

REDEEMER

R E P O R T

JUNE/JULY 2007

CHURCH PLANTERS FROM AROUND THE WORLD GATHER FOR REDEEMER CONFERENCE

BY JUSTIN BROWNE

One after another, with heads bowed, they prayed to God in their own languages. They prayed in German, French, Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, Italian, Russian, Mandarin and many other languages for God to renew the great cities of the world through the creation of new churches. Such was the scene during the last day of the three-day Global Church Planting Conference held March 26–28 in West Cornwall, CT. The conference brought together approximately seventy-five church planters from around the world who are assisted and resourced by Redeemer's Church Planting Center.

While many at Redeemer might be aware of our church

planting activities across the five boroughs of New York City and other American cities, fewer may know of Redeemer's international church planting efforts. Over the last five years, Redeemer's Church Planting Center has helped start over 35 churches in major cities outside of the United States and is positioned to support at least triple that number in the next five years. As many who attend Redeemer might remember, 25% of the money raised from the 2005 Vision Campaign was set aside for starting new churches both in New York City and in cities around the world. The Global Conference, held every two years, is a key event that provides Redeemer's global church planters

and partners the opportunity to learn, share, and fellowship.

This year's conference was rich in content and featured a variety of talks and presentations from the conference attendees. Tim Keller gave three talks during the conference on 1) how the way pastors read the Bible affects how they lead their churches, 2) the marks of a church with gospel depth, and 3) how to develop individuals with gospel-centered behaviors. Randy Pope, the senior pastor of Perimeter Church, was the other keynote speaker and he led two discussions about building leaders within the church and building churches that are attractive to individuals unfamiliar with Christianity.

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YOUTH GROUP PLANS TO RETURN TO NEW ORLEANS IN 2007

Something had to have gone right the first time, because the youth group is getting ready for another summer trip down to New Orleans to volunteer for Katrina relief aid—and the kids and leaders couldn't be more excited. But just to be clear—this is odd. One could chalk up last year's excitement to youthful exuberance, moral obligation, touristic curiosity, but not this year. By all accounts, the Herculean workload and torpid reality of last year washed away any exuberance, obligation, or curiosity they might have had. It was, for

the most part, overwhelmingly vast, and vastly overwhelming.

So then why all the enthusiasm? Why so many smiling faces at the required meetings? Why so many returning volunteers? Maybe it's the joy that comes from serving, or maybe it's just youthful enthusiasm. But there is something to be said this year for a group of NY teens, the big apple at their impetuous teeth, a whole summer to Huck away, getting feverish about visiting a city with little more to offer than thousands of destroyed homes.

Just this past March 14 marked the one year anniversary since Redeemer Church in New Orleans (an affiliated church of Redeemer NY), began hosting groups to come down and work in the miles and miles of destroyed neighborhoods. In that year the church has actually grown from thirty five to one hundred and five (double the pre-Katrina size). Over one thousand volunteers from all over the country helped renovate 180 homes and even helped rebuild one church.

(Continued on page 6)



BRENT BOUNDS CHOSEN DIRECTOR OF FAMILY MINISTRIES

The Redeemer Staff is pleased to welcome Brent Bounds to the long awaited position of Director of Family Ministries. Although Brent has been a part of Redeemer for a number of years and more recently on the counseling staff, many of you may not know him. So here's a short interview and a picture. We hope you'll introduce yourself to Brent and Jenni if you don't already know them.



Tell us a bit about yourself:

I grew up in Dallas, Texas, where my parents had careers in education. I did my undergraduate studies at Wheaton College, where I majored in psychology, and I have a Master's degree from Dallas Theological Seminary in biblical counseling. I moved to New York City in 1999 to get my Ph.D. in clinical psychology at Fordham University. I've been

married to my wife, Jenni, for four years (we met in a Redeemer fellowship group), and we have a 5-month-old son, Griffin.

How have you been involved with Redeemer?

I've been a part of Redeemer since I moved here 8 years ago. Since April, 2002, I have been a

counselor at Redeemer Counseling Services where I've had the privilege of working with children, adults, and families dealing with various issues and have seen the Gospel transform lives.

What do you see as your new role at Redeemer?

New York City is a unique and challenging place to raise a family and build community, and yet I feel that the potential for impact and transformation of this city rests largely in the hands of the families who live, work, play, attend school and worship in it. As Director of Family Ministries, my role will be to facilitate the provision of resources that strengthen, encourage and equip families to live Gospel-centered lives. I am really excited to be serving the Redeemer community in this way.

BEYOND ABUSE: DEALING WITH THE WEIGHT OF CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ABUSE

This seminar is geared towards women and men affected directly or indirectly by childhood and adolescent sexual abuse (survivors, loved ones, friends of survivors, leaders ministering to survivors.)

Saturday, July 7, 2007 from 9:00AM to 4:00PM at the Redeemer Offices

Speaker: Sallie Culbreth, Founder & Executive Director of Committed to Freedom Ministries, Inc.

\$25 per person, breakfast & lunch is included (Scholarships available)

Registration Information at www.redeemer.com

Please register by July 5 (*Your identity will be kept confidential.*)

REDEEMER REPORT

Kathy Keller
Heather Klein

HUNTER COLLEGE AUDITORIUM
East 69TH (Between Park & Lexington)
services at 10:30AM • 6:00PM

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

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
Corner of West 79TH and Broadway
service at 5:00PM & 7:15PM

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

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As we enter spring 2007 and look back over the last year, it's amazing to realize how quickly things have progressed with one of the most significant endeavors Redeemer has undertaken: the purchase of real estate at 150 West 83rd Street. At this time last year, who would have predicted that we would even identify a *possibility* in less than 12 months? While we can intellectually anticipate it, we are also amazed once again by God's provision, and we proceed prayerfully with a desire to be good and faithful stewards of His resources.

The upper west side property is the first of at least three buildings Redeemer would like to acquire over the next ten years, and while this is a very important, expensive and time-consuming project, it is important that we not start treating it as the sum total of Redeemer's existence. In other words, real estate is simply one means by which we will reach the city, build community and serve our neighbors. There are, of course, many other important and significant ways we are living out the vision through Redeemer's ministries, and many of you are, have been, and will continue to be critical to their success.

Given the fact that the West

83rd Street building is currently a parking garage, we have a wonderful opportunity to design the new worship and community center space essentially from scratch. There are hundreds of decisions to be made relative to the design of the space, which will ultimately drive the construction specifications. The process by which the design decisions will be made will involve input from many people especially Redeemer staff, who meet weekly to discuss ministry and program needs and desires, specifically as it pertains to how they hope to use the new space.

Information is also being gathered on the characteristics and needs of the community surrounding West 83rd Street. The information will be gathered from existing published sources but also through conversations and meetings with community representatives and the Community Board of District 7. We truly want to serve our neighbors, thus we need to know and understand who they are, and gather that information based on relevant, current data provided by those who are "in the business" of community service. Additionally, input was solicited from the congregation through the survey distributed and collected during all the Sunday

Services on April 22nd.

We are blessed with a wealth and variety of talent among the Redeemer congregation, and many volunteers are already involved and working on this project. Project teams already meeting include:

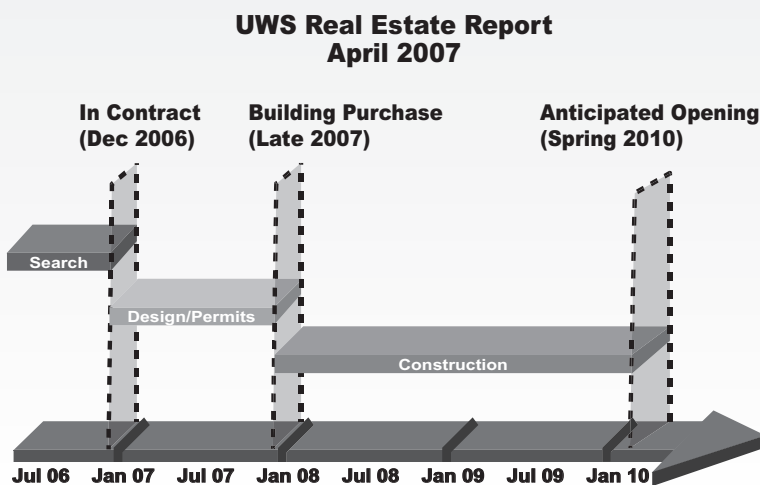
Finance, Architecture
Communications, Legal
& Community

There will be many more teams formed in the coming weeks, and if you are interested in volunteering in some capacity, please contact Susan Lee at susan@redeemer.com.

As we move forward, we must keep in mind that one of the most important reasons for acquiring secure space in the city is gospel hospitality. Of course the new building will have worship space (most likely seating for 900, plus overflow space); however another primary goal is to provide a "third place" for people in the community – a place that is welcoming not only to other believers but also to those who don't believe as we do. Besides providing space for existing ministries and for building community within the Redeemer congregation, we will also seek to develop programs that serve the neighborhood, and the economically disadvantaged.

REAL ESTATE PROJECT TIMING

As of today, we anticipate moving into the West 83rd Street building in the spring of 2010—three years from now. Below is a graphic illustrating the timing of the project.



As the project progresses, more information will be shared through the newsletter, congregational meetings and Redeemer's website. If you have questions, suggestions or comments, email susan@redeemer.com. We will make every effort to respond in a timely manner.

Our vision is central to everything we do. It is to build a great city for all people through a gospel movement that brings personal conversion, community formation, social justice and cultural renewal to New York City and through it, to the world.

NOT JUST ANOTHER CHURCH MEETING!

BY NORMA AILES

Maybe you didn't know that Redeemer's Congregational Meeting and Membership Dinner was more than just a meeting. If you didn't attend the May 5th event, you might not know that it is also a festive and joyful celebration of community, friendship, and fellowship. Attended by over four hundred and fifty members both old and new, it was the perfect opportunity to see friends who attend different services and the perfect setting for discovering friends who live in the same neighborhood.

Following a lively reception with glorious hors d'oeuvres and live jazz, guests moved into a romantically-lit celebration of spring. Seated in sections named after popular landmarks such as Center, guests discovered others who lived in the same or nearby zip code. A nametag sticker clue led guests to their landmarks, a method proving both hilarious and challenging, especially for late-comers.

Elder Charlie Osewalt, (recently chosen Principal of the Year by

an arts consortium), opened this second official "Congregational Meeting and Membership Dinner" in prayer (the first dinner was in October, 2005). After welcoming Jenny Chang as the new Diaconate Director, Tim Keller conducted the evening's official business. Attendees voted in trustees, elders, and deacons, and heard updates from Brian Stanton on financial giving, spending and Redeemer's pending purchase of its first very-own worship site and community building. Katherine Leary gave an update on growth in membership, volunteers, and lay leadership and the successful launch of Sunday's fifth service, 5:00 p.m. at First Baptist Church.

Aside from Redeemer's deep and intentional commitment to living out the gospel of Christ, this is a congregation with a rich sense of humor. Emcee Todd Wilkerson had guests howling at *The Ten Things Tim Keller Does to Prepare for a Sermon* and John Lin's well-known love for the Boston Red Sox. Katherine Leary's *Children of*

Promise video offered touching, revealing and humorous perspectives from parents and kids ages seven to twenty-seven who are growing up in the Redeemer community. The program ended with a hilarious look back at scenes from Redeemer's long-ago Comedy Nights, prompting a groundswell of requests for a Comedy Night 2007. Then tables were cleared for dancing, and Redeemerites once again demonstrated that they are NOT to be numbered among the "frozen chosen."

On the way out, attendees received copies of Redeemer's 2006 Annual Report. Many friends lingered on 'til the last notes of music faded away, reluctant to put a period to a bountiful evening of laughs, memories, and gratefulness for the community that is Redeemer.

NOTE: If you're a member and you didn't receive snail mail & email invitations or reminders about the dinner, please contact Joely@redeemer.com or call her at (212) 808-4460 x123.

TAKE THE PLUNGE AT REDEEMER'S FIRST VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL!

Redeemer is excited to hold its first VBS. If you are looking for a great summer activity for your children, hang on to your life preserver! Redeemer's VBS team is preparing for a water park adventure (literally!) you won't want to miss. They are getting ready to **Take the Plunge!** As kids move from one whirlwind activity to the next, they will be soaking up lessons that will last for a lifetime as they **Make a splash with Jesus!** And to top off the experience a trip for the whole family is planned for July 14 to a real water park – Wild Water Kingdom at Dorney Park.

Kids will **Take the Plunge** each day as they dive into the Word and learn how Jesus used the common element of water to teach some uncommon lessons. It will be a week of fun and excitement sure to make a splash with your kids. The fun will begin each day at 9:30AM and end at 12:30PM from July 9 to 13 at All Angels Episcopal Church.

This program is open to rising Kindergarteners through 5th Graders.

Registration is open! To dive into the excitement, register online at www.redeemer.com/vbs.

REFLECTIONS BY THE SEA

BY MIKE O'NEILL

I have always loved the beach. As a child, the water, sand and soothing breezes always seem to fill me with a sense of peace and comfort. Although the beach has always been a special place, it became more so after I became a Christian. I must admit I feel closer to the Lord while at the beach than anywhere else. Depending upon the day, the beach may speak power, danger, beauty, wonder, vastness, mystery, passion and love. This has always reminded me of the Lord's love for me. Aware the Lord's thoughts for me outnumber the grains of sand on the seashore, I am often brought to tears. Acutely aware the same love is flowing in abundance for all, I am moved to sing for joy.

My love for the beach is undoubtedly rooted with my father and my grandparents. My father was born and raised in Manhattan. When school finished in June, my grandparents rented a beach house (I suspect it was far less grand than the mental picture!) and moved the entire family to the beach in the Rockaways. I suppose it is hard to imagine moving from one part of NYC to another for the summer, but the beach was calling and my grandfather endured the long "A" train ride to work just so the family could enjoy the summer at the beach.

My father and his sisters spent the summer shoeless. Who needed shoes when you were a short walk to the ocean? Endless hours were spent swimming, building sand-castles and experiencing the peace

of the beach.

Much of my family still reside in NYC, but like so many families, many left long ago for more space, better schools and lower costs. In doing so, my cousins relocated to – you guessed it – the beach. After a recent family gathering in Spring Lake, NJ, before the drive home,



*Gemma, Michael & Caitlin O'Neill
Orchard Beach, The Bronx*

I simply could not leave without a visit to the ocean. My wife, who also loves the beach (it was a requirement for marrying me!), was more than eager to enjoy a beautiful spring afternoon at the beach.

That afternoon the generational love for the beach continued. I introduced my newborn son, Declan (6 months), to the wonders of the beach for the very first time. We sat nestled in a dune and I whispered in his ears of the won-

ders of the love of the One who created such a place. We sat quietly in that otherworldly light of dusk at the ocean and I watched my wife and two girls venture toward the power of the surf. It was such a joy to sit quietly and watch them as they intently scoured the sand for treasure. Oblivious to sand on hands, face, clothing and feet, they were fully absorbed in the hunt for treasure – content to deal with the sandy grit in the process.

Already lovers of the beach our girls were lost in the moment. When it was time to head home they scooped up their treasures and walked toward me. I was immediately humbled when a treasure of broken bits of shells and stones was produced. I had expected my perspective of beauty – large perfect shells. My girls saw beauty in EVERY shell they saw. Broken, cracked, blemished – it mattered not. They were all beautiful. I have always loved the following quote by Charles Dickens, "It is not a slight thing when they who are so fresh from God love us." My children, fresh from God, love me unconditionally – a love they learned from the Father.

Enjoying that peaceful moment with my son, I knew *I was* the Lord's treasure on the shore. He had picked me off the shore, brushed off the sand and ran me under the water to reveal the treasure within. Like my girls, He saw only the treasure – the sandy grit washed away by Jesus and His sacrifice.

INTERESTED IN HOSTING A BETA GROUP?

This fall Redeemer will launch 50 brand new, short term Beta Groups and we need hosts. Do you have an apartment or meeting space that can accommodate a group of 6-12 people? Would you be interested in hosting a 7-week Beta Group starting 9/30? For more information about hosting a Beta Group, please email BetaGroups@redeemer.com.



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CHURCH PLANTING CONFERENCE

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In addition to the these sessions, several of the church planters gave presentations on their experiences and lessons learned from planting churches in cities including Sao Paulo, Amsterdam, Buenos Aires, Berlin, and San Francisco. They discussed how their churches have taken the teaching and training they learned from Redeemer and contextualized the basic “Redeemer DNA” for their cities. It was amazing to hear about the microfinance projects started in

Buenos Aires, the all-night prayer sessions in Sao Paulo, the faith and work events held in Berlin, and the impressive number of new churches planted in cities across the Netherlands. Perhaps one of the most encouraging presentations came from a Redeemer partner who is planting churches in the Muslim world. His presentation gave much hope for how God is working in that area of the world.

Overall, the conference was a great success and a wonderful

opportunity to praise God for the work he has done through Redeemer’s Church Planting Center and its planters. Even though prayers were spoken in many different languages, the one thing that was clearly communicated was how deeply these church planters yearn for their cities to be renewed with the hope and power of the Gospel. It is Redeemer’s desire to support them, and many more like them, in their efforts.

YOUTH GROUP PLANS RETURN

(CONT'D FROM PAGE 1)

Last year our youth raised \$4000 with a walk-a-thon as a one-time gift to the New Orleans church. The team that went down gutted five houses in five days. This year they hope to repeat the performance, and maybe go and take a peek at last year’s homes, hopefully budding by now with the first fruits of reconstruction. That *is* the Redeemer vision they’re living out, after all: working to renew a city socially, spiritually and culturally through the Gospel. Maybe they were listening to all those lessons from the youth leaders we thought they slept through. Maybe altruism

is the new rebellion.

Now, don’t get it wrong, the house we’re staying at this year has a pool. They’ll be blasting the radio in the van and slamming sledgehammers with impunity through everything (that needs to be demolished) that they can lay their hands on. The students get to spend some much-needed quality time with the leaders—something in short supply in the New York rush. But also, maybe they’re growing up into the kind of young men and women—ambassadors of a the good news—that are a direct result of families who have

committed to the vision God has give Redeemer to love, embrace and stay in the city.

And maybe now is a nice time to take a look at Redeemer’s youth—as they embark on their second trip to New Orleans—not to aggrandize, but to see in our church the great wealth of blessings that just may be, and may yet be to come.

If you would like to financially support this team, donations can be made online at: www.redeemer.com/youth/missions2007