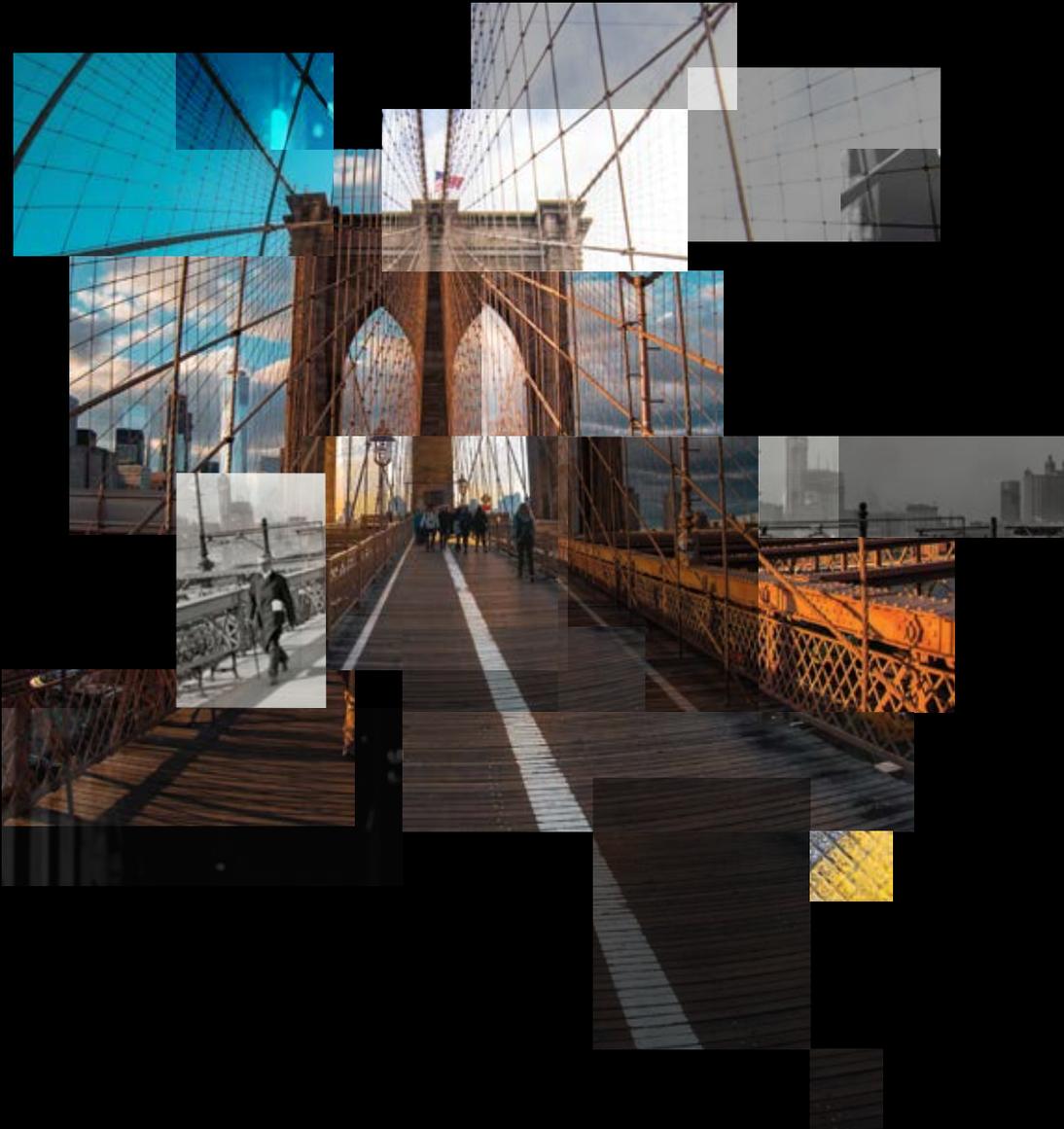


God is building bridges  
of uncommon unity  
in New York.





## un·com·mon

/,ən'kämən/  
adjective

1. out of the ordinary; unusual.



# A dynamic, unified movement is on the rise.

New York is a city like no other—a city where differences are celebrated as part of its very fabric. Every borough is distinct; neighborhoods are economically stratified and culturally diverse; every block has unique challenges and potential. Because of this, one church, one denomination, or one style of worship simply cannot reach all New Yorkers.

This is why we need different people and churches coming together, uniting under a common vision. This is true far beyond New York; the North American Church at large has struggled with modeling unity and integrating differences. But a heart toward unity and a spirit of collaboration are essential to a gospel movement. And we are encouraged to see glimpses of progress in New York.

God is building bridges of uncommon unity in New York. And we have the privilege of joining him in this work.

**GOD IS BUILDING MOMENTUM IN A GOSPEL  
MOVEMENT FOR THE GOOD OF THE CITY.**

# WE ARE AT A SIGNIFICANT MOMENT IN THE STORY OF THE NEW YORK PROJECT.

2

## PHASE 2 (2020-2022)

As we enter Phase 2, we *anticipate* God's ongoing work in our city.

In this season, God is opening our eyes to the ways the Church is hurting and struggling. We are learning ways we need to think differently. We need to continue adapting as new challenges arise and stay nimble in how we pursue our strategies. But we also feel confident that we are moving in the right direction.

1

## PHASE 1 (2016-2019)

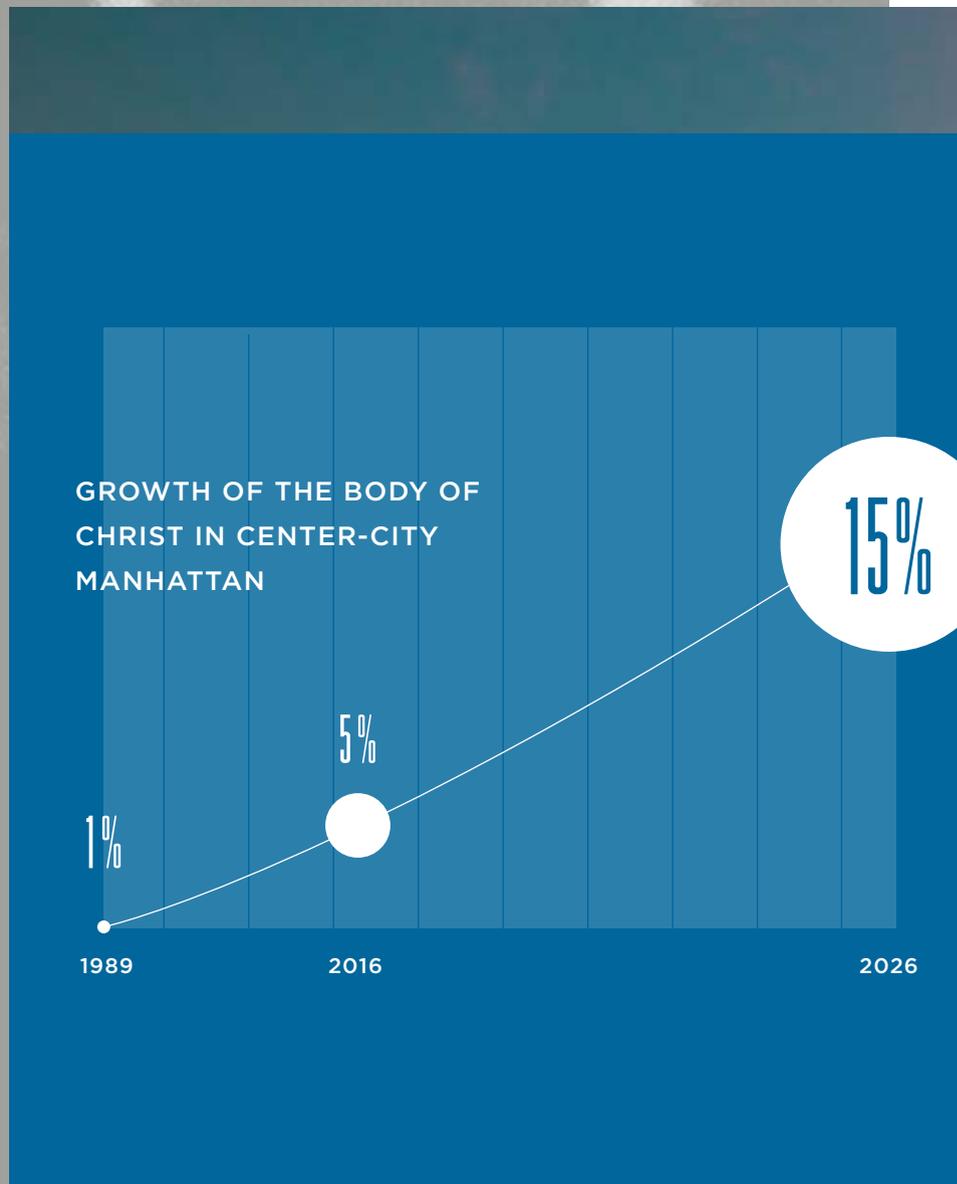
Four years into the New York Project, we *celebrate* all that God has done so far. We are wrapping up Phase 1 with much to be thankful for and having learned a lot. But the work continues.

As the gospel movement continues to grow in unity, it will become an unstoppable force.

Two thousand years ago, Jesus prayed for unity among believers. Today we are continually sobered by the ways unity proves difficult in the Church. But we also see fruits of unity that spur us on in this vital work. Across the five boroughs we are seeing church plants flourish, leaders collaborating across denominations, and people coming to faith. A gospel movement is ultimately a work of the Holy Spirit. But where we see unity building, we also see how God is leading toward a tipping point of gospel renewal in New York City.

**GOD IS  
BUILDING  
BRIDGES OF  
UNCOMMON  
UNITY IN  
NEW YORK.**





## The gospel movement in New York is gaining momentum.

The gospel movement in New York is not new; God has long been at work in New York City. But the movement *is* growing. In 1989, center-city Manhattan was one of the most secular cities in the world. By 2016, the number of center-city Manhattanites that were part of a gospel-centered church grew to 5%. And as we continue to see God growing the body of believers in one of the most influential center-cities of the world, we want to help accelerate that movement. We believe if that number were to triple—from 5% to 15%—it might amount to a tipping point of gospel renewal that brings social good in ways that benefit the whole city and beyond.

**MARKERS OF A GOSPEL MOVEMENT:**

- Believers who are living intentionally incarnational, Jesus-present lives in how they engage in the city
- Churches that are collaborative and humble in how they work with each other and their neighbors
- Gospel-centered churches possessing a dynamic orthodox theology
- A shared commitment to yield to the Holy Spirit in works of unity and justice

# The vision is an entire city renewed by the gospel.

Increasing the number of Christians living out the gospel will have a significant positive effect on the patterns of life in New York. This starts with personal renewal in hearts and lives. But gospel-centric renewal can also multiply expressions of philanthropy, justice, mercy, reconciliation, integrity, and hope across New York in ways that advance the common good for everyone in the city.

## WHAT IF THE CULTURE COMING OUT OF NEW YORK HAD THE GOSPEL IN ITS DNA?



### ▶ A GOSPEL-FUELED NEW YORK WILL CATALYZE INFLUENCE BEYOND JUST OUR CITY:

- Growth in philanthropy
- God-honoring cultural and artistic expressions
- Humane workplaces and industries
- Less crime and institutional corruption
- Greater expressions of mercy and justice
- Restorative race relations
- Community-minded neighborhoods
- A more just distribution of power and wealth
- Peace-filled dialogue amid conflict
- Compassion and respect for human dignity

# God has invited us to be bridge-builders and unity-makers.

The New York Project is a collaborative partnership between Redeemer City to City and Redeemer Churches. Together, our strategy is to accelerate the gospel renewal we see happening around our city by intentionally planting churches, connecting and raising up leaders, and helping churches be deeply rooted in their neighborhoods with permanent homes. In all these initiatives, we seek to love and build Christ's Church as Christ intended.

THE NEW YORK PROJECT IS A 10-YEAR STRATEGY CENTERED AROUND THREE PILLARS:

- 1 NEW CHURCHES
- 2 NEW LEADERS
- 3 NEW HOMES

## THE STRATEGY



### NEW CHURCHES

We're helping plant churches that will help spark renewal across New York.

We are committed to helping leaders plant churches of many denominations that bring the hope of the gospel to New Yorkers. We are supporting this through training, coaching, mentoring church planters, and grants.



### NEW LEADERS

We're training the next generation of New York's spiritual leaders.

We purposefully train leaders in a transdenominational learning community to foster collaboration and unity for gospel-centrality at all times. We develop leaders to lead churches and invest both entrepreneurially and sacrificially in the context of New York.



### NEW HOMES

We're pursuing rooted ministry homes for the city.

Real estate in New York is both scarce and expensive, putting a strain on church presence and growth. Our real estate strategy seeks to alleviate this and provide vital long-term stability to the gospel movement through permanent spaces for worship, community, and training, seven days a week.

# This is a 10-year vision to help the city flourish.

2016-2026

1

## NEW CHURCHES

250+ new churches  
across the five boroughs

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**Providing training and resources  
to start churches that are:**

- Gospel-centered
- Trans-denominational
- Across the five boroughs
- Invested in our neighborhoods
- Welcoming to skeptics
- Vehicles for mercy and justice

2

## NEW LEADERS

Thousands trained through a  
robust leadership engine

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**Investing in 15+ different programs  
and initiatives that:**

- Train church planters and site developers
- Train future pastors and church staff
- Train new sites on mercy and justice initiatives
- Train lay leaders on spiritual practices and work-faith integration
- Train leaders on supporting church and missional health

3

## NEW HOMES

Real estate that serves the gospel  
movement and neighborhoods

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**Providing long-term real estate stability  
for churches and ministries that will:**

- Alleviate the strain caused by the scarcity and complexity of New York City real estate
- Provide spaces for worship and gathering, rooted in a neighborhood
- Provide spaces to train and equip leaders
- Launch new ministries
- Offer neighborhoods a community asset

# FOUR YEARS INTO OUR 10-YEAR VISION, WE CELEBRATE WHAT GOD HAS DONE THROUGH PHASE 1.

## → PHASE 1 RESULTS:

### NEW CHURCHES

**51** total churches launched

**20** new churches in center-city Manhattan

**31** new non-center-city churches, from the Bronx to Brooklyn

### NEW LEADERS

**1,400+** lay leaders attending spiritual formation conferences

**800+** total pastoral leaders trained over four years

**200+** pastors trained in church planting programs

**80** seminarians trained in New York, for New York

**296** millennials trained with a deeper calling to live out the gospel and serve the local church

**20+** different denominations represented

### NEW HOMES

Upper East Side building identified and in contract discussion

▶ AFTER FOUR YEARS OF SEARCHING,  
WE CELEBRATE FINDING A PERMANENT  
HOME FOR REDEEMER EAST SIDE TO SERVE THE  
NEIGHBORHOOD AND GOSPEL MOVEMENT.



## 2016 / BLOCK-BY-BLOCK SEARCH

From 2016–2019, a committee from Redeemer Churches, aided by consultants, conducted an extensive search for a permanent home for the East Side congregation that can also be a resource for the larger gospel movement. They surveyed every block for available properties from 60th to 96th Streets and 5th to 1st Avenues. Of the more than 500 properties identified, they pursued approximately 20 properties in earnest, seriously considering five of them.

## 2019 / PROPERTY IDENTIFIED

In the summer of 2019, the team identified a property in the north central region of the search area. The property can be demolished and rebuilt to include:

- A 600-person auditorium
- 14–17 classrooms
- A Fellowship Hall able to hold up to 300 people

The property contains sufficient development rights to accommodate Redeemer's programs and also add three additional floors, opening the door to partnership with another non-profit.

## 2020 / PURCHASE FINALIZED

If all proceeds well, Redeemer will close on this property for a cash price not exceeding \$30 million. Through the New York Project—including funds raised by the Rise Campaign—\$45 million is allocated to purchase and develop an East Side home. An expected \$15–20 million mortgage will be taken out to cover construction costs; payments will likely be less than East Side's past rent obligations.

## 2023 / BUILDING COMPLETION

In 2023, we pray we can successfully open a new permanent ministry center that meets the needs of the East Side congregation while also providing a rooted home to bless and serve the neighborhood. Through strategic partnerships and a commitment to sharing space, this building can be a launch pad for ministry initiatives city-wide within the otherwise volatile reality of NYC real estate.

We praise God for leading us toward this property and ask for your continued prayers as we move through the contract, closing, and development processes.

WE ALSO CELEBRATE GLIMMERS OF  
A TIPPING POINT THROUGH INDIVIDUAL  
STORIES AND TRANSFORMATION.

## *How does a small group of Christians bless the culture of an entire organization?*

“I arrived at the School of American Ballet in the summer of 2008 at the age of 14; there were several other Christians who arrived at the school that same summer. We banded together. We started a Bible study, worshipped and prayed together, walked the Christian life together. When a group of us got into the NYC Ballet, we continued the Bible study in the company, and the Lord has added in number and in depth to that group of believers in the years since.

We really encouraged each other as believers, and we also started encouraging our fellow dancers. We get so much criticism in our profession, so we started this ministry of encouragement and of mentoring younger dancers who came into the company. Over the years, that culture of encouragement and mentorship has become a part of the culture of the larger NYC Ballet such that there’s now even a formalized mentorship program. Just by there being more believers in that building, it’s changed the place for the better—for the flourishing of the whole community, not just the believers.”

*Silas Farley  
Corps de Ballet, New York City Ballet*



## What does it mean to “succeed” in church planting?

“Over a period of 12 years, I planted two churches in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. One church closed after seven long, hard years. The other church grew rapidly and lives on, but leaving it was more confusing and lonelier than I could have imagined. Both experiences have left me with a lot of questions. Was one church a failure and the other a success? The more I meditate on it, the more I think we ministry leaders need to stop worrying so much about planting a successful church. Because honestly, ‘failure’ has been the best thing that ever happened to me. It reoriented my identity as a child of God and uprooted my identity as a church planter for God. Ministry leaders must instead set our sights in pursuit of the kingdom of God, looking for breakthroughs of salvation, discipleship, healing, justice, and reconciliation in our neighborhoods and cities. I believe this would lead to more perceived failure. But also more resurrections. I believe this would lead to a movement of truly creative and contextual church planting. I believe that church planters and their families would be much healthier in the gospel, and their churches would be much more generative if this was our pursuit.”

*Pastor Robert Elkin*

*Assistant Director, Training; Redeemer City to City*



## What is the exponential impact of sharing the gospel with just one person?

“When I first moved to the city in 2001 as a college student, I was not a person of faith. I was here on September 11, and I remember sitting at a café on the NYU campus, totally distraught. A fellow student approached me with a smile and invited me to pray with her and some friends. I said, ‘No thank you, I don’t pray.’ She then asked if I’d like to grab coffee instead. She took a genuine interest in me and we ended up becoming great friends. I also got to know many of her other friends. It was through these friendships, and through encountering the Word of God in a Bible study with them, that I ultimately became a follower of Christ. My family was surprised by my conversion, and even more so when I later decided to pursue vocational ministry. But over time, as they saw how my life changed—and as my friends and I prayed for them and showed them the love of Christ—the lives of my family members began to change as well. It’s been the most beautiful thing in my life to see my family come to know Christ. Hearing my mom, brother, dad, and step-mom talk about their faith and love of Jesus is an endless joy and wonder for me.”

*Susan Nacorda Stang*

*Director of Leadership Development, Redeemer Downtown*





**AS WE ENTER  
PHASE 2, WE SEEK  
TO ANTICIPATE  
GOD'S ONGOING  
WORK IN OUR CITY.**

## The New York Project is needed more than ever.

The last four years have given us much to celebrate but also awakened us to complexities and challenges we must embrace and learn from. In many ways, God used Phase I to show us that progress is harder and more complicated than simply counting the number of new churches or how many pastors are in our training programs. We are grappling with dynamics that are bigger than the Church in New York; we know the Church at large in America is struggling with complexities we see here. Yet we are committed to doing all we can to lead toward solutions. As we do, we feel particularly focused on three areas.

### THREE CHALLENGES WE FACE:

- 1** *How does the Church demonstrate unity in an increasingly polarized culture?*
- 2** *How do we activate Christians to embrace a mission of “being” church more than just “doing” church?*
- 3** *What transforms Christians in our city to live out a sacrificial lifestyle of evangelism?*



▶ CHALLENGE #1

## How does the Church demonstrate unity in an increasingly polarized culture?

The evangelical community is facing large-scale polarization—mirroring what’s happening in our country at large. We’re overwhelmed by these divides but also know that the Holy Spirit is still the power that can invite us into oneness.

*“And all who believed **were together and had all things in common.**” – ACTS 2:44*

The Church is at her best when the Holy Spirit is leading the beloved community into oneness. In our current culture, it’s easy to lose sight of the truth that we are all made in God’s image, that we are made for God, by God, and for each other. Instead, we tend to look at our differences. And we allow our differences to become a wedge that drives us even further apart. In the process, those we have been called to care for—the poor, the needy, the widows, the orphans—get lost or neglected.

How did we become so polar opposite? When did we stop caring about the most vulnerable? When did some lives become more expendable than others? When did national origin become more sacred than God’s providence? It is when our hearts turn from the gentle voice of love, turn away from the whisper of the Holy Spirit, that polarization takes hold and hardens our hearts.

But we aren’t bound to this way of thinking. In fact, as the body of Christ, we need to throw off the mantle of polarization and draw near to God and each other. We need to invite the Spirit to influence our hearts and minds. Because the Spirit always leads us to the cross, to Christ, and beckons us to be the Church Jesus called us to be.

When we look at the early Church, we see a beloved community—a community where opposites and differences didn’t matter. And it wasn’t because they lived in a culture that more readily embraced differences. Far from it. Even in a classist, ethnocentric, pagan culture, the early Church served the poor and cared for the “least of these,” regardless of skin color, economic class, or citizenship classification. They showed their neighbors and their city that they were all one in Christ.

We have that same opportunity today. The Church is still the answer. The beloved community at her best is when we live out of the belief that we are *all* image bearers of God. And when we honor that image of God in one another, it breaks open the hardness of our hearts that magnifies our differences.

*By Michael Carrion*

*VP, Church Planting & Leadership Development; Redeemer City to City*

*How do we activate  
Christians to embrace a  
mission of “being” church  
more than just “doing” church?*

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The American Church has become so entrenched in programs, structure, and traditions that it has forgotten its original calling: to be a people sent out and living their whole lives in service of the gospel. If the Church is going to grow and flourish, it must once again become a movement of people living on mission in *all* of their lives.

The church that Jesus designed is made for impact—and massive, highly transformative impact at that. I believe with all my heart that the future of Christianity in the West is somehow bound up with the idea of becoming a people movement again. Somehow and in some way, we need to loosen up and learn how to reactivate the massive potentials that lie rather dormant within Jesus’ people if we are going to make a difference to our world. It is only when the people of God as a whole are activated in a movement that real world transformation takes place.

But how do we become activated? And who has been called? Well, that’s simple. *Every* Christian is a missionary and we are *all* called to live out our commitment to Jesus’ lordship in every part of life. What marks Christianity as distinct is that it is truly a people movement: every believer (and not just some presumed religious elite) is an agent of the kingdom and is called to bring God’s influence into all the realms of human existence. With that in mind, our whole view of church changes. You *are* the church before you *do* church. Church is not simply a building or a formal community meeting, it is who we are—a people who have been formed out of a direct encounter with God in Jesus Christ. It is not so much that the church has a mission but that the mission has a church.

And this missional movement must apply the gospel to all spheres of life (business, family, art, education, science, politics, etc.). It cannot be limited simply to “coming to church” or participating in building-based programs. The reality is that it doesn’t take millions of admirers to start a movement that can change the world (in fact, that might be problematic). What is needed is a few people who have been personally transformed and are committed enough to the cause to be willing to in some way or another put their lives in the service of extending it into every domain of life.

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*By Alan Hirsch*

*Missiology and Movement Consultant to the New York Project*



▶ CHALLENGE #3

## *What transforms Christians in our city to live out a sacrificial lifestyle of evangelism?*

People are becoming increasingly consumeristic. We are too distracted by our own wants and preferences to look beyond ourselves. And, all the while thinking we are standing against the spirit of the age, we still bring this mindset into our church lives. Despite so many new churches starting, we still have to find the motivation to change if we want to experience a significant expression of evangelism or conversions.

Consumerism in our culture and our own self-absorption have permeated many of those who profess to be Christians so that we relate to the Church and to our pastors as providers of goods and services. If we don't like the music, if we don't like the preaching, if we don't like the programs, we look for a different church, telling ourselves we need a better "fit."

You can imagine how this consumerist mindset robs us of living on mission to bring the hope of the gospel to those who don't know Jesus. Any form of self-absorption distracts us from the Great Commission given to all who believe. But especially in the spiritual realm, the more I am concerned about me and my preferences, the less I am thinking and living for others, let alone praying for those who don't know Jesus.

Maybe we Christians have lost a sense of sacrifice and urgency for those who don't know Jesus. Tim Keller has said that historically speaking, we Christians today in North America are so comfortable that we have become unable to contemplate real suffering, sacrifice, or persecution, all things Jesus promised to those who truly follow him. Maybe this comfort in America, unlike the persecuted church in China, is what has made us complacent and self-serving when it comes to our faith. So then shall we pray and ask the Lord for more suffering to wake us up? No, that would be pointless, as suffering and persecution are guaranteed to us regardless.

So what would shift our hearts and minds toward a life packed with intentional relationships and conversations about the gospel? What might transform Christians in our city to live out a sacrificial lifestyle of evangelism? It starts with prayer for a greater joy and gratitude. A prayer asking the Lord, "restore unto me the joy of your salvation" (Psalm 51:12). A prayer that asks God to bring us back to living out the Great Commission that is not motivated by duty or obligation but rather an outpouring of our joy in Christ, and out of gratitude and wonder in the gift of salvation.

*By Mai Hariu-Powell  
Executive Director, New York Project*

### **THIS WORK IS MUCH MORE COMPLICATED THAN WE EVER IMAGINED.**

But that means it's all the more necessary. The issues we're grappling with are simply more confirmation that this is a great work—but it's a work that will take years before we see the full fruit. So, we will keep building in anticipation of what God will do.

# In Phase 2, our collaboration will remain essential.

## A COLLABORATIVE STRUCTURE:

The New York Project is a collaborative partnership between Redeemer Churches and Redeemer City to City. There is a joint oversight committee with representatives from both ministries that guides the vision and oversees decisions regarding the New York Project. Beyond that, each ministry has specific projects and initiatives they're working on toward the vision of accelerating momentum of the gospel movement in New York.

## AN ONGOING STRATEGY:

For Phase 2, the three pillars of our strategy will remain new churches, new leaders, and new homes.

### → NYP Leadership Development Center *An initiative of City to City*

Robust training is crucial in pursuing these strategies. Because of this, Redeemer City to City is evaluating options for establishing a New York Project Leadership Development Center to serve as a permanent training and program hub. In the spirit of collaboration, it may be possible to locate this new Center in the three floors added above the future Redeemer East Side building, allowing both ministries to partner, share training and worship space, and resource the larger gospel movement.



# The New York PROJECT



**Redeemer**  
CHURCHES & MINISTRIES

PHASE 2 COSTS:  
**\$39 million**

NEW CHURCHES  
\$8 million

NEW LEADERS  
\$8 million

NEW HOMES  
\$21 million

+ \$2 million for fundraising

PHASE 2 COSTS:  
**\$15–20 million\***

*\*Exact program costs will be determined and raised by Redeemer Churches in 2020*

TOTAL EXPECTED PHASE 2 NEED:  
**\$54–59 million**

Dear friends,

When we look back on what God has done in Phase 1 of the New York Project over the last four years, we are moved to celebrate the growth of the Church and the work of the Spirit throughout the city. We are honored to be part of this great work God is doing. But we're so thankful that our work doesn't end as we wrap up Phase 1.

As with most other great callings in life—like marriage, raising children, serving God—the most worthwhile pursuits demand more of us than we expect. And it is through these experiences that we grow, develop, and learn to rise to the occasion. In this, we become more dependent on God and his people as we navigate the complications that inevitably arise.

The New York Project is like that. Even knowing God's hand is with us, we are sobered by the complexities that we have already encountered and those still ahead of us. While there is so much to celebrate from Phase 1, we also are committed to thinking humbly and creatively about ways our approach needs to shift. This is why we're looking forward with anticipation to Phase 2, seeing how God will continue to guide and provide for us.

As we look toward the next three years, we hope you will be led to join us, pray for us, and work alongside us in this amazing gospel movement unfolding in this city. We are so grateful for your friendship and for the privilege of learning and serving with you.

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In Him,  
*Tim Keller*

## LEADERSHIP

### Timothy Keller

Chairman and Co-Founder  
Redeemer City to City

### Steve Shackelford

Chief Executive Officer  
Redeemer City to City

### James Herring

Elder, Redeemer Presbyterian Church  
Board Member, Redeemer City to City

### Mai Hariu-Powell

Executive Director, The New York Project  
Redeemer City to City

### Mark Reynolds

VP, Leadership Development  
Redeemer City to City

### Michael Carrion

VP, Church Planting & Leadership Development  
Redeemer City to City

### Ruben Soto

VP, Operations & Programs  
Redeemer City to City

### Brian Stanton

Chief Financial Officer  
Redeemer Churches and Ministries

### David Bisgrove

Senior Pastor  
Redeemer Church West Side

### Abe Cho

Senior Pastor  
Redeemer Church East Side

### John Lin

Senior Pastor  
Redeemer Church Downtown

The  
**New York**  
PROJECT

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