

REDEEMER

R E P O R T

AUGUST 2010

WHAT SHOULD I DO NEXT?

BY CREGAN COOKE

If you've been part of Redeemer for any length of time you probably realize two things: 1) we are incredibly blessed with pastors, staff, leaders and congregants who want to see our vision realized "to renew NYC socially, spiritually and culturally through a movement of the gospel" and 2) the vision God has called our church to can feel a little overwhelming at times.

Multiplying our church into neighborhood-based congregations with four new Lead Pastors will be instrumental in positioning Redeemer to move out into the city in a deeper and more meaningful way than ever before. And while we originally set out to have three congregations and three Lead Pastors, the Session felt strongly that God was leading us to have four. So naturally on the heels of announcing the four Lead Pastors a lot of questions were raised both about the change from three to four, but also about when changes will affect the attendee. Questions have come from staff, leaders, members and attendees, with most expressing a desire to know what each person should do next.

First, some things you don't need to do. You don't need to pick a congregation or align

with a particular Lead Pastor yet. While we want everyone to eventually find a congregation they call their own, we are not at that place at this point in time. And when we do ask congregants to put their roots down it will be up to you where you decide to attend and why. We realize this is a complex issue and will work differently for each person based on a number of factors.

Second, you don't need to change your role within a particular area of service. As the four congregations solidify there will eventually be changes to the way some ministries function and how you will serve, but any such changes are still months away and in the meantime we need everyone to continue serving in their current capacity.

So what *should* you do next?

Live missionally. We have always been a church that embraces the city and believes we are called by God to be here living out the gospel everyday in our work, in our relationships and in service. Now more than ever we need to be intentional about letting the gospel affect every part of our lives so that our decisions are based on our

mission rather than our personal preferences.

Allow God to direct your next steps. Since this will mean some difficult decisions regarding which congregation you will ultimately commit to, begin to seek out God's direction now. Look at all the possibilities that will come from this new chapter in our church with an open mind and a willing heart. This gives us confidence and assurance that God will align us in the best possible manner to bring his glory to bear on the city.

Pray. Nothing will be more important than your prayers. Prayer releases the power of God into the world and we can be confident that when we unite in prayer God will do amazing things through our church. At the top of the list, we need your support in prayer about how we as a body make the many steps ahead of us in the unified, selfless manner of servants working to renew this city that God has called us to.

In the months ahead we anticipate significant progress will be made regarding how the congregations will form and launch. Since early in the year both the Session and a task force of staff and elders has been

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ENTREPRENEURSHIP INITIATIVE BUSINESS PLAN COMPETITION 2011

How are you spending your time during these hot summer days? Whether you're inside in air conditioning or outside looking for shade, do take time to reflect on the goodness of God and allow this time to be one of renewal. Specifically, contemplate how to use your gifts in a creative and impactful manner. Perhaps you have always thought about launching a business or want help refining a business idea. Then you should begin to prepare for the Entrepreneurship Initiative's ("Ei") fifth annual Business Plan Competition for the Redeemer Community.

The Entrepreneurship Initiative continues to assist the launch of gospel-centered organizations that serve and improve the city and contribute to the social well-being of our culture. Keeping in line with our vision for cultural renewal, these ventures may be arts, for-profit, or not-for-profit. Winning entrepreneurs receive a small financial grant or investment and theological and strategic guidance from extraordinary talent in the congregation. To get a better sense of our vision, the process for the Business Plan Competition, and its winners, please visit

www.faithandwork.org/competition. Continue to check our website frequently, as we will be updating it with this year's timelines and submission requirements. Should you have additional questions, please contact us at ei@redeemer.com.

As part of this vision, we hope to support entrepreneurs, whose new ventures challenge or augment the services of existing institutions and help advance both the private and public sectors. The Entrepreneurship Initiative provides support through workshops, conferences, mentoring relationships, and a business plan competition.

BETA GROUP LEADERS WANTED

- *No Experience Necessary*
- *Only a 7-Week Commitment*
- *Training Provided*
- *Great Short-Term Ministry Opportunity*

Beta Groups are seven week Fellowship Groups for those who are new to our church or exploring Christianity. These groups have played a pivotal role over the last five years in connecting newcomers to the life and community of the church, while providing each attendee with the forum to process the Christian faith more deeply.

If you would like to lead a Beta Group this fall or recommend someone, go to www.redeemer.com/betaleader

REDEEMER REPORT

Cregan Cooke
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

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P+T+C+V=FRIENDSHIP

Everyone wants to be loved more. Everyone wants to be cared for.

But does anyone feel they are perfectly loved and cared for? No. So then what should we do? I remember wrestling with this question myself when I was going through a pretty lonely time in my life. “Where will I find good relationships? How will I feel more connected?” I thought. For many of us August is typically a month where we take inventory about these things before we “gear up” for the fall. Often there is hope for change, for new and meaningful relationships, but no particular direction for what to do next.

To experience the love and care found in new, rich friendships one has to put effort into several key areas. Scripture shows us that relationships form through a straightforward equation: proximity, plus time, plus commonality, plus vulnerability equals friendship. Or to be really nerdy:

$P+T+C+V=Friendship$

We see the essence of this

equation in Acts 2:42-47.

(P)roximity - Verse 42 states that the newly formed church “devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer.” Clearly this shows us what they did for church, but it also shows us that they were committed to placing themselves in the same space with each other. The word “devoted” here means literally “to press on” and “stick with it.” With so much technology at our disposal we forget sometimes that we need to spend time in the personal company of others.

(T)ime - Not only should we place ourselves in the company of others, but we must do this regularly. Once or twice a year is not enough. Verse 46 says “every day they continued to meet together.” At the very least, this means that for relationships to form and thrive there needs to be some regularity and meaningful face time.

(C)ommonality - In verse 44 we see this because “all the believers were together and had

BY REV. MICHAEL KELLER
everything in common.” Luke, the writer of Acts, was referring to possessions, which if we think about it many things we have in common with others relate to material things like playing tennis, or photography or a favorite book. But just spending time with people and doing it frequently is not enough for real friendship to develop because time spent does not guarantee commonality. If this were true, we would all be best friends with our co-workers. In *The Four Loves*, C.S. Lewis says that in order for friendship to arise “companions [must] discover that they have in common some insight or interest.”

(V)ulnerability - Lastly, loneliness will still set in if there is no vulnerability with one another. What gave the early church the power to be so vulnerable with each other that they were willing to sell even their possessions and goods (v. 45)? What made them willing to put themselves at economic risk? Simply put, they saw and

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CFW GOSPEL AND CULTURE SPEAKER SERIES

Summer is quickly slipping out of reach. Despite the intense humidity and hot temperatures, something within us still saddens as summer wanes. But with the approaching change of season and refreshment of fall comes a stimulating monthly offering hosted by Center for Faith & Work.

What is gospel-centered cultural renewal? How does having

a kingdom perspective change how and why we engage culture in our various spheres of industry? Beginning in September 2010 and continuing monthly through May 2011, CFW will host guest speakers to engage with the Redeemer community as part of Redeemer’s “Gospel in the World” year. The “Gospel & Culture” lectures and Q&A sessions will be held one Sunday a

month at Hunter College in the main auditorium starting at 1:00PM. As we hear from various thought-provoking individuals who have wide-spread influence in their vocational communities, we look forward to having the opportunity together as a church community to think more broadly about how the gospel really *does* change everything!



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meeting regularly to formulate the next steps needed to ready us for a formal launch sometime in the second half of 2011. This fall and into the New Year there will be events and venues for RENEW plans to be presented and for congregants to be involved in working out the best solutions to the challenges of this transition.

Our church needs you to be

a part of this exciting time in our history by attending key events as they as they come up. The first such event is September 22nd when we will hold a special Covenant Renewal service to commission our new lead pastors. Please mark your calendar now to be in attendance on this special night. Various teams will be formed in the coming months and your

involvement is critical to the success of this plan. When we look back at how God has cared for us over 20 years to bring us to this point, it is clear that he is working to bring about his plans for Redeemer in NYC. We then look forward with anticipation and trust that what comes next will exceed what we could ask for or expect.

P+T+C+V=FRIENDSHIP

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heard and remembered what Christ had done for them at the cost of his own relationship to the Father—Jesus lost relationship with God to gain it with us.

So if we know what we want and what it takes to get it, why aren't we experiencing it more?

For many, that initial step of putting ourselves in that first small group, or Beta group, or college group, or Faith & Work group (where we don't know anyone) is just too awkward. What we see in Acts 2, however, is that intentional time spent relating begets

real, organic and natural friendship. We have to be willing to walk through a time of formality to get to the natural friendships. There's no better time than this fall to test this equation and see what it yields.