Kathryn is one of thousands who come to Washington, DC for an internship. While there, her co-worker, Adrienne, asked her to go to Starbucks...but not just for a coffee—for church. Kathryn enjoyed the people and the atmosphere and kept coming to this “coffee shop church” called Redeemer City. One day, a church leader named Kenneth had lunch with her and Adrienne and talked about Jesus and the Good News of salvation through Him. Kathryn wanted what they spoke of and accepted Christ as her Savior! In a few weeks, the church plant outgrew Starbucks and moved to a local hotel, where Kathryn was baptized in the swimming pool as her church friends cheered her on.

Over the last 20 years, Washington, DC has seen a dramatic increase of young adults, professionals, and families moving to the city. Unfortunately, the presence of indigenous, biblically faithful, and Christ-exalting churches in DC has simultaneously declined.

Enter Steven Lee, planter/pastor of Redeemer City Church. Steven grew up in the Washington, DC area and later attended the University of Maryland, where he met his wife, Tiffany. He received his master’s from Dallas Theological Seminary and served in a church planting residency program at Prestonwood Baptist. After sensing God’s call back to the East Coast to plant a multi-ethnic church, Steven and Tiffany returned to DC.

The Lees’ roots in the DC area run deep. Steven’s dad has been a professor at Howard University since the 1960s, and his mom just retired from the University of Maryland. Additionally, Tiffany grew up in Baltimore, so she is no stranger to Metro DC. Steven and Tiffany are raising four children (Shania, Silas, Sawyer, and Stephan) and planting a church in the nation’s capital.

Washington, DC is a diverse city in every way imaginable and is home to a variety of types of people. Redeemer City Church is focusing its outreach on five groups:

1. COLLEGE AND GRADUATE STUDENTS at the area’s colleges and universities (universities like Howard, Gallaudet, John’s Hopkins, George Washington, and Georgetown)
2. NATIVE DC RESIDENTS, like Steven Lee—life-long residents of the District. They are vitally connected to the city and have seen and experienced the rapid changes.
3. ESTABLISHED PROFESSIONALS—people who are typically older and have achieved success in business; economically able to live and raise families in the city’s center.
4. YOUNG, URBAN PROFESSIONALS—characteristically single and within the 21–40 age range. The growth of this demographic is largely responsible for the increase in the population. This community is usually multi-ethnic and religiously pluralistic.
5. CREATIVE CLASS—a mixture of blue- and white-collar workers, including those in the arts, editing, media, design, technology, etc. The DC area is home to high-tech companies like Google and Sirius Satellite.

Kathryn represents the young, urban professional. Once her internship was over, it was time to leave DC and return home. After the congregation prayed over her and asked the Lord’s continued blessing and guidance, she told them how they had been her family while she was in DC. Now she leaves as an ambassador for Christ, taking His salvation message home with her.

Editor’s note: Please pray for Redeemer City Church, which began holding public services on September 13, 2015. They are eager for partners to pray, send short-term mission teams, give financial support—or move to DC and join the team!