

# REDEEMER Report



MAY 2014

## PUBLIC FAITH FOR 25 YEARS

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BY DAVID BISGROVE

On a Sunday evening in April 1989, I walked into the Seventh Day Adventist Church for a worship service at a new church plant called Redeemer. I had graduated from Columbia a year earlier and was in my first year of a new job and living on the Upper East Side. I was bouncing around different churches at the time when a friend from graduate school told me about this new church that was starting up so I thought I would give it a try. The rest, as they say, is history.

As we celebrate 25 years of what God has done in and through Redeemer Presbyterian Church, I find it impossible to separate Redeemer's story from my own. I have been asked

many times what it was like in the early days and why I am still so connected to the community. My answers to those questions are less nostalgic than they are strategic, as I see lots of parallels between those early days and our current model.

For example, in this year of Public Faith, I am reminded of one of the reasons I found Redeemer so compelling in the early days. To put it simply — it was a safe place to doubt! Growing up in the church and the culture of Christianity, like I did, often leads very little room to question your beliefs. But knowing and following Jesus is a journey that often reflects a father's answer to Jesus, "I do believe; help me overcome my

unbelief!" (Mark 9:24). To be a Christian is to live on a continuum of assurance and doubt, and therefore I am grateful that one of the values of our community is to embrace the doubter in each of us.

How does this inform our current situation? While there are challenges living in an increasingly 'post-Christian' world, I see great opportunities as we begin the next chapter of our history. Charles Taylor, in his book "A Secular Age," notes how both Christians and secularists are 'haunted' by the faith of the other. Secularists, absent a vocabulary that explains so much of the world around them, are haunted by  
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## CTC CONFERENCES IN HONG KONG AND SYDNEY

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BY CLARA LEE

Redeemer City to City has been the church planting arm of Redeemer Presbyterian Church since 2000. As church plants have launched all over the world, we have begun sister networks in Europe, Asia and Australia. These networks raise their own funding and bring local churches and denomina-

tions together to share City to City's pastoral training.

From March 19-21, at the invitation of City to City Asia, Tim Keller and several prominent Chinese church leaders spoke in Hong Kong at the Queen Elizabeth Stadium. An estimated 1500 Chinese leaders were able to attend. These lead-

ers had been using Redeemer's gospel-based pastor training for several years, and were able to give their own perspective on it. It was a rich time of fellowship and commonality across cultural and geographic divides.

Then from March 26-29, City to City Australia hosted  
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# THANK YOU! HOPE FOR NEW YORK'S EASTER SACRIFICIAL OFFERING

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**W**e praise God for the work He is doing through Hope for New York's affiliate organizations, and we are so grateful to our congregants who gave generously and sacrificially to this work through the Easter Sacrificial Offering last month.

On Easter Sunday, clients who have been helped by the work of HFNY's affiliates shared stories of Gospel restoration and hope at all Redeemer services.

A few of their stories are excerpted below:

Vianeli

### **Operation Exodus**

*I speak to young people not as a victim, but as a leader ... I am able to speak and lead from experience, unafraid, believing that God can make something positive out of what seems to be the worst possible situation.*

Manny

### **Brooklyn Teen Challenge**

*Over this last year at Teen Challenge, I've had the privilege to build healthy relationships with people who actually care about me and share a common goal. Even better, God has restored relationships with my family.*

Bucky

### **Open Hands Legal Services & The Father's Heart Ministries**

*I have so much hope that, even though we live in a broken world, the Lord is restoring it, renewing everything and completely erasing sin. He's restoring and renewing me day by day, and that's a hope worth sharing this Easter.*

Charles

### **All Angels' Church Community Ministries**

*I no longer have to prove to anyone that I am worthy, because I know that in Christ I am loved and have the capacity to give love. As of today, I have been working for 8 years in one job, and I have had my own apartment for the past year. Although this is a huge accomplishment for me, I know that God still has greater things in His kingdom for me.*

Interested in joining with Hope for New York's work this spring to build a city in which all New Yorkers flourish? Visit [hfnny.org/volunteer](http://hfnny.org/volunteer) to volunteer your time and skills, or [hfnny.org/donate](http://hfnny.org/donate) to learn more about giving to strengthen our work.

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

Office: 1359 Broadway, 4th Fl., New York, NY 10018-7102

(212) 808-4460 (T) (212) 808-4465 (F) [www.redeemer.com](http://www.redeemer.com)

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 9:30 & 11:30AM, 5 & 7PM

Salvation Army Auditorium  
120 W. 14th St.

(between 6th & 7th Aves.)  
Services at 9:30AM & 5PM

# ANNOUNCING THIS YEAR'S EI FORUM: *DISRUPTION*

BY DAVID H. KIM

The concept of disruption is a fascinating one and has been particularly significant for entrepreneurship and for understanding the dynamics of innovation. Economists like Joseph Schumpeter (1883-1950), a contemporary of John Maynard Keynes, championed the notion that disruptive innovation leads to “creative destruction,” a well-known phrase that he coined. For Schumpeter and his present-day followers such as Clayton Christensen (Harvard Business School), understanding the role of disruption is critical to a flourishing commercial enterprise as well as a flourishing economy. Whether it’s disruption created by human-made innovation or by an unforeseen “act of God,” these massive changes and shifts create a significant opportunity — one that we can respond to with either fear or courage.

Disruption instigates a powerful occasion to not only understand the deeper drives that govern our motives, but to solidify our commitments that lead to resolute actions and innovation. This year’s Entrepreneurship & Innovation Forum will explore these dynamics to help participants discern how the gospel transforms the way we experience disruption. God uses disruption in our lives to confront us with His reality,

especially during times when our own agenda and ourselves consume us. When we are confronted with the vision of God’s glory in the light of the gospel, fearful avoidance turns into courageous action. Em-



powered by God’s love, we are able to see otherwise potentially unnerving changes in our world as opportunities to bring about Spirit-led innovation. As the gospel becomes clearer, disruption can distinctively refine and hone our sense of calling, commitment, and purpose in our work.

We are particularly excited to convene this year’s EI Forum. The Forum is open to people of all professions and industries, and is not intended to be limited solely to entrepreneurs. However, in order to create a more intimate and focused environment for this year’s participants, registration will be capped at 200 attendees. We hope this will provide the potential for greater opportunities to process the ma-

terial presented alongside other participants, fostering meaningful relational connections. The Forum will be highly interactive, creating the needed time and space for both individuals and groups to reflect on and respond to how God uses disruption to sharpen and renew 1) our motivations for work, 2) how we shape relational dynamics at work, and 3) our imagination for innovation.

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*Don’t miss this year’s Entrepreneurship & Innovation Forum, May 30-31, 2014 — an opportunity to spend the week-end with a dynamic community of leaders exploring how the disruptive power of the gospel can drive innovation! Gain in-sight from thought-provoking presenters, network with like-minded entrepreneurs, business-owners, and investors, participate in practical workshops, and engage in targeted consultations with experts and coaches.*

*The weekend will also provide experiences for spiritual formation in order to gain a new vision of God’s glory to propel our work. We also will showcase past and present winners of the Business Plan Competition and hear from our 2014 winners.*

*For details and to register:*  
**[faithandwork.org/ei](http://faithandwork.org/ei)**

# FAITH & WORK TRANSFORMATION: 3-MONTH VOCATIONAL INTENSIVES

BY GENA LEE

When I considered signing up for the CFW Vocational Intensive, I was hesitant to commit. With wedding planning on my mind, I certainly wasn't looking to get involved in a 3-month program to take any more of my time. Some referred to it as "Mini Gotham," which was one of the main reasons I was interested. Because I had been both skeptical and afraid to apply for Gotham, I wanted to experience a glimpse of it first through this Vocational Intensive. I wasn't aware how much influence and impact it would have on my work life and spiritual growth.

Before this program, I never stopped to ask myself how I could integrate my faith into the workplace. In hindsight, my church, work, and social life were not intertwined, but instead, were kept separate from one another. For some time, I was selfishly preoccupied with finding the perfect job. I desired to find something that I loved to do, that made me feel better about myself, and that would gain me recognition. Es-

entially, I was looking for work itself to fulfill me. I wanted work to serve me rather than me serving my work. Never did I ask myself how I could serve and bring God's kingdom into the workplace until I began this 3-month Vocational Intensive.



Through exposure to readings, theologians, and daily devotionals, I began to see things differently in the city and workplace. As the brokenness in my work became more apparent, I gradually developed a longing to engage and mend it. I started to realize the sinful, mundane reactions to work were rooted in something deeper within my heart. Rather than a simple behavioral change, I needed a true heart change. I have now come to understand that in whatever circumstance or job I am given, it is my role and de-

sire to bring God's glory into it by doing good work, developing deeper relationships, and seeking renewal.

The community aspect of this program was truly amazing. I was part of the Cross-Vocational group, comprised of people working in many different industries. Although we differed in job experiences, we shared similar struggles in integrating our faith into the workplace. Through our discussions, prayers, and encouragement for one another, I developed a better understanding of true Christian fellowship. As Bonhoeffer wrote, "Christian Community is not an ideal we have to realize, but rather a reality created by God in Christ in which we may participate."

Although my transformation is ongoing, I have been equipped with the lens of the gospel, which I strive to use daily as I look into the brokenness of the city, and specifically, my field of work. My time in the program has truly been a blessing and an instrumental part of my spiritual growth.

## CTC CONFERENCES... (CONT'D FROM PAGE 1)

Tim and Kathy Keller, Katherine Leary Alsdorf, and other CTC staff for a pastor's conference in Sydney, which exposed

850 Australian church leaders to the fundamentals of gospel-centered, city-facing ministry. It was thrilling to see such a large

gathering in a country where the church, as in Europe, has largely lost credibility among  
*(Continued on page 6)*

# HOPE FOR NEW YORK ADDS 3 NEW AFFILIATES

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This spring, Hope for New York added **three new non-profits** to our affiliate network, bringing our affiliate total to over 40 affiliates serving our neighbors in need.

Our new affiliates are:

## BACK ON MY FEET

Back on My Feet uses running as a way to provide structure, discipline, and healthy lifestyle for those in residential addiction recovery programs throughout the city. Volunteer opportunities include early weekday morning or weekend runs with men and women in recovery programs.

## CITYMEALS ON WHEELS

Citymeals on Wheels provides meals to homebound elderly on the Upper West Side. Volunteer opportunities include delivering meals by foot to homebound residents on the weekends.

## STREET SQUASH

Street Squash offers academic tutoring and squash instruction for at-risk youth in Upper Manhattan. Volunteer opportunities include weekday and weekend academic tutoring, as well as coaching squash.

We're committed to partnering with these organizations to mobilize volunteers and provide resources so that they can do their work even better. If you're interested in getting plugged in as a volunteer with any of these new affiliates, just email us at [volunteer@hfny.org](mailto:volunteer@hfny.org).

We're also excited to announce that **we've approved \$1.3 million in grants** that will be distributed this spring to strengthen our existing non-profit affiliate programs. Because of your generosity, we're able to fund affiliate program costs like emergency meals, career center technology and supplies, and enrichment field trips and college visits.

We're so proud to partner with these amazing non-profits all over the city, and we're thankful to those of you who give of your time and resources to enable us to strengthen and support their work.

## PUBLIC FAITH FOR 25 YEARS... (CONT'D FROM PAGE 1)

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the transcendence of a God who created them and gives purpose and meaning to their lives. Christians on the other hand are haunted by what Flannery O'Connor called the 'conflict between an attraction for the Holy and the disbelief in it that we breathe in with the air of our times.'

Why is this an opportunity? From the earliest days Redeemer has intentionally acknowledged and wrestled with the conflict O'Connor describes. It has therefore developed a vocabulary and culture of faith that helps both those who grew up in the church, as well as those who have long

since written God off as irrelevant. As we look ahead to the next 25 years of being public with our faith, my hope is that we will continue to be a community that is honest about our own doubts, and patiently introduces our friends to the gospel of Jesus Christ.



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## CTC CONFERENCES... (CONT'D FROM PAGE 4)

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young secular people. City to City Australia is also launching their own Gotham Fellowship in cooperation with the Center for Faith & Work.

In both cases, the staff of Redeemer City to City played a supporting role as our hosts did the hard work of bringing many churches, leaders, and de-

nominations together to host and plan a major event. Please pray for these networks to mature, thrive and become self-supporting in the near future.