author Sally Lloyd-Jones read her recently published children's book, *Time to Say Goodnight*. Surrounded by twinkle lights and fanciful for-

est trees, the children listened enthusiastically and pretended to be various woodland animals

*Close your eyes now, go to sleep!"* [Lloyd-Jones, Sally, *Time to Say Goodnight* (HarperCollins Publishers, New York, 2006.)



To read the entire book, stop by the Children's Ministries' area at the West and East Side morning services, where autographed copies will be available for sale at 25% off the regular price for a limited time. A member of

as directed by Sally. With all this fun, how could it be...  
*"Tiny mouse, the day is done.  
Stop your scurrying, little one.  
No more squeaking, not one peep.*

Redeemer, Sally has written many other captivating children's books also available for sale at the Children's Ministries Book Table.

## OPERATIONS: FROM A MINISTRY PERSPECTIVE

BY ELAINE ROLLOGAS

*Below is a testimony from one of our Sunday Operations employees. We are humbled to realize the impact of Sunday Ops on the lives of our crew, even though it may only include a short 5-10 minutes of prayer and devotion time.*

By Greg Whitley:

Working at Redeemer has changed my life. Since I first began working at Redeemer my life has taken a turn for the better. I feel that my personal relationship with God has improved and that I have received many blessings because of it. I have recently met my soulmate and gotten married. I feel blessed to be a part of a

growing family at Redeemer and honored to have an opportunity to work with such an outstanding group of individuals, all of whom have become good friends.

I have begun to do things with regularity that I didn't do before I worked at Redeemer, like reading the Bible on a regular basis and telling others about the power of prayer and how it has changed my life. My supervisor, Brad Winslow, who is the West Side Operations Coordinator, has been the guiding force in helping me improve my personal relationship with God.

We have read several passages from the Bible and have had discussions about them. We pray together on a regular basis and pray for others as well.

Listening to Dr. Keller's sermons has helped me to understand what I read in the Bible and has lifted my spirits at times when I have felt depressed. I actually look forward to coming to work on Sundays. I have realized that the power of prayer and believing in God and trusting in Him to guide you through life can make all the difference. With God, all is possible. All you have to do is believe.

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## PRAYER CONFERENCE: THY KINGDOM COME... RENEWING THE CITY & OURSELVES THROUGH PRAYER

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FRIDAY, JUNE 2, 7:00PM TO 9:00PM & SATURDAY, JUNE 3, 9:00AM TO 2:00PM



Tim Keller and special guest speaker, John Smed, will lead us in Kingdom prayer development. We will spend time praying in small groups.

All Redeemer attendees are encouraged to attend, as we pursue our vision for the city through Kingdom-focused prayer.

*I can't think of anyone better prepared to lead us in the contextualizing of Kingdom-focused prayer in a city church like ours than John Smed. –Tim Keller*

To register for the conference or for more information, please visit [www.redeemer.com/prayer/rsvp](http://www.redeemer.com/prayer/rsvp)