

The Church of the Resurrection



2009 Year in Review

From the Rector

Paul writes, *"Your faith in Jesus and your love for the saints arise from the hope laid up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the gospel that has come to you."* Colossians 1:4-6.



The ultimate mark of a healthy church is that her people are transformed by the good news of Jesus' death and resurrection. I continually want this transformation for myself. I want it to be the defining characteristic of my life and yours. Our leaders pray and labor together for this transformation to be central in every ministry of the Church of the Resurrection. In reading through this Year in Review, I hope you will see this theme throughout these pages. Christian faithfulness and fruitfulness are often difficult to measure, but in the end, these are the only metrics that matter.


I shall always remember 2009 as a year of enormous change. Between the new presidential administration and the recession, we saw more employment transitions this year in our church than in all previous years combined. There were tearful farewells as we commissioned dozens of missionaries to Arlington, the Bookers to Boston, and Matt Anderson to

Cairo, as well as many others who transitioned out of DC. In two years we have sent out more members on mission than those that have remained.

But God always supplies all our needs, and especially so this year in the gift of people. We prayed for more families, and He sent them. We prayed for diversity, and by God's grace we are seeing it. We prayed for adult conversions, and God sent us new believers. We prayed for a new assistant pastor and God gave us two. What a joy and privilege it has been to watch the Lord answer our prayers again and again this year!

After sending out so many members and leaders, we are now focusing especially on discipleship and community, without losing our commitment to mission. Our aim is maturity: we want our numerical growth always to be in accordance with the qualitative growth of our maturity in Christ. With Matthew Mason and Aaron Damiani on the pastoral team, I am confident that we will see exciting developments along these lines in the year ahead.

Far too often, life in the city feels like a struggle for survival. God is calling us as a church to move from *surviving* to *thriving*, and in thriving to *overflow* with the good news of Jesus' death and resurrection. This is our strategy for transforming Washington, as we truly set all our hopes on the risen Christ.



Outreach

Church Planting

In January we commissioned almost 40 persons from Resurrection to establish the **Church of the Ascension** in Arlington, under the leadership of Chuck Colson. Since then, Ascension has met Sunday evenings at Christ Church Presbyterian, near Ft. Myer. They have grown, and now there are more newcomers in worship than those sent from Resurrection. Among them are those who have come to faith in Christ through the ministry of the church. Ascension's small group, discipleship and children's ministries are thriving. They are finishing 2009 with their own membership, bylaws, par-



ish council, and bank account. Praise God!

The **Church of the Advent**, our first daughter church, is now two years old, with some 100-150 persons attending worship every week. Under the leadership of Tommy Hinson, Advent also has their own membership, bylaws, parish council and accounts. God has blessed their efforts this year in loving their neighbors in the Columbia Heights neighborhood.

Each week, faithful volunteers have provided food, drink and encouragement in Jesus' name to those staying at La Casa, a homeless shelter adjacent to the Methodist church where Advent meets. Some of those staying in the shelter attend worship on Sundays. Advent volunteers are now also offering ESL classes and GED assistance in a separate transitional shelter. Because of their efforts, Advent was given an award this fall by the DC Coalition of the Homeless, giving glory to God because of the good works of his people (Matt 5:16).

In March we commissioned the Booker family to move to Boston in order to establish a church similar to ours. After working all summer to gather and equip a core group of 30, the **Church of the Cross** began meeting publicly for worship in September, and now have 45-60 persons in attendance every Sunday, and five small groups meeting during the week.

In 2009, we contributed over \$75,000 (about 15% of our budget) to support Ascension, Advent, and Church of the Cross, not to mention intangible support and assistance from our staff and volunteers. Praise the Lord for all the fruit that has already come by his grace through our investment in church planting.



Local Mission



Christian Legal Aid DC, a ministry co-founded by Sam Logan, utilizes a volunteer base of practicing and non-practicing attorneys, law students and paralegals to provide legal aid services to DC's homeless and low income populations in the name of Jesus. Many volunteers come from our church family. In 2009, CLADC served approximately 170 clients at 2 clinics with a

wide variety of legal needs, including identity theft, social security benefits, & fair housing. In many instances, volunteers were able to extend the love of Christ in

word as well as deed, emphasizing the power of repentance, forgiveness and reconciliation. CLADC laid the groundwork this year for 2 new clinics in DC in 2010, and also helped start another clinic in NC. Volunteers developed a new website and better administration this year. Next year, God willing, CLADC hopes to hire a full-time Executive Director!

The Porch is a Capitol Hill youth ministry we support. It brings together teens from diverse racial and socioeconomic backgrounds. The Porch meets weekly for worship, prayer, and Bible study, and also at various times for special events and retreats. Among the volunteers from our church, Raj Parikh leads a small group for young men. The Porch is a great way for people from our church to disciple teenagers who would otherwise have no Christian mentors accessible to them.



Volunteers from Resurrection are now serving meals to the homeless on a monthly basis through the ministry of the **Sunday Lunch Cafe** on Capitol Hill. Jenny Meleski is spearheading our involvement in this ministry.

Together with other local churches and ministries, we helped fund and build a **new playground** behind the

Hopkins public housing units near the freeway. Our Life Ministry team raised more than \$650 for the

Capitol Hill Pregnancy Care Center through a springtime baby bottle drive. Through the Care

Company, we helped provide more than 200 households with Thanksgiving dinner baskets this year. We advised and provided a substantial grant to **Restoration Ministries** in support of their effort to care for trafficked girls in DC. And we were blessed to assist several families in need with micro-grants from our benevolence funds.

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Evangelism

One of our highest priorities as a church is developing meaningful relationships with unbelievers and bringing them under the sound of the gospel. This year, through the leadership of Jake Anderson and in partnership with Capitol Hill Baptist Church, we offered two series of evangelistic Lunchtime Talks at both the Capitol and Georgetown Law. These gave interested non-Christians the opportunity to hear the claims of Christ, and to interact with discussion and questions. Our Christmas Lessons and Carols Service also provided a wonderful opportunity for many to hear the true message of Christmas. Through an outwardly-oriented RezGroup and Bible studies offered for interns, we shared Christ with many seekers during the summer. One of the highlights of the year was seeing Albina Batyrshina, a convert from Islam, baptized on All Saints Day. Thanks be to God!



Rwanda

Partnership with the Anglican parish in Nyagatare, Rwanda is a vibrant part of our church. Jesus is the vital link between our two congregations, in spite of vast cultural differences; and through his Spirit we enjoy an active partnership built on friendships. Our Rwanda Group (formerly Intl Partnership

Council) oversees this relationship in coordination with a similar committee of church members in Nyagatare. Nearly a dozen people from our church visited Nyagatare this year at different times for vari-

ous reasons. At present, one of the top priorities shared by both congregations is education. So last year we began sponsoring 120 primary school students to attend private schools there. Several of our ambassadors to Nyagatare this year have been instrumental in coordinating the project. We are now also exploring possible health projects and planning at least one large team visit to Nyagatare in 2010. However, no matter how many projects we undertake together, our shared priorities remain praying for one another and enjoying a relationship in which Christ is central.

International Missions

The scope of our work internationally is not limited to Rwanda. Our International Missions Group seeks not only to raise up people for cross-cultural missions, but also to ensure that they are sent well. Thus the formation of Barnabas Teams: small groups of 3-5 people who collaborate to support and encourage our international envoys. These teams help ensure that no one sent from our churches is somehow neglected or forgotten. In a transient city like Washington, this kind of ongoing care is essential for the long-term success of those whom we send out in service around the world. Through prayer, friendship and communication Barnabas Teams support people like Mono, Christian Hofreiter, and Matthew Anderson.



In 2007, after a decade in the US, **Mono** felt God's call to return to his predominantly Muslim homeland in southeast Asia as an ambassador of Jesus. He is now settled in a town where his primary outreach consists of teaching English to the local young people. He is exploring a possible radio show and a coffee shop as additional ministry platforms.



Originally from Austria, **Christian Hofreiter** served as pastor at Resurrection for several years until 2006. Christian and his wife Helen now live in England, where Christian is a PhD student at Oxford University. During the past year, Christian completed a Masters degree there with highest honors, and also served as a chaplain for graduate students. He and Helen have a vibrant ministry particularly with many international students there. The Hofreiters are preparing to plant a new church like Resurrection in Austria immediately following the completion of PhD studies, and we remain committed to supporting them in this mission.



Matthew Anderson served as a pastor at Resurrection from its inception through 2009. Matt is now teaching history and theology at the Alexandria School of Theology, with campuses in both Cairo and Alexandria, Egypt. AST was started in 2005 under the auspices of the Anglican church in Egypt to train people theologically and practically for ministry in the Middle East. It is a great honor for us to support Matt in this mission. Matt is also serving as a pastor at All Saints Cathedral in Cairo, and studying Arabic daily.



Religious Freedom

The **Religious Freedom Group** links Resurrection with persecuted Christians around the world. This year, we fostered partnerships with persecuted Christians, kept the church informed regarding religious freedom issues, and hosted 3 major events. In February, Istanbul pastor Turgay Ucal shared the expe-

rience of Turkish evangelicals and led us in a traditional Turkish liturgy. In April, Chinese activist Bob Fu preached on a theology of persecution. In November, leading Eastern European theologian Peter Kuzmic preached at our service observing the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church. We are now launching an initiative to support persecuted Christians in India, including sending Liz Doherty to serve there with International

Justice Mission in 2010.



Discipleship

Small Group Ministries

With our emphasis on revitalization this year, we informally began encouraging the development of Triads throughout the church. Triads are an alliance of 3 (or occasionally 4) persons of the same gender for the purpose of intentional growth as disciples of Jesus Christ. Triads encourage collaboration and partnership at a deeper level than traditional small groups. As clergy, parish council members, and other leaders began participating in Triads, other groups developed by word of mouth. In the year ahead, we will give Triads more public acknowledgement and support.

Our home groups (RezGroups) have gone through a period of reorganization after sending out many leaders and members on mission, as well as many other life transitions in the church. Rezgroup leaders are now being equipped



through a bimonthly training series, sponsored by Rez and Advent, called "Leading Yourself and Others." Currently, 8 RezGroups are meeting regularly and four have reached maximum capacity. To accommodate this growth, we have 7 new RezGroup leaders, with plans for 2 new groups to begin in early 2010. Thanks to all the RezGroup leaders who have served so faithfully during the past year. Thanks also to all those who, through their RezGroups, provided hospitality after Sunday worship this year.

Children's Ministry

In 2009 many children, parents, and teachers went out to form Ascension in Arlington, and the Church of the Cross in Boston. And so prayed, and God provided. Between the Rez "baby boom" and some new families, we now find ourselves contemplating 2 Sunday School classes again, and a split nursery. With the addition of new volunteers, we have a complete monthly rotation and we no longer employ paid babysitters in the nursery!



We are now using a new curriculum called *Generations of Grace: Teaching the Whole Counsel of God to the Next Generation*. The 1st year takes the children from Deuteronomy through Daniel. Next year, we hope to begin teaching our children a canon of songs that will inform their hearts and minds all their lives. We are also always looking and praying for ways for our children to embody their faith in meaningful acts of service. Many thanks to all our volunteers and our leaders, Katie Doherty and Miriam Rudolph.

Prayer

This year we encouraged a movement of prayer (rather than a program) within our congregation. Under the direction of Aaron Damiani, a leadership team for the prayer ministry gathered, prayed, and went on retreat together at Katalou, for spiritual renewal and vision. Since then, with the Church of the Advent, we conducted 3 separate training sessions for prayer ministers. Forty persons were trained, and through this effort we doubled the roster of prayer ministers and the number of stations during the service. Thanks to Bryan Wandell, who is now planning and leading prayer retreats for the entire congregation. Thanks also to Emilie Kao, Virginia Patton, Stefanie Higgins, and Kacy Wandell for their faithful service and leadership.

Discipleship for Women



In October, we held our first **Women's Retreat** in Front Royal, with fifty women participating. Sally Breedlove from Chapel Hill led us in a series of extraordinary messages.

We enjoyed times of worship, fun, and friendship together in the Lord.

Throughout the year, **RezMoms** provided a weekly opportunity for mothers of young children to gather for teaching, fellowship, and encouragement. A number of friends from the church assisted in providing childcare during meetings. Annie Mahr graciously led us in a series of teachings on the Fruit of the Spirit.

RezLife

Worship

As a community, we love to worship the Lord together. God has blessed us with a strong team of volunteers whose faithful service is instrumental in bringing us into his presence week after week. Thank you to all who served as ushers, readers, chalice bearers, musicians, prayer ministers, greeters, altar guild, sound & screen, hospitality, offering counters, cleanup & lockup personnel. This year Paul Hurley earned a well-deserved sabbatical as our volunteer Music Director, and Amy Reno stepped in for the interim while continuing to direct the seasonal choir. Our musicians sang and played on many occasions, including the annual parish retreat, Holy Week and quite a few weddings during the year.



In the preaching ministry this year, we focused on the Incarnation during Epiphany, themes from the book of Hebrews during Lent, the Resurrection

during Easter, and Christian Maturity after Pentecost. Later during the summer and fall we continued our study of 1 Corinthians. During Advent we focused on Matthew 25. It was difficult to say farewell this year to the regular preaching of Chuck Colson, Matt Anderson, and Mark Booker, but it has been a great joy to welcome both Aaron Damiani and Matthew Mason to the Resurrection pulpit.

Under the leadership of Raquel Rogers, a new **Dance Ministry** was born in 2009. The group practiced for many weeks in the spring and fall in order to lead us majestically in worship at festival gatherings during the year.



After years of faithful service leading the **Chalice Bearers** ministry, Caley (White) Crawford passed the baton to Dawn Luecke, who also now leads the **Altar Guild**. We have been blessed with beautiful banners and a better baptismal font this year through Dawn's leadership and vision.

Featuring magnificent paintings provided by Washington Arts Group, as well as banners, music and dance, our first ever **Easter Vigil** was a highlight of the year. It was a combined labor of love of Advent and Resurrection, and our first joint service in Columbia Heights. In the early morning hours of Easter, after four hours of worship together and many of us hoarse from shouting Alleluias, we feasted in praise of our risen King. What a night!



Hospitality

As a church family, we provide hospitality to those in times of need, including the arrival of a new baby, recovery from illness, or transitioning to a new home.

Thanks to the many volunteers who prepared and delivered meals through our **Meals**

Ministry, we blessed a dozen families with roughly 100 meals in 2009. A special thanks to Amanda Reynolds and Julie Weiss for their dedicated service to this ministry.



We hosted 8 **Newcomers' Dinners** this year, welcoming more than 70 persons to the church and explaining our history and vision. Under the leadership of Sarah Whiting, many volunteers worked behind the scenes to provide food and childcare for these gatherings.

We had another fantastic **Annual Parish Retreat** in February, together with Church of the Ascension. Bishop Thad Barnum delivered three powerful messages from Colossians, and we had wonderful times of fellowship, worship, and rest together in the Lord. Amy Hoe led a team of dedicated volunteers in pulling off what many in our church have said was our best retreat ever.



Parish Council

The Parish Council, comprised of 7 elected laypersons and the clergy, helps provide leadership in the operation and direction of the church. The dynamism of Resurrection's ministry of church planting made 2009 an exciting and challenging year for the Council. Through the efforts of the Parish Council, we made the administrative transition from 1 to 3 churches, and saw both Advent and Ascension establish their own bylaws, membership, and parish councils. The Council advised the Rector in hiring decisions throughout the year, and kept a close eye on our finances. In the midst of so many important changes, the Council also worked together to support and revitalize existing ministries within Resurrection, to foster communication within the parish through Up Meetings and focus groups, and to lead in developing strategies for the future direction of the church.

Soli Deo Gloria!