

Forward & Together

2024 VISION BOOKLET





“Quietly, reverently, we salute the past, grateful to our Heavenly Father for the many and marvelous benedictions which attended the work and the past service of our Church for the past years. But we cannot linger too long and too fondly over the memories of the past. Yesterday is gone; today is here; tomorrow lies before us with its opportunities. What shall we do with them? Let’s turn our eyes from the sunset toward the sunrise and scan the horizon for the dawn of a greater day of opportunity.”

**Pastor Marozik
a congregational letter in the 1950’s**

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Forward & Together

For 97 years, we have been a church committed to the mission of God in Redwood City, the Bay Area, and to the ends of the Earth. God continues to call us forward to what is next.

The work of God's mission in the Bay Area in a post-pandemic reality continues to pose challenges that lead to new opportunities.

As we considered the current and future difficulties, and after months of discussion, exploration and prayer, our vision planning team met in the early fall of 2023. A new way forward emerged. Our best path forward is to "replant" Redeemer as a congregation oriented towards a younger, more diverse community with Pastor Corey transitioning into the role of lead Pastor.

What if we fundamentally re-oriented our church to look like a new church plant, but did it within our midst? Without neglecting or turning our back on our existing congregation, what if we developed a new Mission, Vision & Values specifically and uncompromisingly designed to serve and grow within the younger, more diverse community we serve with a new leader, and a refreshed governance model and lay leadership team?

Vision Guide

Become a multi-ethnic and multi-generational church that focuses on serving the younger, diverse community that surrounds us.

Replanting Redeemer

What is a replant?

Replanting is about deep transformational change. New leadership, new vision, and strategies that will transform the current church.

In other words

Envision what it would be like if you were going to plant a new church in Redwood City, and do that at Redeemer.

Picture this...

More and new faces filling our church.

Adults being baptized.

Our church reflecting the diversity of our city.

Our church serving and loving our city with passion and care.

People joyfully serving and generously giving.

Our church's culture resonating with and inspiring the next generations.

Key Guiding Questions

01 How can we reach the young people and families in Redwood City?

02 How do we fit into the ecosystem of Redwood City in regard to community service and development?

03 How can we reach lost people and be a part of conversion growth, adult baptisms?

04 How can we be an intergenerational community?

05 How can we reflect the diversity of our community?

The Process & Timeline

September 2023

A Steering Committee was formed to oversee the replant work being done. Implemented 4 new teams to ensure success: Lead team, Launch team, Congregational Communication team, and School team.

December '23 - May '24

Lead team and launch team formed and led by Pastor Corey to form new vision and cultural DNA with LINC Bay Area and an organizational health consultant.

July 2024

Form our new budget around the replant, and probable new Board of Directors in place.

August - September 2024

We honor and ceremonialize the past 97 years, install new leadership, and we relaunch our church into its new vision!

How to Engage

01 Be Dependent

Stay deeply connected to God in His Word and prayer during this time. Not only for the church's direction, vision, and people involved, but for yourself as well. Let's have a posture of dependence upon God through this process, together.

02 Be Curious

Remain connected and updated to what is going on. Don't allow thoughts and fears in isolation drive emotion, but instead remain curious. Have conversations and ask questions with current church leadership, and members of Redeemer. Keep yourself open to what God is doing.

03 Accelerate Movement

This vision and new direction is possible only because of your generosity. Please consider how to support the new vision and direction of our church with your talents, energy, and financial assets.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Will the replant still serve Redeemer School families?

A: Yes! We will continue to love and serve the school families.

Q: Can't we continue with slow, incremental improvements to the existing ministry?

A: That is an option. But as we continue with slow, incremental change, Redwood City continues to change rapidly, becoming more secular, more diverse, and transient. The longer we wait for significant, transformational change, the bigger the gap grows. Redeemer needs to become something new in order to become more effective. It is helpful to remember the quote taken from Dr. Scott Rische,

"Don't train leaders to fix the church. Train leaders on how to accomplish the mission of God. In leadership training, we need to start with the Mission, not the Church. If we start with the Church, we often just end up creating new ways of DOING Church (with the same limited results when it comes to making new disciplines), instead of finding new ways of BEING the Church and accomplishing God's Mission.

But if we start with the Mission, we will discover new ways of BEING the Church by going into and looking at Christ and the Mission field, and through that, finding the compassion, direction, wisdom, inspiration, motivation, and power from God's Spirit that is needed in order to make the changes that may needed to reach more people with the Gospel (Matthew 9:35-38)."

Q: Do we have a comprehensive plan for moving forward?

A: We have a direction and vision, and a plan to replant Redeemer under new leadership; a leader who has strong connections with the community and the knowledge and abilities to engage those people in helping become a new church. The detailed plans and strategies will come out of the new leadership team that comes together over the next 6-18 months.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Does replanting mean we will change our name?

A: At this point, we are unsure, but it is possible as the vision and strategy become more clear.

Q: Is there a good resource that can help us better understand the challenges in front of us?

A: The best book we have seen so far on navigating the new realities of Post-Christian America is "Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory" by Tod Bolsinger. He uses the journeys of Lewis and Clark to help leaders understand how to adapt to uncharted territory. When they encountered the Rocky Mountains, it wasn't enough to improve their exploration techniques. They expected to canoe all the way to the Pacific Ocean. Instead, they had to abandon their canoes, meet people who knew the landscape, and discover new ways to navigate the terrain. Our challenge is very similar - this is uncharted territory!

Q: What will the new worship service look like?

A: This is a question that can't be answered right now, and probably isn't as critical to future success as we often think. Understandably, worship is a big concern for people, because it is a central part of worship life. But into the future, worship isn't only one part of a bigger picture. People who are unchurched will likely connect to us in new and different ways, other than worship. They may give in different ways and for different reasons. Community service, Home and Connect Groups, online interaction, podcasts and online worship, social groups - these will become just a few of the ways and reasons people engage with the church community that may be more influential in their lives than worship.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Are there churches that have made this transition already?

A: Yes. Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Hayward did a replant from 2010-2020. Pastor Aaron Putnam was called to start a Spanish speaking service. The Sr. Pastor retired. Aaron then connected with Dawit Bokre, an Eritrean first generation immigrant, who went through the EEIT program (similar to the CMC program) and led the replant. After 2 years of transition, Pastor Putnam moved on to work full-time at LINC, but stayed in Hayward. Good Shepherd is still his family's church home.

Q: Are there examples of churches in the area that are effectively reaching young adults and families?

A: Yes. Here is a list of churches Pastor Corey has spent time getting to know through networking and conversations. If you have some time, you might want to check out their websites, social media pages, and maybe even attend worship at one or two.

Examples of Churches doing this well:

1. Menlo Church San Mateo Campus
2. Rise City Church Redwood City (also a successful replant)
3. Echo Church San Jose
4. Epic Church San Francisco
5. Vive Church Mountain View
6. City Life Church San Francisco
7. Redemption Church San Francisco
8. New City Community Church Oakland
9. New North Church

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What does this change mean for the oversight of the school?

A: Over the last few decades, we have observed several important changes impacting the school and church. First, we have evolved from having a school which serves mostly Redeemer families to a school which serves mostly families who do not call Redeemer their church home. Second, we see the need to complete the evolution from a parochial school to an independent private Christian school which competes successfully with other private schools in the area. Both of these changes have an impact on the senior pastor to the point where a significant portion of Pastor Paul's time is spent on school related topics. As we consider a new mission and vision for the church with substantial investment in outreach into the community, we believe that finding a different school oversight model is critical so that Pastor Corey does not get bogged down in school administration. What the new oversight model looks like is a critical topic for the School Steering committee and leadership to discover.

Q: Does this mean that Redeemer School will become a separate independent organization?

A: Our goal in this process is to renew Redeemer's strategy and align its structure and leadership to best fulfill its mission. We are asking the School committee and leadership to study this question and propose a recommendation. If we as a congregation decide to make a change to the corporate structure separating the church and school legally, that would take time to plan and execute and would not happen overnight.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Does this mean that Redeemer Church and School will become less connected and will no longer operate in partnership?

A: No. We are thrilled to have families at Redeemer School that come from congregations all around us (Lutheran and others), and we are equally thrilled to serve Redeemer School families who want to call Redeemer their church home. The primary motivation behind this entire strategy is to help Redeemer engage and serve a younger, more diverse generation of people (including families), and we see a significant opportunity to engage the families that set foot on our campus everyday for the school. Our goal is to find an operating model for church and school which continues to foster church and school collaboration while also enabling both church and school to operate with the focus they need to successfully achieve their desired outcomes.

Q: What does this mean for Pastor Paul and Beth?

A: Please see Pastor Paul and Beth's letter on the following page.

From Pastor Paul & Beth

Dear Redeemer community,

It's hard to believe that we are in our eighth ministry year at Redeemer! It has been an amazing journey of faith. Simply put, we love Redeemer and we love Redwood City! It was very clear when we first met the people of Redeemer that this was a community of people who loved each other deeply, were committed to God's mission, and were used to generously giving, serving and sacrificing for God's kingdom. These eight years together have been filled with joy and blessing for us and our family. We are so grateful for the love you have shown to us. Together, we have been devoting ourselves to giving our best to Jesus and His mission at Redeemer. The Holy Spirit has been busy bearing much fruit, and for that we praise God. The challenges have been great, including a pandemic. But as is often the case, God shows up in the most amazing ways when the challenges are the biggest.

And that is the case again. The changes that are happening in Redwood City and the Bay Area are challenging for the church and God's mission. But in the challenges, there are always opportunities for God to work in new and amazing ways.

So we are filled with hope and excitement about this new vision God is giving to Redeemer. For eight years we have been investing in the next generation of leaders, and now it is time to empower them to take the lead in reaching their generations, and giving them our full support! We are so proud of Redeemer for answering God's call and following His lead into this new future. We can't wait to see all that God does, for Redeemer, and for us.

It is our personal hope and prayer to continue living and serving in Redwood City.

But there is something that always comes before our own hopes and prayers; God's calling in our lives. The only reason we came to Redwood City in 2016 was because we were convinced God was calling and leading us to come! And so in this next chapter of our lives, first and foremost, we want to seek and follow God's calling for our lives.

As this transition unfolds over the next 6-18 months we will be working hard with Redeemer, praying, seeking God's voice and direction, waiting patiently, and discerning his calling for what lies ahead.

It could be continuing our service at Redeemer in different roles. It could be serving at Redeemer in combination with other work in the area. It could be assisting other congregations or ministries in the area. Or, it could be something God shows us that we simply can't see or imagine right now.

Whatever it is, we trust that God will give us a clear sense of calling for us, and that His plans will be best!

Please know that we would love to talk to you about all of this! Don't feel uncomfortable asking, or dropping by for a cup of coffee with us! We truly love the people of Redeemer and treasure your friendship. Conversations with God's people is one of the most powerful ways God speaks to us! And of course, we invite you to join us in fervent prayer and study of God's Word as we walk forward together by faith!

Forward and Together - two powerful words when Jesus is leading the way.

With much love, your fellow servants in Christ,

Pastor Paul and Beth Schult

Thank You!

**"See, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
I am making a way in the wilderness
and streams in the wasteland...
because I provide water in the wilderness
and streams in the wasteland,
to give drink to my people, my chosen, the people I
formed for myself
that they may proclaim my praise."**

Isaiah 43:19-21

