



**Church of the Redeemer
Visions of Ministry
Open Space Report**

Topic: **Urban Ministry in the Secular Age**

Summary of Key Discussion Points:

It has been proposed that the Church of the Redeemer establish itself as a Centre of Urban Ministry.

We are proposing that a key component of this ministry should be to reach out to the community we serve to engage in open, truthful, exploratory and informed theological discourse.

In order to do this we will need to provide a safe environment in which diversity of opinion and belief is affirmed and welcomed.

- Challenge of expressing “something new”; dichotomy between beauty of church music and meeting today’s society with liturgy; present liturgy is alienating to many.
- What to do beyond imitation? We reek of superstition. Biblical metaphors are not evident to newcomers. How do we ask a question that is relevant to true practical/intellectual experience of God, not a tribal, superstitious God in the sky?
- We need to disturb. We will never have it all together. What is sacred? What is necessary? Experience is important! Truth comes through experience.
- Explore theology of new ideas in context – centre of progressive thinking. Progressive – new word indeed!
- How open are we to questioning? Look at patterns in our parish life and move it into bigger picture. The question of how we can be relevant to our children and their children; church does not seem to have meaning to them – how can we meet them and their needs/questions? How can we be partners in their lives – through our understanding that life is a journey through the sacred. Need broader scope of study/education topics.

Next Steps:

- Education Events/Programs: disturb me!
 - What do we mean by God? God is greater than our hearts!
 - Theism in our society.
 - Post-modern world: Terry Finlay has developed presentations re Aboriginal people & issues and global warming.
 - John Spong: a potential speaker for forum
 - James
 - Global views of economy
 - God is a bird!
 - Discussion groups following Sunday worship
 - Consider Globe & Mail forum approaches for some educational events

Dreams

- Presence on social networks: YouTube, Twitter, Facebook
- Meeting elsewhere – are buildings a detriment? Can we try other locations such as theatres – more open to youth
- More experimental programs: yoga and art programs