

Church of the Redeemer:

A Church Plant of the Presbyterian Church in America

New Wine in New Wineskins-- The Transforming Power of the Gospel in Manchester, NH

“Neither do men pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst, the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved.”
(Matthew 9:17)

The Mission: to establish, by God’s grace, a gospel-driven, disciple-making, ancient and progressive expression of the body of Christ that God will use to transform this city for His glory.

The City: Manchester, New Hampshire

Manchester was incorporated in 1810 as a textile center on the Merrimack River. The Amoskeag Manufacturing Company opened its first mill here in 1836. The company (and the city, which depended on the mills) thrived over the next 75 years. At its peak in 1915 when the last mill was built, Amoskeag was the largest manufacturing facility in the world, covering eight million square feet of floor space--equivalent to the World Trade Center. Unfortunately, after the first World War a combination of Southern competition, bad management and lower demand for textile goods cut into the company’s profits. A series of strikes drove the company into bankruptcy in 1936. From 1936 until the early 1980’s, the city was in serious decline. The mills stood largely empty, a silent testimony to thousands of shattered dreams.

Beginning in the 80’s, both public and private investments in the old mills began to breathe new life into them. Shops, small manufacturers, museums, artists and offices began renovating and sharing space in the mills that were preserved. With these new businesses the rest of Manchester slowly recovered from decline. The downtown area, once described as a “wasteland,” began to fill up with restaurants, corporate offices and studios. Manchester, as one writer put it, now “has a pulse.”

The Need

There are several elements contributing to a need for the gospel in Manchester at this time in history.

- ♦ **Population growth:** Manchester has grown more in the past 15 years than it did in the previous 50. There are relatively few evangelical churches in this city of 110,000. *The gospel provides the answer for those searching for purpose in a new and strange place (Hebrews 11:8-9).*
- ♦ **Religiosity:** Manchester is heavily Roman Catholic, but disenchantment with the church over recent scandals is high. Many Catholics do not attend mass regularly, if at all, and are searching for authenticity. *The gospel takes us beyond religiosity and transforms us through a living relationship with Jesus Christ (Galatians 4:4-6).*
- ♦ **Financial Struggles:** Because the median income is low and the cost of living is high, most households have dual breadwinners. This creates stress as families attempt to

balance work, school and relationships. *The gospel can break the desire for “upward mobility” that destroys families, the fabric of the city (2 Corinthians 8:1-4).*

- ◆ **Racial and Economic Diversity:** In a city that was 91% white as recently as 2000, there are rapidly growing ethnic minorities; there are over 70 languages spoken in Manchester schools. Many established European ethnic groups have struggled to accept the changes. In addition, there is a division between the “old economy” blue collar manufacturing population and the “new economy” white collar professionals and executives. *The gospel reveals that through the redemption offered by Christ, we can truly be one people in Him regardless of race, gender or economic status (Galatians 3:28).*
- ◆ **Need for Mercy and Justice:** Despite the economic transformation of the city, many people have been left behind. There are illiterate adults and children, unwed mothers, families in crisis and a severe shortage of decent housing. *The gospel sounds the call to God’s people to demonstrate the love of Christ through long-term relationships of mercy and justice to the poor (Micah 6:8).*

***The Vision of Church of the Redeemer:
Freeing the people of Manchester to worship Christ
authentically in community and to seek together the
transformation of the city through the gospel in word
and action.***

The vision of Church of the Redeemer is embodied in Romans 12:1-2: *I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.* We believe that God is calling together a body of believers who will model “lifestyle worship:” a contagious living out of the gospel of grace amid a secular culture that is burned out on “religion.” This lifestyle worship, which by God’s grace He will use to transform Manchester, will involve:

- ◆ **Bringing glory to God through worship that is both ancient and modern**
- ◆ **Creating a community that cares for each other in small groups**
- ◆ **Multiplying disciples and disciplers individually and in families through the preaching and teaching of God’s word to affect the city, the region and the world**
- ◆ **Planting gospel-driven churches throughout Northern New England**
- ◆ **Living out the gospel through acts of mercy that equip the needy to show mercy**

This, we believe, is how God is calling us to prepare the “wineskins” of the people of Manchester for the “new wine” of the Spirit of God poured out through the person and work of His Son.

As part of our preparation, we have chosen the following specific values to characterize our church in light of where God has placed us and those whom He's called us to reach:

- ❖ **Exhibiting Authenticity** – In a city suspicious of the veracity of the message of the church and cynical about its purpose, we value openness and honesty. We welcome believers, seekers and skeptics alike to gather in community with us. This honesty reflects itself in Life Groups where lives are shared, in worship where there is not pretense and formalism but transcendence and joy, and in mission where we truly serve Manchester by the way that we live.
- ❖ **Speaking Truth** – We value the absolute truth of God's word, the Bible, and accept unequivocally the truth God reveals to us in it. We believe that the truths of man's sin and God's holiness and grace need not be sacrificed in order to reach the people here. Rather, Manchester needs truth spoken in love in order for people's lives, families and social structures to be transformed. We will speak truth in a way that Manchester residents will understand, using a variety of methods that meet them where they are.
- ❖ **Showing Integrity** – In a New England culture that has been jaded by the immoral actions of a few, we value honest integrity that, by God's grace, lives what it believes. In our ministries we stress accountability and responsibility toward those within and without, for God calls us to character and faithfulness.
- ❖ **Embracing Diversity** – Because God created all human beings in his image, we value people of every race, language and nation. We seek to serve those entering our city from across the nation and the world and to model the love of Christ in ways that they can understand and through which they may embrace Him as well.
- ❖ **Demonstrating Love** – The gospel calls us to not only speak truth, but to live it as well. We value the tangible expression of God's love in acts of mercy and justice to the broken and hurting in Manchester. We seek both to meet immediate needs and to help them toward self-sufficiency so that those receiving mercy may, in time, become agents of mercy themselves.
- ❖ **Multipling Disciples** – Jesus called us as the church to "make disciples of all nations." In light of that commission, we value the active sharing of our faith in a relational manner. As people come to faith, we seek to teach them the truths of scripture so that they may, in time, teach others. As this happens, we will seek to plant disciple-making churches around the Manchester area and across Northern New England.
- ❖ **Modeling Dependence** – We believe that all that we have, both as members of the human family and as Christians, comes by the grace of God. Both our status as children of God and our living out God's commands come as a result of his saving and enabling grace. In light of that, we value strength expressed in dependence on God and his work in Manchester. We are unashamedly committed to prayer for God to work in the lives of people here, and rely on Him even as we work for Him.
- ❖ **Living in Interdependence** – As a community of faith, we value each other. We recognize that our effectiveness in glorifying God as we work for the transformation of Manchester is proportional to our dependence on one other. We are committed to meeting regularly in small communities together, to team-oriented ministry and to mentoring relationships in discipleship so that we may live faithfully as the body of Christ in Manchester.

The Leadership

Jon Taylor, Church Planter

Covenant Presbyterian Church, Easley, SC (sending church)

First Presbyterian Church, Concord, NH (mother church)

Core Group, Launch Team developed from FPC and from new contacts in Manchester

Jon and his wife Allie are both native to New England. They met in high school and have ministered together ever since. They were married in 1993 and have two boys, Jonathan(7) and Jacob(5). They have always known of the need for the gospel in New England, and have felt a growing desire for God to use them to help meet this need. Their education and training in the South have provided a broader base of experience as they return to minister in the Northeast. They trust that the partnership that Covenant PCA and First PCA have forged to reach the challenging culture of New England will be mirrored in the support of churches and individuals for this project. The Southeast has benefited from strong Christian fellowship and resources that God can use to encourage brothers and sisters in a frontier region of the country.

Jon holds a B.S. in Music Education from Bob Jones University and an M.Div. from Reformed Theological Seminary. He was the Director of Music and Children's Ministry at Covenant from 1994 until 2003. He has participated in all aspects of ministry, including preaching and teaching, worship leading, discipleship, administration, visitation, inner city mentoring and youth ministry. Allie has a B.A. in Interior Design and a background in Sales and Marketing. She taught Kindermusik at Covenant PCA as a music outreach program to the community. The Taylors are now living in Manchester and engaged in the work of planting CTR.

The Process

Jan. – September 2004:	Settled in Manchester and apprenticed at First Presbyterian Church with Pastor Doug Domin
September 2004:	Informational meeting
September 2004:	Foundations study and leadership development began
April 2005:	Weekly evening worship services began
September 2005:	Advertised launch of morning services
Fall/Winter of 2007:	Work becomes self-supporting

“What Can I Do?”

New England presents unique challenges for church planting that require an extra measure of God's grace through His people. New Englanders tend to value tradition and resist change, to be religious but simultaneously secular in their mindset, self-reliant and reserved. New Hampshire in particular has one of the lowest per capita rates of church attendance in the U.S. In addition, New England has a higher cost of living than many regions of the country. Knowing these challenges, you can partner with us in the following ways:

- ♦ Prayer Support Team – we'll need 200 intercessors praying daily or weekly for God's work in the hearts of the people of Manchester
- ♦ Contact Support Team – if you have friends or family in the Manchester area, we would love to meet them. Building relationships is the most effective method for sharing the

gospel and building Christ's church. You can contact us via email at info@redeemernh.org or by phone at (603) 622-1881.

- ♦ Financial Support Team –Your gifts may be given in single amounts or spread out over four years. You may designate contributions to Jon and Allie Taylor and send them to:
Mission to North America
1700 North Brown Road, Suite 101
Lawrenceville, GA 30043-8122
Or give online at www.pcanet.org/mna

The following number of partners giving at various levels will help us reach our four-year goal of \$335,000. As congregational giving increases, the church plant will be self-supporting by the end of the fourth year. **Our current (November 2005) level of support is about \$265,000 or 80% of our project goal.**

- **Foundation Supporters** – Five Individuals or churches giving \$25,000 or over
- **Pillar Supporters** – Twelve Individuals or churches giving \$10,000 to \$25,000
- **Link Supporters** – Individuals or churches giving what they are able

-Fifteen partners giving \$150 per month -Thirty partners giving \$100 per month
-Thirty-Five partners giving \$50 per month-Forty partners giving \$25 per month

Partnership funds to meet needs of Church of the Redeemer

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Totals
Foundation Supporters	\$50,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$125,000
Pillar Supporters	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$40,000	\$20,000	\$120,000
<u>Link Supporters</u>	\$30,000	\$25,000	\$30,000	\$10,000	\$95,000
Total	\$110,000	\$80,000	\$95,000	\$55,000	\$335,000

We look forward to partnering with you as we together play a role in God's transformation of Manchester. Thank you for considering your investment of time, talent and/or treasure for God's kingdom!

