

DECEMBER 2015

## CHURCH PLANTING IS WHAT WE DO

BY TIM KELLER

“Church Planting” is what we call the development of new congregations of Christians in the city. Since its beginning, Redeemer has been committed to being part of a movement of new churches in the city. Fifteen years ago we developed the Church Planting Center as a department inside Redeemer. Eventually this became its own missions agency, Redeemer City to City, which has helped plant hundreds of churches in scores of the largest global cities in the world, as well as working with Redeemer to plant churches in New York City.

Why do we think church planting is so important? I believe that there is no more

powerful way to reach a city with the gospel than to plant new churches in it. Here are some reasons why that I think that is true.

1. *New churches attract non-churched people* on average of about 3–6 times more than older churches. Only one in 10 new members of churches over 15 years old are people who were not Christians or not churched previously, while in new churches it is one in 3 or even 2 out of 3. Why? New churches are much more focused on outreach and so are more sensitive to the questions and issues of those outside their walls. Generally older, vital churches grow by transferring

already-Christians from weaker churches.

2. *New churches are the best way to increase the generosity base for all the ministries* in a city. All ministries need start-up capital in order to launch. But most ministries and charitable non-profits will need funding from outside themselves indefinitely. A new church, however, only needs start-up funding at its beginning. Several years later — or in some cases sooner — the church becomes self-funding from within. Even more, it begins to be a source of giving and generosity to other ministries beyond itself. In short, church planting is the best way

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## THANK YOU FOR GIVING TO HIS TOY STORE!

Thanks to the hundreds of you who gave *His Toy Store* in November!

You helped Hope for New York stock our *His Toy Stores* with over 2,600 toys for 855 families in need!

This month, we’ll work with several of our affiliates, as well as other ministries, and hundreds of volunteers to host 9

stores all over the city — in neighborhoods from Bushwick to Chelsea to the South Bronx.

At these stores, parents can shop for toys at no cost and will also be able to connect to local ministries for year-round resources. These parents include the working poor in low-income neighborhoods, formerly incarcerated individuals recon-

necting with their families, and moms and dads in residential recovery programs.

However, we don’t see this outreach as just a one-time giveaway — our hope is that parents connect with a caring community for year-round support and spiritual community.

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# FACING DIFFICULT PROBLEMS: WHY RENEWAL GROUPS AT REDEEMER COUNSELING?

BY NICK DARRELL

Renewal groups at Redeemer Counseling Services are a powerful way to address difficult problems, such as addictions, eating disorders, and grief, by connecting with the body of Christ. As we come together in our weakness, we experience the power of Jesus to strengthen us, but also to unite us in his mercy and love. Because Renewal Groups focus on a particular problem, those who participate are joined with others facing similar challenges. To have brothers and sisters who understand your struggle and who will urge you toward deeper dependence on Jesus is both comforting and empowering. Further, the counselors who lead each group are not only trained in the topic, but have also thought deeply about each challenge and have wrestled with how God's promises specifically speak to offer freedom, joy, and rest.

The Renewal Group for Sexual Integrity, is for men who are unable to rid themselves of sexual sin, such as pornography, masturbation, online video sex chats, affairs, anonymous sex, and hiring prostitutes. The men

vary in age, marital status, background, and spiritual maturity. Several are trying to salvage ruined engagements and marriages. Most come feeling discouraged, angry, ashamed, and hopeless. Usually they doubt that God is good and all-powerful. This group aims to change that by helping men to worship their Creator, Father, and Savior and remind them that He is more than willing and able to set them free if they will trust Him.

Many exciting moments have come from the men owning their weakness and receiving God's strength, which comes through powerful times of worship and prayer and a deeper understanding of the false worship they engage in through sex. These heart changes bear fruit of loving accountability and encouraging one another in righteousness. One man, set on giving into temptation, contacted the entire group in desperation asking for prayer and help. The response was astounding, and the answered prayer was a victory not only for the individual, but for all who lovingly interceded.

Another man testified that his marriage had never been stronger as he was conquering sin and now able to point his family to Jesus. He had so dramatically moved from depression to joy that all were encouraged by his transformation. This man, who cried tears of despair at the first meeting, ended our time giving thanks for what God had done through the faith of the other group members. Another man was so amazed at how God had freed him, he wanted to start a sexual integrity group at his own church. Because of God's power and faithfulness, many men have been able to stop engaging in sinful sexual patterns, and almost all report a significant reduction in frequency and intensity. All praise to our patient and glorious God!

Renewal Groups are offered in the spring and fall. Registration for the next ones opens in January, 2016. To find out more about Redeemer Renewal Groups contact Redeemer Counseling Services or go to [redeemer.com/rcs](http://redeemer.com/rcs)

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## REDEEMER REPORT

The Redeemer Report is a publication of the Redeemer Presbyterian Church.  
Office: 1166 Avenue of the Americas, 16th Floor, New York, NY 10036  
212-808-4460 (T) 212-808-4465 (F) [www.redeemer.com](http://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.

# CFW's 2015 CONFERENCE: YOU HAD TO BE THERE

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BY CAREY WALLACE

You can't catch up on what you missed at the Center for Faith and Work's 2015 conference by reading this.

The content, as always, was world class.

Author Daniel Nayeri opened the conference with a hilarious and poignant story about one part of his professional path: a transition from publishing to pastry chef.

Bill Milliken, founder of Communities in Schools and author of *Tough Love*, spoke movingly about the power of community to transform first his own life, and then the lives of countless students who moved through his program.

Tim Keller traced the history of the seismic shift from traditional societies' emphasis

on community, to the modern cult of the individual, noting the claustrophobia of some communities, the loneliness of individualism, and the fact that these tensions only resolve when our hearts are rooted in the love of Christ.

Mary Vandenberg, professor of systematic theology at Calvin Theological Seminary, gave a crash course in covenant theology, and the ways in which God makes promises not to individuals, but to communities.

Psychiatrist Curt Thompson spoke about the role shame plays in keeping us from fully engaging in community.

Peter Heslam, director of Transforming Business, described the results of his own research among communi-

ties of business leaders and the ways in which Dutch thinker Abraham Kuyper's faith helped shape his entire nation.

But often, the highlight of any conference is not the speakers, however accomplished. It's the community — the new friends, the pleasant surprises, the old acquaintances.

And instead of letting those connections happen by accident, on the margins, the Center for Faith and Work put experiments in community in the center of the conference, carefully cultivated.

Sandra McCracken invited the crowd to become a community through times of reflection and worship. Panels demonstrated community as they  
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## GIVE HOPE FOR NEW YORK THIS CHRISTMAS

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This year, if you donated to or volunteered with Hope for New York, you helped make some amazing things happen.

You volunteered in citywide initiatives like *Don't Walk By* and *His Toy Store*; you attended our workshops and info sessions to learn more about mercy and justice in New York; you led with us as team leaders and committee members; and you spread the word among your networks through our socials and events.

You enabled us to distribute over \$1.4 million in grants and mobilize more than 40,000 volunteer hours to 40+ affili-

ates across our city.

We are so grateful for what God has done through your partnership, and, this month, we're celebrating some of our highlights from the year on a special page on our website.

This month, we're asking you to continue this work of hope and renewal for New York City by giving to Hope for New York before the end of the year.

- Give online at [hfny.org/givehfny](http://hfny.org/givehfny)
- Ask your company if they match charitable donations

- Send a check to Hope for New York, 1166 Avenue of the Americas, Suite 1610, New York, NY 10023
- Become a monthly supporter by joining The Hope Exchange at [hfny.org/hopeexchange/](http://hfny.org/hopeexchange/)

Your gift will enable us to go deeper and wider with our work next year — partnering with more churches to mobilize more Christians giving and serving in this city, strengthening more local non-profits, and loving more and more of our neighbors.

to increase the number of new Christians, and therefore, new Christian **givers** in a city. It is the best way to help all the ministries and institutions of a city thrive and grow.

*3. New churches are the best way to renew the older, existing churches.* How so? Often older congregations are reluctant to try a new approach, sure it would 'not work here.' But when the new church, which has the freedom and incentive to innovate, succeeds with some new method, other churches

out from the "mother church" to begin new churches. That is about to change. Redeemer is transitioning from one very large church to three large neighborhood based congregations, East side, West side, and Downtown. Each of these three will commit themselves to being church planting engines over the coming decade and beyond.

At one level, this means planning for each congregation to plant three new sites or daughter churches, each time sending out substantial numbers of congregants, with their own staff and pastoral leadership, to begin a new worshipping community. This way Redeemer may grow

into a family of 10-12 churches over the next few years.

But at another level, it means our Redeemer congregations will have to develop a "church planting mindset" ... looking for every opportunity to help dozens of new churches begin in the city. They will give members and resources to encourage these new works at every turn.

For example, right now our Downtown congregation is in discussion with new Presbyterian church getting started in Brooklyn Heights. Over a dozen Downtown attenders will be sent out with the blessing and prayers of the church to help start the new congregation.

This church will not be under our control — it is not in our denomination. But that's the vision. Our three congregations are not only going to triple the number of Redeemer churches, but will pour themselves out to help many churches of different bible believing denominations start across the city.

This means that church planting will become one of the on-going, perpetual ministries of the church. Every week, month, and year we preach the Word, worship with music, and instruct our members and children. Now, with the same regularity, we will always be in the process of planting one or two churches. It won't be a special event every so many years. It will be simply one of the things we do.

Next year we are planning to hold a capital campaign to prepare our congregations for the future. We want to not only raise enough money to start nine new Redeemer churches, but also be deeply involved in helping plant 91 other new churches in New York's center city as well as 175 congregations across the rest of the five boroughs and metropolitan area. If we can do this, it will be the most ambitious mission plan and project to reach a single city that I've ever known. We pray for God to guide and bless us in this endeavor to glorify him.

**“So, in summary, the only way to substantially and sustainably grow the Body of Christ in a city is to plant new churches.**

take notice and are encouraged to try it themselves. In addition, as we have seen, new churches attract and produce more converts, leaders, and givers, many of which find their ways into the other churches of the city. They also partner with the older churches in outreach ministries, charitable organizations, and joint projects.

So, in summary, the only way to substantially and sustainably grow the Body of Christ in a city is to plant new churches.

Through City to City, Redeemer has been committed to church planting, but over 25 years it has only twice directly sent out a group of people

# 2015 ADVENT WORSHIP SCHEDULE

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## DOWNTOWN CONGREGATION

Sunday services remain at 9:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. each week throughout Advent

### **December 24:**

Downtown Christmas Eve service is at 5:00 p.m.

## EAST SIDE CONGREGATION

### **December 20:**

Lessons and Carols at morning and evening services with Musical excerpts from Handel's Messiah in the morning.

There will be two morning services: 9:45 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.

## WEST SIDE CONGREGATION

### **December 13:**

Lessons and Carols at morning services with Musical excerpts from Handel's Messiah.

There will be three morning services: 8:30 a.m., 10 a.m., and 11:30 a.m.

### **December 20:**

Lessons and Carols at 5:00 p.m. and 6:45 p.m. evening services

### **December 24:**

Christmas Eve service at 5:00 p.m.

### **December 27:**

West Side 6:45 p.m. service canceled

## THE REDEEMER DIACAONATE WANTS TO SAY... THANK YOU!

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November 22 was an inspirational Sunday. Congregants from all three Redeemer congregations came together to support the Diaconate, a ministry of deed. The gifts are still being tallied, and we have already received over 50% of our \$550K goal for 2015. Your financial gifts translate into tangible expressions of Christ's love and God's mercy for our congregants in need.

One of our Diaconate care recipients shared:

*I pray daily for this congregation that has become so dear to me. I pray in thanksgiving for all you have done for me and for your continued faithfulness to the Lord. There is a wonderful 4th Century hymn, 'Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est' Translated, that means: 'Where charity and love are, God is there.' That describes Redeemer. Thank you.*

Your commitment to this ministry of mercy at Redeemer and your partnership with

us make the work of the Diaconate possible. It is out of our Mercy Fund that our deacons and deaconesses are able to meet the practical and financial needs of those in our church family. We are thrilled to see lives being changed and transformed by the gospel. If you missed the Diaconate's Special Offering Sunday back in November, you can still make a gift at [redeemer.com/mercygift](http://redeemer.com/mercygift).

With gratitude from the Diaconate.



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

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We love stories like this one from a volunteer at last year's store at The Father's Heart Ministries:

*A mother came out with a big smile and near tears in her eyes because she had had to return a toy her daughter really wanted to the store and just found the*

*exact one here for free. She was so happy to be able to do this for her daughter, and several of the regular volunteers at Father's Heart who knew her and her daughter well spent several minutes hugging with giant smiles on their faces, so happy to see such a simple outreach of giving a child a gift bring such joy to*

*a mother and love for her family and those who are serving her.*

You can follow all the *His Toy Store* action by using **#HisToyStore**, or follow **@hopefornewyork** on Twitter, **@hfnny** on Instagram, or find us on Facebook using **facebook.com/hopefornewyork**.

## CFW'S 2015 CONFERENCE ... (CONT'D FROM PAGE 3)

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explored community — various viewpoints, all wrestling with the same questions.

But the main event of the conference did not take place on stage. As in Jesus' ministry, the real action occurred around the table, over a series of meals chosen by The Pixie and Scout.

This was the heart of the conference: not education, but connection. Not just another handful of smart ideas, but the chance to actually engage

with other people, with all the nerves, surprise, friction, wonder, and revelation that entails.

So you can't find out what happened there by reading the notes, because all attendees experienced their own unique conference.

And the best stuff happened not when the speakers spoke to the crowd, but when people talked with each other.

The good news? We don't always need the big time speak-

ers to learn and grow.

In fact, it may be the woman sitting across from us who says something that sets us free. Or something we say that the guy next to us really needed to hear.

And whether we made it to the conference or not, the power of community is always available to all of us, any time we take the time to connect with the people in our own worlds.