

Redeeming Times

January, 2010

CHURCH OF THE
REDEEMER



Happy New Year from
The Taylors!

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Dreams and Realities

by Jon Taylor

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Internet Links:

www.covenantpc.com
Our home church, Covenant
Presbyterian Church in Easley,
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www.newlifehome.org
Our local mercy ministry, a Christian
treatment home for women and
children

www.pcanet.org
Home page of the Presbyterian
Church in America

www.intownmanchester.com
Website of events and
information about the City of
Manchester

www.redeemernh.org
Our website

Harry Bernstein wrote the second volume of his memoirs at the age of 98. He entitled it *The Dream*. In it he described the visions his mother had of immigrating to America, how they actually made the trip, and how they found their way in their new country. Their dream of America was realized, but once here they realized that the reality was quite different. Harry's story shows how, through the pain, his dream came true in ways he never expected.

The year of 2009 has been like that in many ways for our church family. We have seen our vision for Manchester become more of a reality than ever before in our history, bringing both joy and challenge.

At the same time, we've seen God move in ways we never quite expected. He truly is sovereign in His plan to rescue the broken.

We began meeting in our new space at 228 Maple Street in mid-February of 2009, and fell in love with it immediately. It provides a panoramic view of Manchester in three directions from our third-floor location. We keep the shades open on purpose, and I encourage people to look out the

windows when I preach, if they'll pray for the city simultaneously. We've been able to expand our ministries and, more importantly, our people are beginning to embrace our vision in the city now that we have a more permanent home.

We began with a focus on children's ministry, holding a bowling/movie outreach in April and a Summer Kids' Club in a neighboring park in August. We began seeing a steady influx of neighborhood children immediately after the club ended, some of them walking the three blocks to our facility.

The Pioneer Club ministry started on Thursday nights this Fall under the leadership of our Children's Director Karen Lyons, and we have seen ten to fifteen children from the neighborhood come at one time or another, most regularly. We've had to divide our Kids' Village program on Sunday mornings to accommodate more diverse ages because many of these children are hearing Bible stories for the first time. Natisha showed me a poem she wrote one day that said in part, "...I should just die on the cross, God should not die on the cross..." The children are seeing Christ's love and hearing it, and they are responding.



Sharing a laugh at ESL training



Karen explaining badges at our Pioneer Thanksgiving Dinner



Gillian, Danielle and family at Pioneer Thanksgiving Dinner



Melissa and friend at a Christmas ornament outreach



Charlie and Julianne adorned with Christmas hats

We hosted a Thanksgiving dinner for the Pioneer Club families, and virtually all the children had family members attend. Some have visited worship, while others have expressed interest in involvement. This is a long term process, and we are committed for the duration. God is working.

Another dream we've had since the beginning was to provide ESL (English as a Second Language) classes for local immigrant and refugee families. We flew an MNA trainer up in October to train CTR teachers and opened the class to the community. Under the leadership of our directors, Diane Trombley and David Lyons, we have six teachers and several other volunteers ready to go. Classes will

begin in late January.

The most exciting event of the year came on December 13th. CTR became organized as a particular church of the PCA, ordained Ken Butler and Dan Filicicchia as elders, and installed their church planter (that's me) as pastor. Ben Merritt, an elder from Covenant PCA in SC, flew up to share in this special occasion. This was momentous not only for us, but for a presbytery whose three states rank among the top five least churched in the nation. We sang, took vows together and praised the God who began this work before the world began. Truly, 2009 has been a year in which we've experienced God advancing the vision He has for this city... through us. Praise Him!

Prayer and Praise

- We praise God for all of YOU, for caring, for praying and for sacrificing so God's kingdom is advanced in Manchester.
- Please pray for the children and families in our neighborhood—that they would see Christ in us and come to know him.
- Praise God for raising up volunteers to love the children through Pioneer Clubs (Karen, Dawn, Brian, Madeleine, Denise, Bill and Diane), and pray for them.
- Pray for our ESL staff (David, Diane, Bob, Barbara, Jennifer, Ron, Kara and Phil). More importantly, pray for students. Registration is Jan. 18th.
- Praise God for Dan Filicicchia and Ken Butler, our new elders. Pray for our session as we shepherd CTR.
- Pray for our women's studies, life groups and men's groups as we learn and grow together.
- Pray for God to give us a burning passion to see our friends, neighbors, loved ones and co-workers go beyond religious form and come to know Christ's transforming grace.

Family Matters

by Allie

"If at first you don't succeed, try, try again. THEN QUIT. There's no point in being a... fool about it." So says that great philosopher and theologian..... W.C. Fields. If you didn't get the memo, we are expecting yet another baby boy due in April. We pulled the big boys out of school to come to the ultrasound, and when the pronouncement was made by the tech... Jonathan said... "Again." (He's been around the block on this one a few times.) We've received mixed reactions to our announcement, ranging from

excitement re: a family basketball team to genuine pity and even sympathy. (I've not, however, received a condolence card... YET!!!) I can identify with each emotion. Guess I'll have to wait for granddaughters to experience tiaras and ballet class. Hope springs eternal! We are very thankful for our baby boy, who as yet is... nameless. Jonathan (11) and Jacob (9) have been busy with school, music and sports in 2009. Jonathan takes trumpet lessons and Jacob clarinet. Both play in band. (We dug Jon's old jr. high clarinet out of an abandoned trunk in the basement, polished it up....and voila!) Jonathan's fall soccer team won the NH state championship for his division in October. Meanwhile, my volunteer position as chauffeur continues to expand.



Allie and her boys apple-picking this fall in Vermont



Our New Orleans NNEP Mission Team with Linda, the homeowner, and her family



The elders of the Northern New England Presbytery laying hands on our new elders in prayer

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Family Matters *(continued)*

It's been exciting to see the boys using their musical gifts and becoming a tangible part of leading worship at CTR. Charlie (3) began music classes at Manchester Community Music School in September. He adores his teachers. It brings back fond memories of the "old days" when I taught Kindermusik at Covenant for years. Charlie loves music, and while he was initially shy about singing solo, he now cheerfully takes requests... singing at the top of his lungs. His repertoire has grown considerably, and his rendition of "I Had a Bad Day" is a popular request! We've recently begun the search for a middle school for Jonathan... it's hard to believe we are at this point already. (Wow....middle school and a newborn... simultaneously!!!!)

2009 brought major surgery (successful) for both Charlie and Jon, visits from the southern branch of the Taylor family (GA) and our beloved British aunts from England, joyful celebrations of both my mom and dad's 70th birthdays, a quick weekend get-away to Bar Harbor for Jon and me, camping at Gunstock for Soul Fest with dear friends (for Jonathan), several summer camps for the big boys, multiple visits from dear friends and family, and official installation as pastor at CTR for Jon. We are so thankful for your prayer support that carried us through 2009 on a daily basis! May 2010 (however you say it!) be a year of blessing for you and your family!!!

Support Status

In 2009 we took a big leap financially to lease the space on Maple Street. Our budget increased 36% from 2008. At the same time, the Lord has provided. Our congregational giving increased 20% in 2009. We still are not taking in enough funds to be fully self-supporting each month, but we are closer than ever before and pray for that threshold to be reached in 2010. We have increased the budget by about 3% for 2010 to expand our children's ministries and begin ESL.

We thank God for His goodness and we thank you for your faithfulness. If you are interested in partnering with us in prayer or financial support or know an individual or church that might be, please call our church office at (603)622-1881. In closing, we want to thank all of you for your support in encouragement, in prayer and in finances. CTR's organization is as much your victory as it is ours, for we couldn't be here without you. We recognize that God builds his kingdom both through those who send and through those who are sent. We wish you a wonderful New Year, recognizing that it is the birth of Jesus Christ, His perfect life, His death on a cross and His resurrection that give us the hope of eternal life. We desire and pray that you have that hope in Him, and can celebrate it this year.



Particularization Service for Church of the Redeemer

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom

His favor rests."

Luke 2:14