

MAY 2016

CONTINUING TO RISE

BY TIM KELLER

By now, a goodly percentage of the people reading this already know that the RISE Campaign is about exponentially accelerating the movement of the gospel in New York's center city. It is a vision for the next 10 years, in which Redeemer grows not as one church through expansion, but rather grows even *more* as a family of congregations through extension and multiplication.

Beyond that, Redeemer has committed itself to collaborating with and supporting dozens of other sister churches in the city to plant hundreds of new congregations. These are ways that Redeemer since its inception has dreamed of serving the Body of Christ and the city — but in many ways we have *only* dreamed about it. We believe that God is now graciously opening the door to execute this vision in a new way.

The first part of the campaign was completed this Spring. To do these new things

we have had to find many new financial resources. The RISE Campaign, together with the gifts of friends outside of Redeemer, will enable us to begin.

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about giving money; it is about rising up spiritually from a posture of being passive to being active, from “sitting and soaking” to “sending and serving.” Those are vivid metaphors, but what do they mean? We have regularly said that RISE is asking three things of people — pray, give, and engage. It is that last action verb that needs

to be fleshed out, and that will emerge more clearly as we get feedback from you all, but I can sketch out some general ideas here.

First, it will mean a new openness to being sent into your neighborhood to start new churches, often with believers from other congregations, in order to better reach and serve your neighbors through the gospel. Redeemer is a large church with lots of options and services for members. But God does some unique things in both Christian formation and mission through each size of church — from small to medium to large — that he does not do through the other sizes. He also does unique things through churches heavily tied to one smaller neighborhood that he doesn't do through large regional congregations. And vice versa. Every church has both lay and pastoral leaders who have different gift-mixes and abilities.

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CFW ARTISTS-IN-RESIDENCE EXPLORE “GIVENNESS”

The Center for Faith & Work is pleased to announce our 2016 Spring Artists-in-Residence. Inspired by Marilynne Robinson’s recent collection of essays *The Givenness of Things*, applicants were asked to craft proposals for new work prompted by the theme of *Givenness*. To quote Robinson:

An etiology that implies a lower order of complexity than our given experience reports to us and through us only seems rational if we leave out of account the most basic knowledge we now have of the cosmos, knowledge that has as its signature a radical resistance to simplification, to understanding in terms of any known language of causality.

Riffing off Robinson’s essay, artists were asked to creatively consider: What is a given? What defines its nature? Proposals ranged from projects that were deeply personal, as in Erin Layton’s devised theatre piece about uncovering a secret family heritage, to the hyper-structural, as in Jane Adams’ urban installation on morphogenesis, juxtaposing city datasets with the language of ancient atomists.

The five awarded artists are writer Jakki Kerubo, storyteller Adam Wade, actress Elizabeth A. Davis, data artist Jane Adams, and theatre artist Erin Layton.

CFW is excited to walk alongside each artist with financial support and resources towards the creation of new work that explores the essence of *Givenness*.

Keep an eye on CFW’s

website to see past and present CFW Artist-in-Residence work, as well as each artist’s full bio.

CFW’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.

For more information, visit faithandwork.com/artistinresidence.

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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NEW STAFF HIRES FOR THE WEST SIDE

BY DAVID BISGROVE



The Rev. Drew and Donna Field



Kate, Sara, Lucy, and the Rev. Michael Keller

Many of you over the last year have asked how to pray for me and the West Side Congregation. Without hesitation I would always answer — “pray for God to send us a pastor who has the experience and passion to help us as we seek to embody Redeemer’s Vision on the Upper West Side.” I’m thrilled to let you know that God has answered that prayer by sending us the Reverend Drew Field to be our new Executive Pastor starting this Spring. Drew and his wife Donna Field were active in Redeemer from the very beginning, 1989 to 2000. Both were involved in many ministries, first as volunteers and later Drew as staff. They helped to start small groups, Moms’ groups, the West Side site, Trinity Church Rye and Avail.

After seminary, Drew was an associate pastor at Redeemer. He was responsible for both the finances and organization at Redeemer, as well as small group and discipleship ministries. In 2000, the Field family was sent to launch Grace Presbyterian in Silicon Valley, now thriving in two locations. In 2011, they moved to Charlottesville, Virginia, where Drew is the Executive Pastor of Trinity Presbyterian Church and Donna coordinates the Children’s Sunday School. They have been married for 26 years and have four children ranging from ages 24 to 15: Timothy, Sarah, Elizabeth and James. They look forward with much anticipation to what God is doing in and through Redeemer as they return to the city.

When they sent their email accepting the offer of the position of Executive Pastor at

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Redeemer’s vision from the beginning has been to see God expand his Kingdom through a movement of new churches. And as you know, the Rise Campaign seeks to accelerate that strategy across NYC including through the three Redeemer Congregations. I’m thrilled to announce that the West Side Congregation has hired the Reverend Michael Keller to launch the first of those sites. Although Michael has been around since Day One, there are many things about him you might not know. For one, he has been collecting city experiences like other people collect stamps.

After growing up in New York, Michael worked in the East End of London at London City Mission, returning to New York City in 2002 to work as New Life Fellowship’s Young Adults Coordinator in Elmhurst, Queens, for two years before heading to Boston where he attended Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

While earning both his M.Div. and an additional Master of Theology degree in Apologetics, Michael also served on the staff at CityLife (PCA) Church in Boston (along with Abe Cho) from 2004 until 2009 as pastor of community life and head of the School of Christian Formation.

His wife Sara, an honorary New Yorker through her Queens-born-and-raised parents, was busy teaching high school at Boston Trinity Academy, and getting a joint Ed.M in Education and English from Harvard in 2008.

In 2009 Michael and Sara returned to New York City to create a model of an urban version of RUF (the PCA’s college ministry), which

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SANDWICH SATURDAY, BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE CHILDREN'S MINISTRY OF THE WEST SIDE

This year, the West Side Children's Ministry (WSCM) has centered their teaching on how to respond to God's free gift of salvation through gratitude and generosity. Inspired by the RISE campaign, WSCM has tied Sunday School lessons into the theme of generosity, with the ultimate goal of bringing that teaching into experiential reality: kids... being generous ... in their own homes ... on their own time ... with their own resources. To that end, the ministry planned in-home service activities, including Sandwich Saturday. It was not a flashy "event" with a welcome table, nametags, and tables set up for a morning of community-wide sandwich making; not at all.

Instead, it was in kids' homes, with their families, on their time, using household staples, making meals for families in need.

For Sandwich Saturday, as with many first-time events, there was little indication of what the level of participation or outcome would be. The prayers leading up to Sandwich Saturday focused on the heart-shaping, not the sandwich-making, results. And though the results of the former are not quantifiable, those of the latter exhibited the great potential that kids, who love and serve the Lord and their neighbors, have to renew this great city. Families dropped off more than 500 peanut butter and jelly sandwiches to W83 before

they were delivered to nearby St. Paul's and St. Andrews.

When the sandwiches arrived, the volunteers at St. Paul's and St. Andrew's began praising the Lord, full of gratitude. They responded to what might have seemed like mere loaves and fishes from a child's sack lunch as though it was a feast of plenty fit for the multitudes. Through the gifts of these children, the volunteers served a dozen guests at the overnight shelter and provided lunch to the 400 participants at their food pantry.

May the Lord continue to work in the hearts of Redeemer's children, empowering them to respond with gratitude and generosity to what the Lord has done.

NEW STAFF: CHURCH PLANTER ... (CONT'D FROM PAGE 3)

they named City Campus Ministry. Beginning with no students, today RUF/CCM regularly ministers to over 150 students weekly with a staff of three. It draws students from NYU, Columbia, The New School, King's College, Fordham, City College, and others schools in Manhattan. It meets on Sundays and Wednesday nights during the school year. "I think that interacting with college students has made me hyper-aware of the fragmented culture we are all living in, as well as the challenges we have in building community here in the city," Michael said.

Michael has acted as a regular supply preacher and worship leader at Redeemer's three sites. In addition to raising their daughters Lucy and Kate, Michael and Sara have been

active in the West Side community, where they make their home. Sara has been involved in a West Side moms' group for four years and volunteers with the West Side Kids Community Group (KCG) every Wednesday.

Currently Michael is working on his Ph.D. in Historical Theology at the Free University of Amsterdam and Sara is pursuing her Nurse Practitioner degree at Columbia.

"Being able to focus on planting a church on the West Side, with people we love and in a place that we love is something we have dreamt of (whenever we get enough sleep to dream!) for years. I hope we will find others who have the same vision for reaching skeptics, families, and New Yorkers in a new church," said Michael.

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This means that the only way to give every people group and neighborhood the best possible opportunity to see the gospel embodied and hear it communicated is if there are churches of *literally* all shapes and sizes everywhere throughout the city. That will only happen if the main Redeemer congregations, which God has made rich with people and leadership, send small and large groups of people out every year to begin new churches. That means far more members who will be willing to leave their comfort zones and say, “Here am I, send me.” Are you willing to RISE like that?

Second, it will mean a heightened awareness of being a Christian serving in a particular part of the city. The RISE Campaign included sixty neighborhood gatherings of over 2000 people. The neighborhood gatherings do not replace Community groups, which are smaller. They connect a larger group believers so they can consider what life together and ministry in their neighborhood could look like. These initial meetings were mainly concerned with the

first part of RISE — to explain the campaign and encourage participation. But future gatherings can begin to think together about other ways to engage one another and the urban community in which they all live in such a way that makes the love of Christ visible to all.

Third, RISE will be furnishing the Redeemer family and the entire New York City gospel movement with educational, training, instructional, and discipling pathways and resources such as we have never seen before in our history. I will be leaving my role as Senior Pastor and begin serving the family as one of the chief teachers, trainers, and disciplers. Redeemer members have certainly had some stellar offerings in this regard, the most obvious being Gotham Fellows. However, compared to our future, they have been relatively few.

In the future, opportunities for going deeper and being a more formed, trained, and equipped Christian will greatly expand. Do you want to know how to talk to skeptical friends about your faith in a more compelling way? Do you want to know how to

use the means of gospel grace to understand your own heart and make changes you’ve never been able to bring about? Do you want a portfolio of ways to connect, serve, and promote justice in your neighborhood? Do you want to know how to read the Bible for yourself and mine its riches? Do you want to know how Christianity is like and unlike other religions? Do you want to know how to commune with God through prayer, and not simply “say your prayers”? Would you be willing to consider whether God is calling you into vocational church ministry, to serve on the staff of a church?

In short — are you willing to commit the time and the effort to be trained so as to “grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18)?

These are just three concrete, life-changing ways that RISE can go beyond only praying and giving. Without praying and giving there can be no engaging. But engagement will mean these things and much more. Get ready to RISE.

NEW STAFF: EXECUTIVE PASTOR ... (CONT'D FROM PAGE 3)

the West Side, Donna wrote this:

“Okay, you have us. We’re in ... Are you kidding? We want to be a part of it! We are movement people. We want to be part of the movement. We want to sacrifice.

We don’t know how it is exactly going to

work, [but] we are on our way. Out of the comfort zone of our beautiful home and easy town, we will rise.”

Thank you for your prayers and continue to pray for the Fields as they transition to NYC over the next few months.



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