

JANUARY 2016

SOME OF THE REMARKABLE PEOPLE I'VE MET AT REDEEMER

BY MAX ANDERSON

Here, at the beginning of 2016, it is New Year's resolution time. Which will shortly be followed by "breaking your New Year's resolution time." Making a New Year's resolution is like making a promise to live the kind of life you aspire to. It's often about starting something new. A new diet. A new gym routine. Getting a new job.

But it's really hard to start something new. It is so much easier to do what you are already doing. Habit is a powerful thing. So I always admire people who keep their resolutions and I admire people who

actually do new things. I've met many people like that at Redeemer. People who not only have started new things, but have started new things for the good of our church and our city.

My friend Jerry is an entrepreneur. He looked around Redeemer and realized that there wasn't a group of men who could get together and talk about what it means to follow Jesus as a man. So he started a weekly men's group that meets every Tuesday morning at the W83 Ministry Center. I now know at least a dozen guys who say that is a critical part of

their friendship and faith life. It wouldn't have existed without Jerry.

They say raising kids in the city is hard. Now that I have three of them I'd have to agree. That's why so many people move out of the city when they start having kids. Well, some moms I know said they wanted to start something to help kids grow up well in the city. Alice, Sandi, Jenni (and now many others) created a Kids Community Group as a sort of after-school youth group for elementary age kids on the Upper West Side. What began

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FALL VOCATIONAL INTENSIVES

I seem to have a successful track record of underestimating what it is that God can do. Our Vocational Intensive was a short, three-month immersive program that wrestled with the question of how, specifically, the gospel interfaces with our work as architects, urban planners, builders, engineers, real estate financiers and sales agents.

As a leader, I hoped that our cohort would catch a vision of the beautifully nuanced ways that God is redeeming our industries through the gospel and that the enormity of the gospel includes not only our personal salvation but the restoration of all of creation. I honestly thought this was a big enough vision for our group. Not only did God meet this expectation,

BY JOHNATHAN AGRELIUS, LEADER

he surprised us by growing some in areas of prayer, some in greater heart transformation, and others in a profound shift of worldview. For everyone, God seemed to have brought us to a deeper and richer understanding of the gospel than I thought would be possible in such a short time frame.

What started as skepticism
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RACE, RECONCILIATION AND THE GOSPEL

BY PAMELA BROWN-PETERSIDE

In the last year there has been heightened coverage in the media around the issues of race and violence, including the tension, apparent at times, between communities of color and the police. More recently, students of color on college campuses have been speaking out about historical and contemporary experiences of racism and discrimination. How can the gospel help us to grapple with the complexity of these issues? How can the love of God who reconciled himself to us through Jesus provide a way forward that points us toward hope and renewal?

To create space for important questions like these, Grace & Race — which seeks to help

the Redeemer community wrestle lovingly and winsomely with issues pertinent to race and the gospel of grace — is hosting a series of three events this winter-spring. They are stand alone gatherings but are intended to move us as a community from a personal understanding of race and racism to a more systemic grasp of how racism manifests itself in the U.S and how the gospel shapes our response.

The first event entitled “Why Race Matters to God and What That Means for Us” will be held on January 14 at the Redeemer office. East side Lead Pastor Abe Cho will give a talk about what the Bible has to say about race and recon-

ciliation. Then, other staff and leaders will speak about their personal experiences of race. Attendees will also have the chance to process these talks in discussion groups. Space is limited but the event will be recorded and made available on the Grace and Race page of the Redeemer website.

The second event will happen in March and involve neighborhood walk-throughs where people will have an opportunity to visit community-based organizations affiliated with Hope for New York or churches that were planted by Redeemer City to City. The idea is for us to learn about the specific neighborhoods where

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as nothing but a good idea has grown to serve more than 100 kids every single week, teaching them about the gospel, how to pray, and helping them develop friendships with each other.

My friend Craig looked around and felt we could do more to reach out to our friends and neighbors to help them understand the gospel. So, though he hasn’t been to

seminary, he began working with David Bisgrove and some others to start “The West Side Café,” a Tuesday evening gathering for people to talk about whether it makes sense to believe in God or follow Jesus.

Our friends Summer and John are so generous. We have been their guests at several charity events for the Bowery Mission. Although they have

three children and another on the way, they somehow manage to host people regularly at their home — either for dinners or for multi-week stays — and they manage to engage deeply with one of the most important social justice organizations in our city.

Several years ago, my friend Bethany felt that she knew a lot

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REDEEMER REPORT

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.

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JANUARY IS MISSIONS MONTH AT REDEEMER

BY CHRISTINA STANTON

He has told you, O man, what is good ... to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God. — Micah 6:8

Redeemer's 2016 overseas short-term mission trips will be highlighted this month. We hope that more people than ever before will join these life-changing teams this year. We have 14 trips scheduled, with the goal of sending up to 200 people to South Africa, Madagascar, Japan, Guatemala and more. Each short-term mission team will consist of 10 to 20 people, who will serve in a cross-cultural context.

Through City to City, Redeemer's church planting arm, our teams will develop and implement social justice and mercy projects while spreading the love of Christ. Past trips have

included projects such as finance and business courses for local entrepreneurs, medical services, education initiatives, as well as hosting and assisting with outreach programs.

Want to find out more? Visit our Missions info table at coffee hour after services on **January 17, 24 and 31**. Come speak with "alumni" of these trips, who will be happy to discuss their personal experiences and answer ques-



Tokyo, Japan 2015 mission trip

tions. **January 31 is Missions Sunday** and testimonies will be featured during all services. Please consider a short term trip in your 2016 plans. See you soon!

REMARKABLE PEOPLE I'VE MET ... (CONT'D FROM PAGE 2)

of people who wanted to read the Bible but were having trouble finding a resource to guide them daily. She started a daily devotional, written specifically to New Yorkers, to help busy professionals engage with the word of God in a new, powerful way. She sent the devotions out by email, and the list grew to have several thousand subscribers.

Another friend, Brian, is a playwright. This past year, I got to attend one of his shows and I was blown away. He deftly wove in themes of redemption and gospel in ways that were moving but far from ham-

fisted. It was a show you could watch as a person with no faith and be inspired to think about what your family, your heart, and your life is all about. Brian started with just a blank computer screen, and created a play that seasons a part of New York's theater culture with a gospel-formed view of life.

Redeemer is making the transition from a megachurch to a movement. We'll become three independent churches and soon will be planting many more. Our vision is to share and demonstrate the love of Christ all over New York City. To succeed we'll need hun-

dreds of people to rise and become leaders, people who look around and see opportunities to serve, who start things for the good of the city and our church. This spring our church will launch a campaign to raise money and leaders for our vision. It will be a chance for each of us to live out resolutions to open our eyes to the needs around us, to serve our neighbors, to work for the good of the city, to live out gospel-changed lives in the city.

I hope to see you there ... we can do so much to encourage one another.



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FALL VOCATIONAL INTENSIVES ... (CONT'D FROM PAGE 3)

has ended with a dynamic new perspective and energy to see the redemption accomplished by Christ applied to “every square inch” of creation, including our work — good news for our city!

Are you looking for ways to explore your calling this year? This spring, consider deepening

your faith and work integration with a 3-Month Vocational Intensive. Intensives follow similar contours to the Gotham curriculum framework, exploring how the gospel is at work transforming our hearts, communities, and the world, and are led by Gotham Alumni. Over the course of nine weekly

2-hour meetings and three Saturday sessions, participants learn in community how to apply theological content and biblical truths to everyday work life, creating a more meaningful and sustainable integration of faith and work. Visit faithandwork.com/intensives to register or for more information.

RACE, RECONCILIATION AND THE GOSPEL ... (CONT'D FROM PAGE 2)

these groups work in order to understand their unique history and challenges. We also hope to explore the particular issues of race, ethnicity, and justice that these neighborhoods and organizations encounter in our own city.

The final event in this series will be a talk on May 20 with Tim Keller and Bryan

Stevenson, civil rights attorney and Executive Director of the Equal Justice Initiative (eji.org). Stevenson is also the author of the New York *Times* best seller, *Just Mercy*, which you may have seen in paperback at a Starbucks this summer. Stevenson's work centers around providing legal representation to those on death row, decreasing the U.S.

prison population over the next decade, and seeking to create a renewed and more honest conversation about the effects of slavery and lynching on this country.

We welcome prayer for these events and hope you will consider attending one. Better still, come, and bring a friend.