

NOVEMBER 2015

THE DIFFERENCE CHRISTIANITY COULD MAKE IN THE CITY

BY TIM KELLER

At Redeemer we often speak of serving, strengthening, and “renewing” New York City. When we talk like this, we must be careful not to deny “common grace.” We believe God gives all people — not just Christian believers — talent and insight to preserve and cultivate human life. But what if the Body of Christ in center city New York were, for example, to triple over the next decade or so? What difference might it make? I’ve been talking with the elders and lead pastors about our vision for what our church could look like in the coming decades. We might see:

1. *An explosion of radical philanthropy.* Most people don’t go into “philanthropic mode” and give away large sums of money until they are very rich indeed. However, studies show that Christians adopt a philanthropic mindset far sooner, before significant wealth is amassed. There will be a willingness to limit their lifestyle and consumption in order to give away startling amounts. I think Christian givers could learn to be more non-paternalistic and involved with communities of need, and better partners with those who lead the various charities and ministries.

2. *An increase in civility and true pluralism.* Even in democratic western cultures, the groups who have held the reins of cultural power have always excluded and silenced unpopular voices and minority viewpoints not simply as mistaken but as despicable and beyond the pale. There has never been a genuinely pluralistic society — one in which every viewpoint has the right to be heard without marginalization and defamation. Christians humbled by the gospel could work with others toward the creation of a culture in which people of deeply different

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GIVE CHRISTMAS GIFTS TO FAMILIES IN NEED THROUGH HIS TOY STORE

His Toy Store, Hope for New York’s Christmas outreach for families in need across our city, will begin this November!

For the entire month of November, Hope for New York will be accepting online donations for Christmas toys

for families in need all over our city.

This year, we’re working with our affiliate partners to host **nine** His Toy Stores in strategic neighborhoods across the city in December. At these stores parents can shop for toys at no cost and are also able to

connect to local ministries.

These parents include the working poor in low-income neighborhoods, formerly incarcerated individuals reconnecting with their families, and moms and dads in residential recovery programs. For many of

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NOVEMBER IS “INSPIRE MERCY MONTH”

Tim Keller, in his book *Ministries of Mercy*, defines mercy as “spontaneous, super-abounding love that comes from an experience of the grace of God.” He adds that, “the deeper the experience of the free grace of God, the more generous we must become.” When Tim and Kathy founded Redeemer in 1989, they modeled our Diaconate to be Redeemer’s expression of mercy ministry.

Just like Acts 6, the Redeemer Diaconate is a group of individuals who walk alongside of those in our church family who are experiencing difficulties and/or in crises. Through meeting practical needs, we strive to contribute to the building of a repentant and rejoicing community where hearts are being changed through encounters with Jesus and one another. Throughout the month of November, there are several ways for you to partner with us to contribute to the flourishing of mercy ministries in our church community:

Nominate a fellow member.

Our deeks (our affectionate

term for deacons and deaconesses) are nominated, trained, elected and appointed by Redeemer elders and members. During the month of November, nominations will be accepted for deacon and deaconess; we also need new elders. We especially need Redeemer members’ help to identify candidates for both the Diaconate and the Session. With three congregations the Session and the Diaconate are in need of new leaders.

Elders are men of solid character with a gift of being a spiritual leader. Deeks are compassionate people, great listeners, the ones that people always go to for help. By nominating a Redeemer member who is known for these qualities, you have an opportunity to contribute to the care and oversight of the church.

For more information, visit redeemer.com/nominate.

Provide a financial gift.

Sunday, November 22, is the Diaconate’s Annual Special Offering. Every year, the Diaconate takes up a special offering

for its Mercy Fund. It is out of this fund that our deeks care for and minister to congregants with needs.

This year, the Diaconate is on track to help over 500 individuals and families with various needs. We estimate that we will provide direct financial assistance totaling over \$275K to roughly 185 individuals and families in need. Estimated aid for 2016 will be close to \$310K in funds provided by the Diaconate to help those in need within our church family. We thank you in advance for preparing your hearts to give on Sunday, November 22. Your help is instrumental in enabling us to carry on this ministry of mercy. You can donate online at redeemer.com/mercygift.

Pray with us.

We are only able to care for and serve our fellow sisters and brothers in need because of God’s sustaining grace and the wisdom he grants us.

Thank you so much, your faithful partnership is making a difference!

REDEEMER REPORT

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Office: 1166 Avenue of the Americas, 16th Floor, New York, NY 10036
212-808-4460 (T) 212-808-4465 (F) www.redeemer.com

Kathy Keller
Heather Klein

Hunter College Auditorium
E. 69th St.
(between Park & Lexington)
Services: 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.

W83rd Ministry Center
150 W. 83rd St.
(between Columbus & Amsterdam)
Services: 9:30/11:30 a.m., 5 & 7 p.m.

Salvation Army Auditorium
120 W. 14th St.
(between 6th & 7th Aves.)
Services: 9:30 a.m. & 5 p.m.

VISUAL ARTISTS CHOSEN FOR THE FALL 2015 CFW ARTISTS-IN-RESIDENCE

The Center for Faith & Work is pleased to announce our Fall 2015 Artists-in-Residence: visual artists Alix Pentecost Farren and Caroline Washburn.

The two artists were chosen from invited proposals that explored the idea of “Body,” based on the following prompt:

As humans, it seems we need organization. Function requires form. Forms require laws. Sorting. Framing. Defining. These are the tools we use to draw order from chaos.

*When that order is attained, we can call it a **body**, a word that bears literally dozens of definitions. It seems our ever-evolving existence depends upon the world’s vital and latent potential for order, for a body to be made.*

From the beginning of time, humans have been pondering Aristotle’s famous question about form: “What gives a table its tableness?” This is not just a quest for substance, it’s a quest for a form’s boundaries. If embodiment is the marriage of substance with form, what signals or defines disembodiment?

With this, we’d like the artist to consider the following questions. What kind of mass constitutes a body? How are its edges defined?

Each resident artist is now in the process of creating a brand new work on that theme, as it’s uniquely expressed through visual art.



Alix Pentecost Farren

Alix Pentecost Farren is an illustrator, cartoonist and artist. Her work has included stationery design, mud murals, animations, and installations. She went to The School for Art and Design at the North Carolina School of the Arts



Caroline Washburn

and then studied illustration and filmmaking at the Rhode Island School of Design before moving to Brooklyn, NY. Her work has been shown in multiple galleries in New York and abroad, and her comics have

been published by Harlequin Creature and Keep This Bag Away From Children and exhibited at Rhode Island Independent Publishing Expo and the Society of Illustrators Museum of Comic and Cartoon Art Festival.

Caroline Washburn is originally from Pittsburgh, PA. She received her degree in both Visual Art and Art History from Brown University in 2012, where she graduated with honors.

Caroline’s practice explores the concept of re-contextualization. Primarily working with graphite and paper, she creates a state of eerie hyperrealism by focusing on themes of memory and isolation. Her work provides a dramatic awareness of the singularity of her subjects, which allows the viewer to intimately interact with the subject as she does. Caroline has been included in a number of group exhibitions. She had her first solo exhibition Visual Heritage in 2012 and was featured as the alumni artist at her alma mater, Shady Side Academy, in 2013. Caroline was awarded the William Weston Excellence in Fine Arts Award and the Annual Juried Student Exhibition Prize in 2012.

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THE DIFFERENCE CHRISTIANITY ... (CONT'D FROM PAGE 1)

beliefs would finally be free to express who they are and practice what they believe — and if they treat others with respect would themselves be treated with that same respect.

3. *The cultural recapture of “vocation.”* Robert Bellah, in *Habits of the Heart* argued that what he called the “sacredness of the individual” — of individual choice and happiness — has not been offset in our culture (as it was in the past) by the sacredness of anything else.

Our culture has nothing more important than individual freedom binding us together. As a result the social fabric is unraveling. However, he thinks there is something that could help renew culture, “the re-appro-

priation of the idea of vocation or calling.” That is, “work as a contribution to the good of all and not merely as a means to one’s own advancement.” (Bellah, *Habits of the Heart*, pp.287-288.) If Christians in New York City could demonstrate what that looks like, it could begin to spread across the country. Among other things, it would entail more integrity in our work, and more humane workplaces and work weeks.

4. *Hope and community in the arts.* Contemporary art is dominated either by critical theory or by commercialism. Much art is aimed at transgressing and debunking all social norms in order to liberate the individual. Or it is designed to

provoke in such a way that attracts eyeballs and income. It is possible that gospel-changed Christians in the arts would bring far more hope and less nihilism, and could express visions of community and shared values.

If there were hundreds of thousands more Christians working in the financial sector, government, the media, the art world, and in the foundations and non-government organizations of New York City, it could have an impact far greater than we can imagine and of benefit to all. Would it be too much to hope that the “salt” that Christians could bring to our culture might lead to a curiosity about the “light” that motivates us?

HIS TOY STORE ... (CONT'D FROM PAGE 1)

them, His Toy Store is the only opportunity they have to provide gifts for their children.

Through His Toy Store, we’ve met parents like LaToya, who has been involved with A House on Beekman’s “Mommy & Me” program in the Bronx. LaToya was able to choose toys for her three children.

“When their dad lost his job, I thought, ‘How am I going to do everything? Here comes rent, but what are we going to do for toys?’” she said. “It took a weight off.”

However, we don’t see this

outreach as just a one-time giveaway — our hope is that parents connect with a caring community in their neighborhood for year-round support and spiritual community. Pastor Anna Mandile, one of our partners at Living Waters Fellowship in Brooklyn, told us that His Toy Store is an indispensable resource for being able to love and serve families in the neighborhood.

“Many of the families [we see] have trouble paying their bills,” she says. “They often are living with more than one

family in an apartment to make ends meet, and they struggle to give us the \$20 fee per week for our afterschool program.”

His Toy Store allows families to “see love without the “strings” attached. They know that they are loved and cared for.

How to Give: Our goal is to raise enough to stock our stores for 850 families: that’s around 2,600 toys. This year, giving to His Toy Store is completely online! Simply go to hfny.org/HTS to make your gift by November 30.

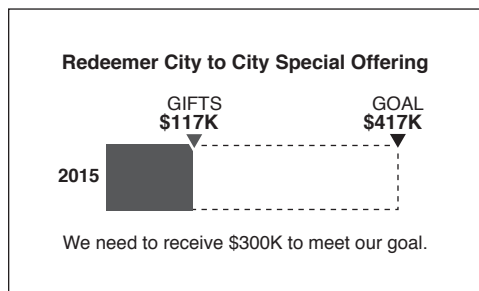
CITY TO CITY CHURCH PLANTERS SAY “THANK YOU” FOR THE SPECIAL OFFERING

People are sometimes surprised when they discover the full scope and reach of City to City’s (CTC) global training. CTC delivers year-round training programs on five continents to help leaders start new churches in global cities. In fact, this year CTC will train about 1,000 pastors and ministry leaders for urban evangelism.

A CTC signature program is the The International Church Planting Intensive (the Intensive). The Intensive is a residency for city-center church planters and happens in both Asia and New York City. This year 16 leaders and their wives attended the New York session of the Intensive. CTC field faculty recruited each leader, and the leaders attended on scholarship. Their training and lodging costs were entirely underwritten.

You met the New York Intensive class on CTC Sunday on September 27. Half of this exceptional class was introduced at all West Side services and the other half was introduced at Downtown and East Side services. Redeemer, everyone at CTC says thank you for welcoming these leaders to each worship service with such warmth! All of this year’s participants were moved by your prayers and applause. One leader commented, “The people at Redeemer remind me that I must be doing something important!”

Thank you for giving so generously to the Special Offering. This year we tripled the Special Offering goal to support all of CTC’s global programs in 2015. CTC asked you to give \$417,000 toward the remainder of the 2015 global program cost. So far you’ve given \$117,000 toward this goal. If you haven’t given yet, you still can and



we hope you do! Please visit the Intensive giving website: redeemercitytocity.com/rpc.

You might enjoy some of the comments from our leaders as they return home to their cities.

It has been an incredible blessing to be in New York this month. To take a step back from the busyness of life and reflect on my ministry and spiritual life has truly been invaluable. I will apply all that I learned and I believe that I return to my city as a more effective preacher, pastor and leader.

Thank you, Redeemer City to City and Redeemer Presbyterian Church, for your generous investment in me. Your willingness to sacrifice time, finances and training for the sake of the kingdom is a true example

of your desire to honor Christ among the nations. Your generosity not only benefits me, but also the people of Edinburgh.
– Athole Rennie, church planter, Edinburgh, Scotland

I can’t believe the Intensive went by so fast. It is an “information overload,” but in the best way. It’s almost like going back to seminary, but leaving out all the boring and “useless” stuff and only getting the really good stuff!

I now return to Cape Town to go into the first phase of starting a new church, and I’m excited to contextualize what I learned. I hope to reach as many people as we possibly can with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Thank you to Redeemer City to City, Redeemer Presbyterian Church, and to all the supporters for giving us an opportunity to be refreshed by the gospel and its application to our work in Cape Town.
– Louis Scheepers, church planter, Cape Town, South Africa

When I arrived at the Intensive, I expected my theological vision to sharpen. I expected to learn more “strategies” for drawing people into the body of Christ. But I did not expect to learn so much about myself and to embrace the good news of Jesus even more deeply than I did before. That is exactly what happened!

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ARTISTS-IN-RESIDENCE ... (CONT'D FROM PAGE 3)

In its practice of arts patronage, the Center for Faith & Work's artist-in-residence program has a two-pronged purpose: to support emerging and established local artists through the commissioning

of new work, and to celebrate and contribute to the intrinsic value of the arts as a vital fabric of the city. Being devoted to the flourishing of all New York City, the Center for Faith & Work is proud to offer selected

resident artists the opportunity, resources, financing, and support to create works of art that contribute to the excellence of New York's rich and creative culture.

CITY TO CITY "THANK YOU" ... (CONT'D FROM PAGE 5)

God brought my attention to how some of my own idols and pride hinder my being an effective witness. The potent combination of cross-cultural relationships, deep thoughtfulness about the gospel, and classes on church planting and effective evangelism proved to be incredibly transformative. I honestly believe I am a sharper tool in God's hand because of the Intensive.

– Kyle Brooks, church planter, San Francisco Metro

I am so extremely touched by the generosity of the whole

organization: from covering our accommodation and transportation expenses to the light, but much-needed fun nights out at the end of the week. It is incredible to watch how CTC stewards resources in order to give us well-rounded, holistic training. Additionally, CTC has the best non-teaching staff I have ever encountered. I saw just how diligent each member is in trying to ensure the organization runs smoothly with no issues whatsoever. They do everything with a smile and a warm friendly heart to go alongside. CTC shows me that the gospel can not only

transform an individual or a church, but an entire organization as well.

I leave the Intensive eternally grateful to God for this opportunity to be equipped for the good work He called my family to do. Though the challenge is daunting, my time here has given me much more confidence to face whatever obstacles come. Most of all, I have renewed vigor to do my part in ensuring that God's will be done in my city as it is in heaven. Soli Deo Gloria!

– Femi Osunnuyi, church planter, Lagos, Nigeria