

REDEEMER

R E P O R T

MARCH 2010

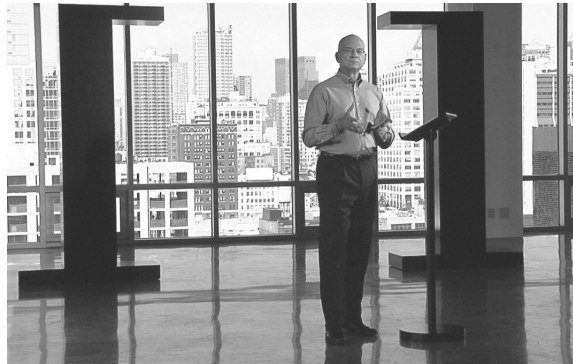
gospelⁱⁿlife

By JOHN LIN & SCOTT KAUFFMANN

On the last day of August 2009, a team from Redeemer could be seen hauling a huge six-foot high replica of a bracket into a building in the Meatpacking district. A few hours later, Tim Keller spent all day standing between two of said brackets with the skyline of the city immediately behind him. Now, in March 2010, you can discover why.

gospelⁱⁿlife is a joint project between Congregational Life and Redeemer City to City. It is an intensive eight-week course on the gospel and how it is lived out in all of life—first in our

hearts, then in community, and out into the world. We sometimes refer to it as a compilation of “Redeemer’s greatest hits.” We expect it to be used in several venues.



• Redeemer Church will use gospelⁱⁿlife as the flagship course of its discipleship and leadership formation pathway. Congregational

Life will first use it with an invited group of participants this spring. It will be made more widely available in months and years to come.

- Redeemer City to City will use the course as a recruiting and training tool for key movement leaders, pastors, church planters, and cultural leaders in our target cities.
- Redeemer City to City will partner with Zondervan to distribute gospelⁱⁿlife to other churches as a small group curriculum.

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HOPE FOR NEW YORK EASTER SACRIFICIAL OFFERING: SUNDAY, APRIL 4

Each Easter, Redeemer collects a special offering for Hope for New York (HFNY), a separate 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization. 100% of the offering received is given in the form of direct grants to HFNY’s affiliate organizations that serve the poor and marginalized throughout New York City.

Our affiliates continue to need your help more than ever. The current economic climate has caused a significant increase in the need for services for homeless and low-income individuals and families across our city. They are the most vulnerable, and the needs are becoming increasingly more urgent and essential.

Please prayerfully consider your sacrificial gift this Easter. This special collection will be received during all Redeemer Easter Services. You may also make an online donation at www.hfny.org/donate or you can mail a check payable to “Hope for New York,” 1359 Broadway, Suite 410, New York, NY 10018.



JOB SEEKING? YOU ARE NOT ALONE

BY ROGER SPIVACK

Ask me about the Diaconate's job search ministry. It's my favorite topic. It is what I do three days a week, reaching out to help those in our church family who are unemployed and seeking work.

In June, 2008 I retired from my company. Toward the end of that month I happened to ask Jenny Chang, our Diaconate Director, if she had anything I could do for one or two days a week. Yes, she did. The Diaconate had launched a job search/coaching ministry as part of our 2005 Vision Campaign initiative and was looking to expand, and I had just completed the NJ Department of Labor, Professional Service Group curriculum teaching job search skills. Wow! What a fit!

I started coaching congregants receiving Diaconate care in August and immediately built on the core resume writing training by added interviewing, networking, and what I came to label as the job search paradigm. In the fall when the job market collapsed, we expanded the coaching for those receiving Diaconate care to include sessions for the larger Redeemer family.

These sessions are called Job Search Skills Training. My mission is to replace the anxiety and discouragement all too

often experienced in today's job search with solid job search skills presented in a gospel-centered environment. I believe that all job searches regardless of work, education requirements or pay grade encompass the same processes.

First you have to know with assurance what job you are looking for and why; second you need to understand the components of the job search; and third you need to proceed toward their mastery. There is little room for anxiety and fear, so much a part of the secular world. We recognize these emotions, but crowd them out with knowledge, experience and faith.

The teaching process I use is more coaching than teaching. In teaching, the material is presented and the students graded on what they have learned and how well they have learned it, all in the classroom setting. In coaching I show participants what they have to do to achieve the goal they want, and then stand with them as a guide and encourage them to follow the process. I myself am encouraged by the results and also the support not only of the Diaconate but also by Stephan Lehtonen, and my volunteer resume support team.

Participants' feedback about the training is excellent. In addition, as sessions progressed,

there were requests for post training support, a time and a place for participants to stay connected and help each other. By June 2009 we put this together in collaboration between the Diaconate and Center for Faith and Work. We launched a weekly two-hour meeting to provide networking, accountability, prayer and spiritual teaching. We call it the Job Search RoundTable.

Our job search skills training sessions provide the tools for a successful job search. The RoundTable provides community, encouragement and hope. Each Thursday when we gather a different Redeemer staff member has volunteered to teach on a relevant subject from a biblical perspective. Attendees come when they can, and volunteer their services as they can and as the need arises. We like to say that the RoundTable is for job seekers by job seekers.

As with the skills training session, the RoundTable has been well received. The two work well together. We know that God is still at work and in control even when we are in between jobs, and we can either look for a job with God's help or do it alone. One participant confirmed the necessity of relying on God by sharing, "I learned a lot from

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REDEEMER REPORT

Kathy Keller
Heather Klein

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

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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

COMPARISON OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRY STATISTICS

The following table compares average weekly attendance as well as highest weekly attendance in Children's Ministry for 2005 and 2009.

	2005 Avg. Weekly	2005 Highest	2009 Avg. Weekly	2009 Highest	Growth
Overall Weekly Total	179	276	310	397	73%
Nursery Total	90	115	140	179	57%
Infants (0-12mos)	10	22	17	29	70%
Walkers (12-23 mos)	19	30	36	49	94%
Two year olds	27	44	48	64	85%
Three year olds	24	35	38	52	58%
Preschool Total	46	64	69	106	50%
Preschool	23	39	42	66	82%
Kindergarten	23	40	27	40	17%
Elementary Total	49	82	92	138	88%
1st grade	17	29	19	39	12%
2nd grade	11	27	22	36	100%
3rd grade	7	14	12	25	71%
4th grade	9	17	13	23	44%
5th grade	5	15	10	18	100%

Note: 2009 Elementary numbers by grade are lower than actuals. WS5PM reports combined 1st-2nd grade and 3rd-5th grade numbers and are not included in this table. Elementary total number is accurate. Average weekly numbers are based on entire year and are therefore slightly lower than if based on academic year average.

COMPARISON SUMMARY:

- Family Ministries was created as a result of the 2005 Vision Campaign with one of the goals being encouraging families to stay in the city. As we are now embarking on the RENEW Campaign, it is significant to see what the efforts of the previous campaign have accomplished.
- Overall, Children's Ministry has grown **73%** in average weekly attendance over the past four years.
- In most categories, the *average* attendance for 2009 is greater than the *highest* reported attendance in 2005.
- Families with very young children (0-3yrs) continue to be our largest demographic.
- What is most remarkable is the 88% growth in the elementary numbers. Given the challenges of real estate and education, this trend says a great deal about the commitment of Redeemer families to stay in the city.
- These trends also point toward potential numbers and needs in our Youth Ministry.

FAMILY MINISTRIES AT REDEEMER

BY BRENT BOUNDS

The purpose and vision of Redeemer is to ignite a movement of the gospel that changes the city of New York spiritually, socially, and culturally. As the Children's Ministry Director, this vision is not only personally inspiring, but has guided our ministry in shaping a philosophy: "The Gospel. A City. For Generations."

Three years ago the Redeemer vision inspired me to leave a ministry in North Carolina, and move to New York to invest in families and children. I arrived shortly after the goals from the last vision campaign were established, my favorite being the goal to encourage, equip, and assist families to flourish in the city.

In North Carolina I found myself constantly reminding other church staff members about the importance of remembering the single population in our congregation. In New York, the reverse is true. Not only is the city often unfriendly to families, but the question of how to best incorporate children into the church body has brought biases into churches as well. In the past ten years New York has gone through a significant demographic change, and Redeemer is a reflection of that change. I have noticed many churches wrestle with how to best incorporate children into the community. There are no easy answers, but I believe tackling these kinds of issues is extremely important.

Housing and schooling are

two other very big issues for families striving to live out the Redeemer vision. Not only is the cost of living incredibly high, but the limited amount of space is a sacrifice for children who need safe areas to run and play. I have had countless conversations with mothers who struggle to be good neighbors, while living in constant fear that one of their children may make a noise that offends other tenants in the building.

The challenge of finding a school—whether it is public or private—and being accepted, is equally daunting. Watching families go through the application process is unlike anything I have ever seen. Many people, especially those living outside the New York area, are in disbelief when I share that I am often asked to write character reference letters for preschoolers. The pressure of time, money, and energy it takes just to get a child accepted into a preschool is extremely stressful and overwhelming.

At this stage I can appreciate how the vision of staying in the city could begin to feel too costly, but I am continually amazed by the families who do not get discouraged. The vision requires many sacrifices, and it is a wonderful privilege to work alongside families who are open and willing to the challenges that come with those sacrifices. I am thoroughly impressed and inspired by mothers who muscle their strollers up and down subway

stairs, fathers who work long hours and balance the demands of family and community, and children who share very small rooms with their siblings. Despite these challenges, our ministry has seen a remarkable growth in numbers of elementary age children. Given the challenges of real estate and education in New York, this trend says a great deal about the commitment of our families to remain in the city. Words cannot express my gratitude to our families for this level of dedication.

As the number of families has increased, so has the demand for more volunteers. The opportunity to teach the Gospel to our growing community of children is incredibly exciting, but it also presents a large challenge in finding volunteers who can help manage this level of growth. One of the most staggering statistics I have discovered is the 73% growth in average weekly Sunday school attendance since 2005. In the first six months of my position I quickly realized that with 300 to 400 volunteers serving in our ministry there was no way I could devote the kind of time and attention each one deserved.

As a result I hired a Volunteer Coordinator, Amy Alexander, to focus all of her energy on recruiting and training volunteers. She is doing an amazing job, and we have received countless comments from parents who are so thank

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HFNY VOLUNTEER FAIR

Hope for New York held its semi-annual Volunteer Fair on Sunday, February 28 after all Redeemer services. HFNY volunteer fairs are a great way for the congregation of Redeemer to see who the affiliate organizations of HFNY are, to learn about the work they are doing in the city and to get connected and involved in serving their neighbors.

Several affiliate organizations

and their volunteers were present at the fair on Sunday, and the congregation was able to see how mercy and justice can be put to practice. From teaching ESL to immigrants and mentoring kids in the Bronx to helping at a homeless shelter or cooking a meal for the less fortunate, volunteer opportunities were plentiful. The need and the work in the city were exposed and once again the

congregation responded, as many people signed up to volunteer and offered up their time and effort to help these organizations change lives.

The February volunteer fair was a reminder of how God does great things in challenging times. If you are interested in volunteering with, or would like to make a donation to Hope for New York, please visit www.hfny.org

FAMILY MINISTRIES... (CONT'D FROM PAGE 4)

ful for the quality of volunteer who serve our children each week. I am most struck by their love for God and our families, and their commitment to showing up on Sunday and praying for the children in their classes during the week.

Several weeks ago I opened a storage cabinet at one of our service locations and came across little boxes with presents for one of our elementary classes. Two of our volunteer teachers had done this on their own,

without any assistance from the staff. This is but one example. There are numerous stories of people loving our children and families well beyond their Sunday responsibilities. Again, words cannot express my gratitude to our amazing volunteers.

I cannot begin to imagine the kind of impact our children will have on this city in future generations. The children we are nurturing now will be raised with a love for the city because it is their home. They

will embrace the unique issues and experiences of New York because they will already have had exposure to them. They will be years ahead of us in how to love and care for the people of this city because they have seen it modeled by their community all of their lives. I am honored to witness all of these things, and my steadfast prayer is for this generation to grow in their knowledge of Christ and change the city spiritually, socially, and culturally.

JOB SEEKING?... (CONT'D FROM PAGE 2)

the workshop about the skills of getting a job but what a difference in a spiritual environment full of care and support.”

Our job search ministry is a blessing to all who are involved, leaders especially. It is a fine example of the church serving congregants where they are. It is an expression of love and concern within the community of believers. Quoting from

James 2:22 (NIV): “You see that his faith and his actions (referring to Abraham offering his son Isaac on the altar) were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did.”

For further information go to www.redeemer.com/care/career_center/. You will find details on a number of relevant support services provided by Redeemer, including the

RoundTable. Under career directions you will find the job search skills training schedule.

The Diaconate is Redeemer's mercy ministry addressing the needs of those in our church family experiencing hardship. The Diaconate is our response to God's calling to be merciful, to love and care for one another in practical ways. If you need practical assistance, call the Diaconate Helpline, (212) 726-1334.



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gospelⁱⁿlife... (CONT'D FROM PAGE 1)

So, the brackets? The brackets capture the theme of the course, which is “between”—how do you live out the gospel in life between the world that is and the world that is to come? How do you live out the gospel in life between Sunday morning and Saturday night? How do you live out the gospel in life between mission and discipleship, between evangelism and justice, between cultural engagement and distinctive practices? Between your Christian community and the community around you?

Week 1, therefore, begins with the theme of the city: our

home now, the world that is. Week 8 closes the course with the theme of the eternal city: our heavenly home, the world that is to come. In between these gospelⁱⁿlife bookends, we look at how the gospel changes our hearts, changes our community, and changes how we live in the world.

The course materials are very rich. Each week consists of a 1-hour home study, a group Bible study, a 10-minute DVD segment of Tim Keller teaching, followed by a guided discussion about the ideas in the teaching. The participant materials contain a substantial amount of

reading, as well as questions for reflection and discussion.

Tim Keller says, “The concept behind the gospelⁱⁿlife course is that Christ-likeness happens when we bring the gospel to bear on the roots of a person’s heart. We want to help people work out what it means to believe the gospel more deeply and rejoice in Jesus’ salvation more fully in a community. So we’re working these things into people’s lives, we’re doing it in community and that is the basic concept behind the gospelⁱⁿlife discipleship curriculum.”

Visit www.gospelinlife.com to learn more.