



AUGUST 2013

## CENTER FOR FAITH & WORK: IN THE LIVING ROOM

BY KALEN CHENG

*C*onsider the lilies of the field. Our God made beautiful stuff, even though he also built it to expire. This is a strange struggle for us on earth: to admire but not to fret, to see beyond the moment (though mesmerizing) to the eternal. For those of us in the creative arts, who endeavor on the building end of things, whose achievements are marked by elusive goals in a subjective world, the creative nature of our God is necessary meditation; and In the Living Room is a place to do just that.

To be honest, I wasn't sure whether signing up for this

7-week commitment was a good idea. I don't always appreciate getting dumped into the "artist pool" because we're not all the same. I wanted to resist the conflation of "us" (the poor but noble artist) versus "them" (people who make money for a living).

But the opposite happened. God surprised me (again) by the variety of people and talents that exist. You know when you sit next to that graphic designer in church and see them take notes? They realize the sermon's words and meaning visually and it's so cool. Multiply this by twenty-ish (the number of

participants attending In the Living Room) and you'll see and hear the process of people working out their thoughts and ideas in myriad ways—film, visual art, fashion, craft, acting, writing, music. It can be quite inspiring.

Still, efforts outside of the Arts call upon imagination and creativity. The business of predicting the life of a stock, the research and formation of technology frameworks for a need that does not yet exist, the naming of a child whose personality and future is unknown. These are not to be diminished.

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## SAVE THE DATE: MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 23 "PUBLIC FAITH" VISION NIGHT WITH TIM KELLER

**Public Faith: Sharing the Hope That's Within**  
**Monday, September 23 at 7:00PM**

All Redeemer members\* and leaders, save the date and make plans to join us to hear Redeemer's vision for the coming year.

*\*Those who have taken membership vows and formally become members of Redeemer Presbyterian Church.*

# VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2013: KINGDOM ROCK

BY KAREN DOLAN

From July 15-19, over 260 children from all over the city came together at W83 for Vacation Bible School (VBS).



This year's theme was "Kingdom Rock", and each day the kids learned how God helps us to "stand strong!" Parents, kids, and volunteers had a wonderful time worshipping God and enjoying one another through song, crafts, Bible stories and small group discussions.

It was a great experience for parents, staff and volunteers to come together and make the Gospel come alive to our next generation New Yorkers. The week also gave Redeemer families who are part of the East Side, West Side and Downtown Congregations the opportunity to come together for a reunion

of sorts. Parents, children and volunteers could visit with old friends while at the same time forming new friendships.

Perhaps even more exciting is that many families brought friends with them to experience VBS (some for the very first time) to learn about the good news of Jesus.

As amazing as this year's VBS was, it took an army of volunteers to pull it off, and we could NOT have done it without them! Before the week of VBS, we had dozens of volunteers helping: build sets, paint banners and decorate the entire W83 building. During VBS we had over 100 volunteers who led the kids in crafts, stories, singing, snacking, recreation, and crew leading. And Redeemer's youth group also volunteered and did a great job leading the kids while bringing a youthful, energetic vibe that the kids loved!

While VBS is a huge undertaking, there is nothing more gratifying than seeing the excited faces of the kids each morning as they walk through the doors. Hearing parents and volunteers describe how VBS is helping a child understand God's Word, is worth all the effort! Perhaps the greatest reward in serving with this team, is that long after the final day of VBS is over we hear parents tell stories of their kids still singing VBS songs and talking about what they learned. I can't help but be excited by that and I'm already looking forward to next year!



## REDEEMER REPORT

Kathy Keller  
Heather Klein

Hunter College Auditorium  
East 69th St.  
(between Park & Lexington)  
Services at  
10:30AM & 6PM

W83rd Ministry Center  
150 W. 83rd St.  
(between Columbus & Amsterdam)  
Services at  
9:30AM, 11:30AM, 5PM, 7PM

Salvation Army Auditorium  
120 W. 14th St.  
(between 6th & 7th Aves.)  
Services at  
9:30AM & 5PM

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# NYC RE-IMAGINED

BY CHRIS DOLAN

On Saturday, June 22, three teams of West Side congregants scoured the UWS for a scavenger hunt as part of the Center for Faith & Work's month-long program, NYC Re-imagined. The participants were required to take snapshots of themselves with anything from a non-existent subway stop to the place where Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan had coffee in the hit movie, *You've Got Mail*. What do these things have to do with faith or cultural renewal? Was this just a crazy social event meant to bring neighbors together for a fun day?

NYC is one of the most unique and exciting places to live, yet often we go about our days rushing from work meeting to personal appointment to social engagement. How often do we stop, not only to think about, but actually to care about the infrastructure that makes it possible for over 8 million people to live and work and actually flourish in such close proximity? What is it about NYC that makes

it the most visited city in the world, drawing more than 52 million visitors in 2012? And does God actually care about the efficiency of our transit system? These are several of the questions I hoped would

has been made..." Do you see the invisible qualities of God made manifest all across this great city? Do you see how God is using you to reflect his glory and sovereignty through your own work? How does

your particular area of work contribute to the greater flourishing of NYC? This is what we hope people came to consider and better understand through the 30+ offerings engaging nearly 400 people across the month of June as part of NYC Re-imagined.

So I urge you to take the time out of your busy

day to look with new eyes at the city we inhabit. Ask the questions that too often go unasked. Consider the impact that a 24 hour, 365 day a year subway system has upon the opportunities and quality of life for millions of people made in the image of God. See God at work in new ways.

If you want to recreate the UWS Scavenger Hunt with a group of your own, it's available on the CFW website at [www.faithandwork.org/hunt](http://www.faithandwork.org/hunt).



*Attendees participate in the Upper West Side Scavenger Hunt*

arise as each team sought to discover the 5 bus routes that run north/south through the UWS.

If we take seriously the sovereignty of God and the extent of his reign, then we come to understand that God is at work throughout this city. In Romans 1:20 we read "since the creation of the world, God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what



# UNITY AND THE GOSPEL IN BUENOS AIRES

BY REDEEMER CITY TO CITY

Last month, on June 11–13, Timothy Keller was the special guest speaker at a national gathering with over 1000 pastors in Mar del Plata, Argentina. The unity among this body of pastors has garnered attention from Christianity Today, Lausanne and Pope Francis (formerly the Archbishop of Buenos Aires). This close-knit group has pastoral councils in every city, and they meet together to pray and encourage one another across denominations and traditions. They are also commonly recognized by local governments for their service to the poor.

During the national gathering in June, Dr. Keller exhorted pastors to see the Bible as being all about Jesus rather than all about us—for example, about his finished work on the cross rather than our own good works—and to believe and live out the implications of the gospel in our own lives, which none of us fully do. Many pastors in attendance described the message as thought-provoking, Christ-centered and powerful. We're hopeful that this will be a precursor to similar events we can do through a

regional CTC network in Latin America, which would be similar to City to City Asia and City to City Europe.

On June 14, Dr. Keller spoke at a breakfast sponsored by the Argentine Bible Society at the Intercontinental Hotel in downtown Buenos Aires. The event was called

*Dr. Keller exhorted pastors to see the Bible as being all about Jesus rather than all about us—for example, about his finished work on the cross rather than our own good works.*

“Fe y trabajo: una relación liberadora” (Faith and work: a liberating relationship). Buenos Aires, a city of 13 million that attracts immigrants from all over Latin America seeking advancement, is like New York in that it is significantly more workaholic and ambitious than the rest of the country and much of the continent.

In Dr. Keller's talk, he spoke about the internal moral compass and source of strength that Christianity provides amid the pressure of the workplace. He also spoke of the hope that it brings to our frustration, citing the story “Leaf by Niggle” by J.R.R.

Tolkien, and many other ideas from the book *Every Good Endeavor*. More than half of the 170 in attendance were non-Christians.

Our thanks to Marcelo Robles, a key leader in Buenos Aires, who was responsible for making both events possible and served as Dr. Keller's translator. He was part of our 2011 International Intensive and has a longstanding relationship with Redeemer, including receiving short-term mission trips in 2011 and 2012. He is now working on a university center and church plant in the secular center-city neighborhood of Palermo.

We are also indebted to Norberto Saracco, head of the Facultad Internacional de Educación Teológica, a seminary now in 12 Spanish-speaking countries. John Thomas, CTC's Director of Global Training, has been partnering with FIET to conduct the first two-year Church Planting Incubator program outside of New York, completely in Spanish (occurring simultaneously in Santiago, Chile). Many of the participating pastors were present at these events.

# REDEEMER DOWNTOWN FOLK BAND PLAYS IN UNION SQUARE PARK

BY JOSH SIMMONS

On Sunday, July 7, the Downtown Folk Band (led by AM Music Director, Harrison Hollingsworth) played for an hour in Union Square Park after the morning service. It was a perfect sunny, hot, and humid morning for folk music. The folk band has played four or five times since Downtown services began last fall. The style of music is one that many people enjoy and appreciate, so back in the spring the idea was born: “why not

take the band to the park and share their music with others?” And several weeks later, we had the opportunity for our community to come together and invite friends from our neighborhood. We had 40-50 people join us, and

many more who stopped by to listen. It was a joy to share the gift of music with our neighbors. We look forward to doing this again and discovering other ways we can meet and love our neighbors downtown.



## CFW: IN THE LIVINGROOM... (CONT'D FROM PAGE 1)

Indeed, this is one way God reminds me: the overlap is not that some are in the Arts, the overlap is that we are all made in the image of a Creator. He is multifaceted, worthy of wonder, the generator of all things. In the beginning, God created...

Therefore, when we go back to our studio, practice room, coffee shop—or office—and try to do good work, we do not have to put some form of ourselves on a pedestal. “Be knocked off center,” as we talked about In the Living Room. This idea

is applicable to any vocation.

So, why do we have In the Living Room? Why should artists get their own joint in the body of the church? I asked myself these questions, too. Was this some sort of team-building, Kumbayah camp exercise?

For some, it was a time to heal and be built up; to contemplate the God-endued honor in what some people in their past labeled “frivolous;” to be with others whose day job is one thing while their mind and heart-life is occupied elsewhere; to be chal-

lenged by the fact that God can be in the process of our work, when the work itself doesn't have a hard outline.

We discussed the notion of liminality, the “here, but not yet” place that Christians can live in. (e.g. Our marriages are a “here, but not yet” version of our status as the Bride of Christ.) For people in the creative arts, we walk into this shifting place in our work lives, too, and it can be unnerving. There is no such thing as “finished” in art. But we're all working toward some

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## CFW: IN THE LIVINGROOM... (CONT'D FROM PAGE 5)

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imagined plateau before the next climb. The target is wavering and the fruit of our labor is not always in measure with the amount we have sown.

For me, this was the benefit of In the Living Room: to communicate and have communicated to me the

blessedness of our “at work” state. Truths that, though known, require continued kneading into our thought lives, especially when our work lives can be incredibly frustrating and lonely. We, like Niggle’s tree, are in-process. So, when you’re in a particularly quiet season, like I

am, you can confess, “I don’t know” and it is less uncomfortable. God made the lilies of the field splendid but temporary, and it is good.

*Kalen Cheng, is a Gotham Alum who participated in the In The Living Room Artist Intensive.*