

MARCH 2018

SIX WAYS TO PRACTICE SABBATH

BY TIM KELLER

We all know that “remembering the Sabbath day” is one of the Ten Commandments. It was also a creation ordinance, one of the rules God made for his newly created children to aid them in their flourishing. (Genesis 2:2-3). So the idea of regularly resting from your work, while not involving *less* than observing a single day of rest, entails more. In a culture that forces us to overwork, how can we practice Sabbath?

I suggest that you should be sure to get six kinds of Sabbath rest. All of these represent different kinds of breaks from

ordinary work that can refresh and enrich.

- Make sure some time is *completely unplanned*. This means having a day in which you can do whatever comes into your mind and heart to do at the moment. It is like the Sabbath year in which the land was given “rest”—it was not planted with anything, and you could eat whatever happened to grow from it. (Leviticus 25:1-7) We need this kind of complete cessation from activity occasionally or even our supposed

time off will just be another form of tiring exertion.

- Take some *avocational* time. An avocation is something that is pleasurable for you, but that takes some skill and expertise. Usually it is something that others do for a living. This could be a sport, but it also could be anything from carpentry to music. This is somewhat analogous to planting a different crop in a field one year in order to replenish nutrients and make the land more fertile for its

(Continued on page 6)

EASTER SACRIFICIAL OFFERING

This Easter season we celebrate Christ’s resurrection and the restoration it promises. Because Christ has defeated death, He has made a way for all things to be restored, including what is broken by oppression and injustice.

Our desire for Redeemer is that each congregation would be marked by hopeful, resurrection-fueled love — that,

confident in the restoration Christ has secured, we would pour out our lives in generosity and compassion toward our neighbors, especially those who are marginalized, vulnerable, or experiencing poverty.

Redeemer created the Easter Sacrificial Offering over 25 years ago, and every Easter since then, we’ve received the ESO for Hope for New York,

our partner for loving and serving New Yorkers in need across our city. We do this as a sign that Easter isn’t just a celebration for us to enjoy, but a power that sends us out to bring resurrection joy to the world.

Will you consider giving generously to support the work of Hope for New York this Easter? Hope for New York is a

(Continued on page 8)

RELIEF FUNDS HELP REBUILD AFRICAN-AMERICAN CHURCHES

BY BRUCE TERRELL

“We’re so grateful for all of you who are concerned about the churches on the Guadalupe and we pray that God will bless you and forever keep you.”

That was a recent heartfelt expression of thanks to congregants of the family of Redeemer churches from Rev. A.L. Taylor of Little Zion Baptist Church in Cuero, Texas. Little Zion Baptist Church is one of eight Guadalupe River congregations that were able to rebuild after Hurricane Harvey with the help of disaster relief funds from Redeemer.

It could have been much worse, as the hurricane came ashore in Texas and made its way along the Guadalupe River before coming to a standstill near Cuero, and then slowly moving east. It wasn’t nearly as bad as the record-setting flood in 1998 that killed 25 people and caused over \$500 million in damage. After that great flood, Redeemer Presbyterian Church took a relief offering to help repair African-Ameri-

can churches in the area. Hurricane Harvey gave Redeemer another opportunity to provide funding to help with church rebuilding efforts.

As reported by *A Journey Through NYC Religions*, “Historically, the African, Hispanic, and Vietnamese American communities in Texas settled along the river bottoms. Partly this was a result of discrimination and segregation, and partly it was the result of economics. This is where their churches are. These communities seldom get much attention.”

The communities got Redeemer’s attention through Tony Carnes, editor and publisher of *A Journey through NYC Religions* and also a Redeemer East Side member. Redeemer was able to pinpoint specific needs for church reconstruction and meet those needs because of Tony’s long-term background and knowledge of the Guadalupe River flood plain area.

These rural communities are

sometimes forgotten or do not receive as much focused attention of disaster relief efforts as urban areas. Additionally, relief agencies have not usually aided in church rebuilding. And yet in these poorer communities religious groups are often the key to the process of recovery.

In one of Tony’s visits to the area soon after Hurricane Harvey, he recalled this story, “As we stood in the middle of a swampy forest of fallen trees, we saw one guy sawing away at the debris. He had a big old mosquito hat with nets and corks on his head. He looked at us, wondering who we were. We were wondering how we were going to get in touch with any of the church leaders. It turned out that he was one of the pastors and the city councilman to boot.”

What a privilege to come alongside Rev. Taylor and this pastor/councilman and play a small part helping them serve and love their communities.

REDEEMER REPORT

Cregan Cooke, Kathy Keller
Heather Klein

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) redeemer.com

Hunter College Auditorium
E. 69th St.
(btw Park & Lexington)
Services: 10:30 a.m.
and 5 p.m.

W83rd Ministry Center
150 W. 83rd St.
(btw Columbus & Amsterdam)
Services: 9:30 & 11:30 a.m.
and 5 p.m.

West Side Church Plant:
NY Society for Ethical Culture
2 W. 64th St.
(at Central Park West)
Service: 10:30 a.m.

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

AMAZING THINGS ARE HAPPENING IN KOREA

FIND OUT WHY TIM KELLER IS HEADED THERE NEXT

When Jonathan Oh attended City to City's 2009 International Intensive in NYC, he knew he wanted to bring this teaching — how the gospel changes hearts, communities and cities — to ministry leaders in Korea when he returned to plant a church. This conviction led to the eventual creation of City to City Korea, a network formed out of City to City Asia Pacific. CTC Korea's primary focus is the capital, Seoul, which has a metropolitan population of over 25 million.

Seoul is a huge city that struggles with the things any major urban center does: materialism, success, performance, and loneliness. It is also an international city; subway announcements are routinely given in Korean, Chinese, Japanese and English. Seoul is also known for its mega-churches. A number of denominations have their largest church in Seoul, and the largest church in the world, Yoido Full Gospel Church, is located there. But these churches are struggling to reach young people and professionals who don't see Christianity as credible or relevant to their lives.

So when CTC Korea held its first public conference last year, and the material was taken from Tim Keller's *Center Church*, 600 pastors and leaders attended, many from these mega-churches. Stephen Ro,

CTC Korea Catalyst, explains, "Tim Keller is not just another western preacher to these pastors. They've seen how his church in Manhattan is reaching professionals, and they want to know more."

After the conference a number of pastors expressed a desire to join the network, CTC Korea. When told they would first need to go through CTC's training, they humbly agreed. Ro, along with Stephen Um, both Korean pastors and CTC trainers who live in the U.S., travel to Seoul three times a year to facilitate the training and are now teaching their second cohort. Through the training many pastors have been significantly affected by the gospel, and their hearts have been awakened.

This month, CTC Korea is hosting its second Center Church Conference with Tim Keller as the keynote speaker. It's a conference for ministry leaders on gospel, city and movement, but the first evening is open to the public and will be on the topic of suffering. Tim's book, *Walking with God Through Pain and Suffering*, was recently translated into Korean, and this subject is a core theme for Koreans.

Between Japanese occupation and a war that left this small country split into two parts, the people of Korea are well acquainted with suffering. To be Korean is to experience

han, an unresolved anguish or pain. There are already more than 2,000 people registered for Sunday night's session where suffering will be viewed through the lens of the gospel.

One significant element of this event is that it is Keller's first trip to Korea. Ro says, "When it comes to gospel, city and movement, Tim has taught it and applied it. He's still doing it, and gospel renewal is happening." The final session of the pastors' conference is on faith and work. Ro says, "In Korea, we're making disciples in the church, but we're not making disciples in life. When business people, pastors and lay people hear this, it's going to help them connect the dots on how their faith and work fit together."

Through the conference, CTC Korea hopes more ministry leaders will catch the gospel vision and go deeper in training. Um sees this gospel message making a tremendous impact on Korea. He says, "As people experience the unadulterated gospel, that God loves them through Jesus Christ and grace changes everything, I sense a new revival coming — a gospel revival. The hope is to see a lot of new churches — a lot of gospel-shaped churches — planted in Korea, and it's happening now, and it's going to continue. This is a great thing."

(Continued on page 7)

ADDICTED TO ABUSE

BY DETRA THOMAS

Detra Thomas is a preacher's daughter who was born and raised in Arkansas. She moved to New York City in May of 2015 to escape an abusive husband. Then she became homeless and found out about the New York City Rescue Mission, a Hope for New York affiliate that provides food, clothing, and shelter to New Yorkers in crisis.

Below, Detra shares her story of how God used the Rescue Mission to show her that she can be real about her pain and yet walk confidently in the freedom of who God created her to be.

I'm a preacher's daughter who was born in Arkansas, and I'm the oldest of four. My mom and dad, they loved me, but they had a very dysfunctional marriage. My dad was verbally and emotionally abusive, but he was a well-liked, charming person.

I met Jesus when I was 7 years old, and I went to a Christian college on a full scholarship for music. I got married after my third year. My husband was a well-respected preacher. Unfortunately, he was also emotionally abusive and very controlling.

When I was 42, the memories of abuse I suffered as a child at the hands of my grandfather and other men started coming back to me. I realized that those horrific experiences set me up for a person who used the name of God to control and manipulate me.

But I stayed with my husband for 34 years. I had 7 children and no job. I thought if I was submissive and loved him that he'd realize how cruel he was being. But it got to the point where I was suicidal, and I begged God to take my life for over a year.

Then one night, my husband and I were driving and he pulled over to yell at me. He was in my face, and I thought, "This is it." I grabbed my purse, got out of the car, and started walking. I felt free. When I looked up, I saw a woman walking toward me. She asked if I needed a ride. I told her, "Yes." She said, "God said to stop and pick you up." God has been taking care of me like that ever since.

That was on May 27, 2015. After that night, I moved to Brooklyn to be with my son for a while, but when he and his wife moved, I had no place to stay. I found out about New York City Relief, and they helped me apply for Medicaid and get a spot at the New York City Rescue Mission.

Up until that point, being homeless had been my biggest fear. But I felt God saying to me, "It's time. Don't be afraid." Still, I felt like moving into a shelter meant that I was doomed, a failure.

But through my experience at the Rescue Mission, God has taught me to be real with my pain. It's been hard. I lost everything I've ever known. Despite that, God is helping me

understand his grace more and more each day.

One night I went to an AA meeting to get out of my room at the Mission. I listened to people share about their addiction, and God revealed something to me. I wasn't addicted to alcohol, but my very strong addiction was to being good. I knew that God loved me, but my whole life I'd been taught that if you don't obey your earthly authorities, you don't have God's full protection. So I worked very hard to please my authorities, mostly my dad and husband. When they were unhappy or blamed me for something, I assumed I had a spiritual problem. But that night, God really revealed that addiction of mine — and the truth that he does not shame me and there is no condemnation in Him. And he's been teaching me to walk in that ever since.

After I'd been there a month, a lady at Starbucks, where I work, found out I was living in a homeless shelter. She was upset, but after she left, I felt freedom. I didn't feel embarrassed. And in that moment, the Lord helped me realize why He had put me in this shelter:

Homelessness has its own stench, and God has tried to tell me for years that none of what has happened to me defines me. The abuse, my husband, being homeless — none of that defines me. That was a great moment, hearing God

(Continued on page 6)

2018 HOLY WEEK AND EASTER SCHEDULE

THURSDAY, MARCH 29, 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 simple communal meal afterwards. RSVP needed to attend the communal meal as space is limited (meal is optional and costs \$10 per person, pay when you register). You can RSVP online at: redeemer.com/maundy. There is no need to RSVP if you are only attending the worship service. Childcare will not be available, and all children are welcome to be in the service.

FRIDAY, MARCH 30, NOON TO 3:00 P.M. | OPEN PRAYER IN W83 SANCTUARY

W83 Ministry Center, 150 W. 83rd St.

The sanctuary will be open for quiet prayer and reflection on the afternoon of Good Friday. Prayer guides will be available, and musicians will be present providing music.

FRIDAY, MARCH 30 | GOOD FRIDAY SERVICES

East Side, 5:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

All Souls Unitarian Church, 1157 Lexington Ave. (corner of 80th St.)

Childcare through age four. RSVP required, email kirsty.sadler@redeemer.com with your service time and age of child(ren).

West Side, 5:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.

W83 Ministry Center, 150 W. 83rd St. (between Amsterdam & Columbus)

Childcare available from nursery through pre-K.

SUNDAY, APRIL 1 | EASTER SUNDAY SERVICES

Every Easter, in celebration of Christ's ultimate sacrifice, we receive an offering for the poor and marginalized of our city. The Easter Sacrificial Offering goes to support the work of Hope for New York (HFNY), our partner for mercy and justice outreach. HFNY provides volunteer and financial resources to 40+ non-profit organizations serving the poor and marginalized in NYC. Learn more at hfny.org.

East Side, 9:45 a.m., 11:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Hunter College Auditorium, 695 Park Ave (enter on 69th St.)

There will be a special Easter program for children at the 9:45 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. services. No children's program at the 5:00 p.m. service.

West Side, 8:30 a.m.*, 10:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

W83 Ministry Center, 150 W. 83rd St. (between Amsterdam & Columbus)

Childcare available from nursery through pre-K.

Lincoln Square, 9:00 a.m.* and 11:00 a.m.

New York Society for Ethical Culture, 2 W. 64th St. and Central Park West

Childcare available from nursery through pre-K. A time of Q&R will follow both services.

Downtown, 9:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

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

Full children's program (nursery to 5th grade) at 9:30 a.m. service. No children's program at 5:00 p.m. service.

* Even with additional Easter Sunday services at our West Side and Lincoln Square locations, we anticipate these morning services will reach or exceed capacity. If you can, please consider attending the *first* morning service at one of our sites or any of our evening services where we expect to have more space available.

ordinary produce.

- Take some *contemplative* time. The Bible requires that we observe the Sabbath day with gathered worship, but that is not all we should do. Prayer, solitude, journaling, reading and reflection are all crucial ways that we replenish our inward resting in Christ and his work alone for our salvation. Hebrews 4:1-10 draws a remarkable analogy between the gospel of free grace and the Sabbath. The writer says, “*there remains, then, a rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God’s rest also rests from his own work just as God rested from his.*” (v.9) When we find salvation through Christ and grace, we rest from the most debilitating work of all — the work of establishing our own worth through our efforts, the work of earning our own salvation.
- Take some *aesthetic* time. The Genesis account indicates that God rested from his work at least partly in order to enjoy his creation.

Throughout Genesis 1 and 2 we see God viewing all that he has made and saying, “It is good!” “It is good!” We also need to take time to simply enjoy the beauty of God’s world. The main thing to do with beautiful landscapes or great music or some other form of the arts is to take it in and say, “That is so good.” This refreshes and energizes in unique ways that the other forms of resting do not.

- Take time to *nurture relationships*. This is time with your family and friends, time set aside to pay full attention to the most important people in your life. Again we see that this kind of time replenishes and nourishes you in ways that the others cannot. We are irreducibly relational creatures, made in God’s image. Even strong introverts need both the affirmation and sense of being known that comes from close bonds and relational ties.
- *Inject Sabbath* into your work. Some people are so

given to overwork that even regular time off doesn’t seem to keep them from being totally exhausted by the intensity of their workweek. Associated with the Sabbath laws were the gleaning laws, in which the owners of fields were not allowed to harvest out to the edges of their fields. They had to leave a percentage of grain in the field for the poor to come and take. Some people have used this as an inspiration for deliberately setting fewer goals for themselves in a given day and week, not *harvesting out to the edges*, not trying to squeeze productivity out of every single second of every day.

These forms of Sabbath do not need to be practiced in a wooden way, with exactly the same amount of time for each. But none of these forms should be completely missing from your life. Take stock. Honor the Sabbath. God has given it to us as a gift, as well as a command, and it should be received and enjoyed.

tell me, “Detra, you don’t let anything define you except what I’ve told you, that you’re my creation and you are covered in the blood of Jesus.”

Now God is teaching me day by day to walk in that freedom and to be who He created me to be.

This Easter, you can support

organizations like the New York City Rescue Mission serving New Yorkers in need like Detra by giving to Hope for New York at hfny.org/easter.

CFW CONFERENCE APRIL 13-14: *FORMED TO WORK FOR THE GLORY OF GOD*

The Center for Faith & Work is excited to announce its 7th annual Faith & Work Conference on April 13-14, 2018: *Formed to Work for the Glory of God*.

We live in a city that's driven by ambition yet desperate for rest. But the gospel responds with a critical question: to what end? The gospel uniquely gives us a radical new vision that our work is for the glory of God: the issue is not that we expect too much from our work, but that we have come to expect too little.

When we see that work is created to glorify God, our work doesn't necessarily get easier, but it does become more meaningful. The pain in our

work is faced with greater honesty, where the brokenness can finally be named and seen. The unseen potential of our work is faced with greater imagination, where an innovative spirit can unleash what yearns to be resurrected. In short, when we discover that we're formed to work for God's glory, we find that our small tasks aren't so small, and our big tasks are in better hands. Work becomes desirable. Rest becomes possible. Faith becomes essential.

Artists and educators, designers and technicians, home-makers, engineers, managers, entrepreneurs, doctors, and everyone in between are welcome to this two-day experience to investigate how we are

formed to work for the glory of God.

This is the third event in Redeemer's Formation Conference Series. Speakers will include Tim Keller, Katherine Leary Alsdorf, David H. Kim, and Elizabeth Barlow Rogers, founder of the Central Park Conservancy, as well as over 20 Glimpse opportunities throughout NYC centered around work, culture and Sabbath. Worship will be led by Porter's Gate, which includes musicians Sandra McCracken, Liz Vice, Paul Zach, Isaac Wardell, and others. Visit cfwconference.com for full schedule and registration information.

TIM KELLER HEADING TO KOREA ... (CONT'D FROM PAGE 3)

Please pray:

- For Tim Keller and other speakers to communicate the gospel in ways that will bring about concrete changes in Korea.
- For the CTC Korea board members and leaders. Pray for unwavering passion for the gospel movement in Korea and their churches to support their work.
- For the healing and redeeming power of the gospel among young people of Korea. There are many who are uncertain of their future because of economic and political instability.
- For those who left the church because of their disappointment with the current situation in many mega-churches. Pray for them to come to the conference and begin the conversation about the attraction and power of the gospel.
- For the pastors of Korea. Pray for renewed love for and joy in the gospel. Please pray that this conference can renew their confidence in the gospel to be bold and confident in the Lord.



1166 AVENUE OF THE AMERICAS
16TH FLOOR
NEW YORK, NY 10036

FIRST CLASS MAIL
US POSTAGE
PAID
NEW YORK NY
PERMIT # 349

“PREPARING OUR HEARTS FOR EASTER”

It's not too late to begin using the Lenten devotional material available at redeemer.com/lent

EASTER SACRIFICIAL OFFERING ... (CONT'D FROM PAGE 1)

501(c)(3) separate from Redeemer, so it relies on support from individuals to continue their good work.

Your gift will go toward Hope for New York's work to strengthen programs at 50 non-profits across the city, including food and shelter for

the homeless, job skills training, youth mentoring, and more. Your gift will also support Hope for New York's larger vision to grow a movement of mercy and justice in New York City, with a goal of partnering with 30 churches and 90 non-profits by 2027 to see

more and more New Yorkers thrive and flourish.

We pray that you, as part of Christ's church, would continue to seek ways you can live out the hope and power of the resurrection in our city.