

MARCH 2016

IT'S TIME TO RISE

BY TIM KELLER

This month we enter a season where all of Redeemer will focus on a bold vision that will shape our church and our city for a generation or more. It's a vision we believe God gave us from the earliest days of Redeemer's formation, when it seemed to be a great but far-off prospect. Today we are at a wonderful crossroads — we can move toward the actual fulfillment of that calling.

In 1988 when we began to work towards holding our first service, we asked God not just for one congregation but for a whole movement of churches. At the time less than 1% of the people in center city New York attended what could be called a gospel teaching church — today it's 5%! Although Redeemer and its partner City to City gave crucial help to many of new churches, that extraordinary growth can only be attributed to God's Spirit at work.

But what if it's just the beginning? What if, in the next ten years, the number of churches and of people attending those churches tripled, to comprise 15% of center

city residents? At that level we could begin to see gospel values — radical generosity, mercy and justice, work as a vocation, racial reconciliation, loving neighbors, and joyful hope — begin to permeate every sector of life here. It would bring positive change not just to individual lives, but could enhance and shape how life is lived in the whole city.

Through the Rise campaign in March and April every Redeemer attendee will be asked to think through how he or she could invest themselves more deeply in the vision God has given us. It entails prayer, and I mean serious prayer. It means being open to being sent out into your neighborhood to reach and serve in new ways. It means giving of your resources.

That's what Rise is about. It's about activating *everyone* in our church community into new areas of service and ministry all across the city. In Isaiah 6:8 we read: *Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"*

Will you take the first step?

Rise starts by asking everyone to say: "I'm in." I'm in to pray, engage, and give as part of a gospel movement for the good of the city and in ways that invest not just my resources, but myself in this movement for our city.

Here's what we hope to accomplish together: First, we need many new gospel teaching churches rising in neighborhoods without access to the good news all across the city. Church planting is the most strategic way to grow the Body of Christ in our city.

Second, we need new leaders rising in every sector. Gospel-shaped leaders can serve people at every level of culture, through ministry, the marketplace, arts, medicine, education and every other way that humans serve the common good. I hope many of you will step forward to be trained and sent out.

Third, we need new buildings rising for all to share. Putting down physical roots in a neighborhood is essential to reach rooted New Yorkers and serve the common good. We have seen how incredible the

(Continued on page 5)

JOIN A CITY WALK AND CROSS BOUNDARIES WITH REDEEMER PARTNERS

BY KATHERINE EVANS WOODELL

As Christians we are called to a deep and authentic unity across boundaries of race, class, and culture (Colossians 3:11-13).

Here in New York City, even though we encounter myriad people of different backgrounds every day, many of us must admit that we have a difficult time understanding or entering into the experiences of our brothers and sisters of different races, classes, or cultures. We don't experience a sense of unity or reconciliation. And, many times, these barriers can run along geographic or economic lines.

In January we had a talk and panel discussion about "Why Race Matters to God and What That Means to Us." The video of the Rev. Abe Cho's talk about how God created us both different and yet deeply interdependent by design is available at redeemer.com/graceandrace.

This month, our Grace & Race initiative is organizing a set of "City Walks." These seek to explore a New York City

neighborhood by crossing socioeconomic boundaries and learning about the experiences of those who live and serve there through the lens of Redeemer partners.

These walking tours will be hosted by City to City church planters and Hope for New York non-profit affiliates who live, worship, and work in neighborhoods that reflect the rich diversity of this city. On these excursions you will join other Redeemerites to hear stories about the history of a neighborhood, its beauty, its brokenness, its systemic issues related to poverty or race, and the unique ways in which God's presence is manifested there.

This is primarily an opportunity to learn about a NYC neighborhood that you may be unfamiliar with, but there will be ways to connect with what God is doing in the neighborhood throughout the year. You may recognize some of these church planters who were profiled our Stories of Renewal.

The walks will be hosted by:

Bowery:

Dwell Church & Bowery Mission

Chinatown:

Chinese Christian Herald Crusades

Park Slope:

Recovery House of Worship

West Harlem:

Renaissance NYC Church

East Harlem:

Metro Hope, Exodus Transitional Center

Washington Heights:

Christ Crucified Fellowship, Operation Exodus

South Bronx:

Restoration Community Church, A House on Beekman

Sign up at redeemer.com/graceandrace.

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.

COMMUNITY BREEDS NEW LIFE

This year's Gotham Class of 2016 recently participated in their mid-year retreat, providing an opportunity to take an in-depth look at their own hearts to recognize the reality of the brokenness beneath our motivations for work. Through teaching, reflection, discussion, and prayer, the fellows reflected on the power of the gospel necessary to put to death these idols as Christ's death, resurrection, and glory powerfully transform why we do what we do.

The following is a reflection from one of this year's fellows, Wilbur Yen.

"Doing anything fun this weekend?" my co-workers asked innocently. I did not know how to answer. There are certain suspicions that arise when people hear that you will be attending a Christian "death retreat." "Not much, going to Jersey," I responded quickly.

My wife and I arrived that night in Princeton and were happy to find that indeed, the rest of our Gotham Fellowship cohort had arrived. At least we'd be facing the weekend together with people who we had grown close to over the past four months in the program. We hugged, exchanged stories about the holidays, and discussed the legitimacy of Star Wars conspiracy theories over pizza delivery late into the night.

The next morning, we met Patric, our leader who would march us into this certain death. "It's a Whole Lot Worse Than You Think" was the first line of the table of contents in our retreat booklet. The subtitle: "Sin, Sharks, and Complex Networks." "Here we go," I thought.

Growing up in a Chris-

tian home, the concept of sin was not foreign. The common ones: don't lie, don't cheat, don't steal; along with culture-specific ones: don't drink, don't wear jeans to church, don't let the Bible touch the floor and a multitude of others; were engrained early on and accompanied by a sense of guilt and punishment if I missed the mark. Even so, I learned, adapted, and could "pass" as a good Christian if I put my mind to it.

What was different and remarkable about the way we approached the topic of sin that weekend was that the discussion forced me to do the hard work of looking beyond simple behavioral and cognitive modification and straight at what lies beneath it all — my insecurities.

As a professing Christian, it was humbling to see how much I still operated out of not trusting in the sufficiency and goodness of one I call God. Through the use of personal examples, Patric walked us through the process of identifying deep-rooted issues through everyday, mundane situations, and how to under-

stand the transformative reality of the gospel in the midst of them.

Left to myself, processing these issues would no doubt have led to a sense of despair. Thankfully, I was grouped with other men that weekend who sat through the same difficult sessions. Though we represented a diverse group of professions — healthcare, social enterprise, theater, startups, venture capital, academia, and church ministry — we identified with the same human struggles of inordinate desire for approval, worth, and control in our everyday work.

Sharing our moral failures with others can often be unpleasant, anxiety ridden, and painful. "Fun" wouldn't be the word I would use to describe the weekend. However, the title of "Death Retreat" would not tell the whole story either. As with many things we've been learning in Gotham, new life can sometimes only come out of death.

Reflecting on the weekend, I am filled with wonder and gratitude that God extends his invitation to heal to a community of such brokenness.

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER SERVICES

DOWNTOWN CONGREGATION

Thursday, March 24, 6:30 p.m. | Maundy Thursday

The Salvation Army, 120 W. 14th St., between 6th & 7th Aves.

Maundy Thursday is a celebration of the events at the Last Supper. There will be a worship service and an optional communal meal afterwards. RSVP to attend the communal meal as space is limited (meal is optional and costs \$10.00 per person, pay when you register: redeemer.com/maundy)

Sunday, March 27, 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 5:00 p.m. | Easter Sunday

The Salvation Army, 120 W. 14th St., between 6th & 7th Aves.

We will have our full children's program at the 9:30 a.m. service and limited childcare for infants to 4-years-old at the 11:30 a.m. service.

EAST SIDE CONGREGATION

Friday, March 25, 5:30 p.m., 7:00 p.m. | Good Friday

All Souls Unitarian Church, 1157 Lexington Ave.

Childcare available for children ages 4 and under. RSVP required. Parents please contact rebekka.kehlenbrink@redeemer.com.

Sunday, March 27, 9:45 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m. | Easter Sunday

Hunter College Auditorium, E. 69th St. between Park & Lex. Aves.

There will be full children's programs for all ages (through 5th grade) at both the 9:45 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. service. There is no childcare or children's programs at the 6:00 p.m. service.

WEST SIDE CONGREGATION

Friday, March 25, 5:00 p.m., 6:30 p.m. | Good Friday

W83 Minstry Center, 150 W. 83rd St.

Sanctuary open for prayer on March 25 from noon to 3 p.m.

Sunday, March 27 | Easter Sunday

8:30 a.m., 10:00 a.m. 11:30 a.m., 5:00 p.m., 6:45 p.m.

W83 Minstry Center, 150 W. 83rd St.

THIS EASTER, GIVE TO THE POOR OF OUR CITY THROUGH HOPE FOR NEW YORK

BY ELISE CHONG, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

At Hope for New York we love hearing stories of Easter resurrection power — stories of Christ bringing transformation and renewal where there was once hopelessness and despair.

Through our 40+ non-profit affiliates throughout the city, Jesus is working to bring life, hope, and healing to our neighbors in need. He's working through congregants at Redeemer, believers who demonstrate Christ's love for their neighbors through practical actions of service and generosity. We are so humbled by this!

Every Easter, to celebrate Christ's resurrection power and remember His love for the poor and vulnerable, Redeemer receives an Easter Sacrificial Offering to strengthen Hope for New York's work to serve the poor of our city.

Because Hope for New

York is a separate 501(c)(3) charitable organization from Redeemer, we greatly depend on individual donors — in fact, only 4% of Hope for New York's operational budget comes from local churches. The Easter Sacrificial Offering is an opportunity for congregants to give to continue our work to make direct grants, mobilize volunteers, and provide training and consulting to organizations sustainably and holistically serving the poor and marginalized of our city.

Would you prayerfully consider giving to Hope for New York this Easter to strengthen work that meets the needs of thousands of poor and marginalized New Yorkers? 100% of your gifts will help support various NYC populations, including at-risk youth, low-income families, immigrants, the homeless, and the elderly.

- You can donate online at hfny.org/easter.

- You can also give during your Easter Sunday service or by sending checks (payable to "Hope for New York") to Hope for New York, 1166 Avenue of the Americas, Suite 1610, New York, NY, 10036.

- In addition, you can incorporate generosity into your daily life, throughout the year, with The Hope Exchange, HFNY's committed monthly giving program. Learn more at hfny.org/hopeexchange.

Please pray that our congregation would give generously, motivated by the joy of what God has done. Please also prayerfully consider a sacrificial donation for the poor of our city.

IT'S TIME TO RISE ... (CONT'D FROM PAGE 1)

difference has been for the West Side since opening W83. The building is an asset to the neighborhood; used by schools, community board meetings, film crews, support groups, performing arts, and much more. It greatly enhances the creation of community and friendships among members of the congregation. And we have found it makes us visible

and able to reach many New Yorkers with the gospel that were previously inaccessible.

So how can we do all this? It's going to take financial resources, yes, but more importantly, people like *you*. We need YOU to rise. In the past Redeemer has grown by *bringing people in*, but as we look ahead this movement that God has started will grow by Redeem-

er *sending people out*.

There are many ways to get involved and learn more about this vision: attend a Community Group, use the daily Rise devotionals, or sign up to be invited to a Neighborhood Gathering. I hope everyone will take this opportunity to see where God is calling you to Rise and say: "Here am I! Send me!"



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MANY BEAUTIFUL THINGS: A MOVIE YOU PROBABLY NEVER HEARD OF (AND SHOULDN'T MISS)

BY JANE FRAZIER

Recently I saw *Many Beautiful Things*, a documentary of the life of Lilius Trotter. Trotter was a self-taught artist and a protégé of John Ruskin, who ranked her talent with the great artists of the day. To his great dismay she left England to live in Algiers for most of her adult life, living in the slums and ministering to the women and children there. But she continued to draw and paint exquisite watercolors.

The John Ruskin society contributed to the movie and the film is directed by Laura Waters Hinson (*As We Forgive*) and produced by Hisao Kurosawa, the son of legendary Japanese director Akira Kurosawa.

The film stars Michelle Dockery (*Downton Abbey*) as the voice of Lilius Trotter and John Rhys-Davies (*Indiana Jones, The Lord of the Rings*) as the voice of her mentor, English art critic John Ruskin.

For a movie with almost no action, it is lovely and engaging. The filmography fit the content — the beauty silenced me. Truth sparked beauty and set it aflame.

A serious and beautiful movie that examines a woman torn between pursuit of her art and the needs of the poor.

Check the internet for the movie trailer. DVD release is March 8.