



# The 4th Focus

## “King of Change”

Just as it does every year, last fall initiated a process of withering, dormancy and dying for flowers, shrubs and trees. Winter confirmed the death through burial under snow. And now, very soon, through the radiant power of the sun, color, buds and fragrance will burst from the ground. The living, dying and endless change of the seasons are the essential rhythm of life that God has built into our creation.

Persistent change is also God’s design for our hearts and lives. The Heidelberg Catechism refers to repentance and conversion as a life-long process where there is a constant “dying-away of the old self and the coming-to-life of the new.” Jesus taught how we are to follow or increasingly become like him. Paul’s letters constantly drove home the need for making progress in love and faith. While God himself is the same for eternity, he is relentlessly working to transform, redeem and re-create us and all of creation.

Most of us, so far, would intellectually agree with our need for constant change. But, the reality is, we often prefer to stay the same. Sameness is comfortable. The unexpected is unsettling. There is so much changing in this world, I just want some things, like my schedule and my worship service and my friends, to stay the same. Don’t mess with my comfy routine and my circle of friends.

But, routine, sameness and comfort are NOT kingdom values. Jesus taught and modeled the need to take up our cross. There is discomfort, pain, sacrifice and stretching. Paul said he constantly adapted and changed, “becoming all things to all men,” that he could by all means save some (1 Cor. 9:22). And here we see a key element for embracing change and these often-difficult kingdom values. Christ and Paul were passionate with a kingdom vision.

We are involved in a cosmic war for the eternal destiny of the souls of hundreds --even thousands--of people in our neighborhoods. Our short stint here on earth, as those who have received the benefits of the sacrifice and dying of Jesus, could not possibly be about hanging out with the same old friends or kicking back in front of the drone of a television. We are called to relentless change—with new relationships, new experiences, bold new approaches--so that by all means we can save some.

Our church family has undergone some change for the sake of saving some. Six years ago, New City Neighbors was a big, bold step—like a Lewis and Clark adventure into uncharted territory. And every year, it has wonderfully grown and adapted and I believe that it is still just getting started.

In recent months, we have provided our church facility to a community of Burundi and Rwanda refugee believers for the purpose of worship and education. Now, with the leadership of Justin Leasure, who, with his spouse, Elise, were certified as English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers, we begin a new ministry of teaching English to local refugees from Burundi and Rwanda. We push out to meet a significant need and gain an opportunity to love, model and teach about the gospel.

Over the next few weeks, we will be challenged to prayer walk, extend invitations and welcome guests for our Easter breakfast and worship. Every week, there are opportunities to open your heart, home and schedule for hospitality and welcoming others into the church and your life.

Are you working to put off or die to some of your old ways and routine and embracing new ways with a new agenda that revolves around God’s kingdom? We have a King and a kingdom that is worthy of every ounce of our energy and love. During this Easter season, we celebrate how Jesus suffered, sacrificed and rose again and he did so with a great purpose in mind: That we will lovingly and gladly suffer, sacrifice and rise to a new life that revolves around him and the people he loved and died for. Let us pray for and pursue the change that honors the King of Change.



**Side Trip  
6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Grade**

Following a lesson about how Christianity compares to Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam, our class decided to take a bit of a side trip and learn more about some of the missions that Fourth supports. Armed with laptops, each of us looked more deeply into one of the websites explaining the ministries of Mission India, Wycliff, Words of Hope, the Van Dykes (Guatemala), and Youth With a Mission/Project LIFE. It was a challenge to narrow the topics as all of these missions have many facets to their ministries. Much was learned and our class came away with a heightened awareness of the world's nations' need for Jesus.

Our study continues with Heidelberg Catechism questions 14-30, looking at the Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The role and attributes of each (as taught in the Bible), our relationship with God, and how this affects our relationships with others are important parts of each lesson we discuss. We have challenged ourselves to read through the book of John at home to grow our understanding of Jesus and His amazing love for us.

- Norma Boehm



**Tea &  
Tables**

Listening and being reminded of God's faithfulness is always an encouragement for everyone in their journey of life. We thank Candy Parler for sharing stories of her journey and of God's love and grace with the ladies at 4th on March 22.

Thanks to Marcia Schuur, Beth Rossiter, Nancy Aukeman and Lynn Simone, we had delicious cheesecake and a variety of teas to enjoy. The tables were smartly decorated with birdhouses and floral arrangements. We were also treated with Candy's favorite verse - Jeremiah 29::11 on a bookmark to take home as a reminder of the evening and God's love and care for us.

**March**

- 2 - Noreen Reitsma
- 7 - Breanna Tubergen
- 7 - Matt Simone
- 11 - Skip Hawkins
- 13 - Brian Townley
- 13 - Koa Rossiter
- 13 - Kivi Rossiter
- 19 - Erin Meendering
- 20 - Tim Dorn
- 22 - Vera Baar
- 23 - Sarah Parler
- 25 - Tiffany Gonzales
- 27 - Daniel Berthiaume
- 28 - Percy Woods
- 29 - Barb Blystone
- 30 - Sue Berrios
- 31 - James Brinks

**April**

- 3 - Sandy Moll
- 5 - Matt Scherpenisse
- 7 - Erin Berrevoets
- 9 - Mike Brinks
- 11 - Alex Smith
- 12 - Michael Gleason
- 13 - Jo Ann Parks
- 14 - Beau McDowell
- 15 - Chad Kooyer
- 16 - Becky Gebhart
- 16 - Paul Baragar
- 17 - Nathan Meendering
- 18 - Emily O'Brock
- 20 - Amy Holubeck
- 21 - Zachary Coeling
- 25 - Lisa Boehm
- 26 - Molly Bierens
- 28 - Mike Bolt

**Check These Out!**

**ADULT**

**Who Do You Think You Are?** by Mark Driscoll  
WHO ARE YOU? Driscoll believes false identity is at the heart of many struggles—and that you can overcome them by having your true identity in Christ!

**Nearing Home** by Billy Graham

“Explore with me not only the realities of life as we grow older but also the hope and fulfillment and even joy that can be ours once we learn to look at these years from God's point of view and discover His strength to sustain us every day.”

**CHILDREN**

**That's Where God Is** by Dan & Ali Morrow

Join a little boy's hunt for God and discover God is everywhere around you.

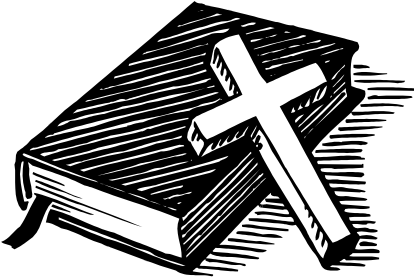
**There's No One I Love Like You**  
by Jutta Langreuter

Brayden Bunny thinks it would be much nicer and easier living with his friends but it doesn't take long for him to realize someone very important is missing.

## Reformed Church Heritage - American Indian Missions

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From a very early date, the Reformed Church ministered to local native populations. As early as 1599, ministers accompanied Dutch ships to the East Indies, partly for this purpose. In 1614, the Classis of Delft encouraged ministers headed overseas to learn the indigenous languages. At New Netherland, the second article of the “Provisional Regulations” of March 1624 urged settlers *...by their Christian life and conduct to draw the Indians and other blind people to the knowledge of God and His Word.*



We have seen how the first minister Jonas Micaelius saw little hope of reaching the Indians with the gospel. Rev. Johannes Megapolensis was the first to show genuine interest in their spiritual welfare. The patroon Kiliaen Van Rensselaer, himself a godly man, urged Megapolensis to work among them, saying that it was his prayer that *their stony hearts may be softened, their blind eyes opened, and their deaf ears unstopped...and that they may be brought to the fold of Jesus Christ and go*

*among other heathen bringing forth fruits of righteousness and gratitude.*

Megapolensis gained the confidence of the indigenous population. He opened his home to them and at times as many as eight slept on the floor near his bed. In 1644, he wrote a letter to a friend containing a lengthy description of Indian society which was published in Holland without his permission. After moving from Rensselaerwyck to New Amsterdam, his work was far less successful. Together with Rev. Samuel Drisius, he spent two years training a local native to work among his people, although their student eventually returned to his old life. What Megapolensis had planted would be harvested by those who followed.

Rev. Godfriedus Dellius arrived in Albany in 1683. He began visiting local villages, bringing small gifts and preaching through an interpreter, a woman named Hille who became a believer. In time, he translated into the Mohawk language the Ten Commandments, Apostles Creed and several prayers, utilizing Roman letters to approximate phonetical sounds. Psalms were translated and set to music which was sung, Dellius reported, *with sweet melody.* Like Megapolensis 50 years before, he arranged the release from captivity of several Roman Catholic missionaries. Some who later wrote to him signed their correspondence *Your obedient servant in our Lord.*

Rev. Johannes Lydius had a great influence on native believers called *praying Indians* who made public testimony that they no longer lived *in envy and malice, which are the works of Satan...but in peace and concord.* During his 26 year ministry at Albany (1712-38), Rev. Peter Van Driessen continued the work. Writing to Classis Amsterdam in 1731, he reported *By God's pitying grace, the blessed results were such, that in a few years, that entire nation was incorporated into the Kingdom of Christ.* He proposed the establishment of a chain of native chapels, a plan never realized.

At Schenectady, Rev. Bernardus Freeman gained more skill in the Indian language than any Reformed minister up to that time, being able to write as well as speak it. He translated the Athanasian Creed, the morning and evening prayers of the Anglican liturgy, as well as portions of the Old and New Testament. Five years after Freeman left Schenectady, the native Christians sent a petition to the governor, asking that Freeman return and live directly among them. He declined in large part because of his wife's aversion to the idea.

Despite the efforts of Reformed pastors, there were several factors that hindered missionary work. Culture and language barriers posed problems. Although there was outward interest, the number of baptized Indians that remained steadfast was relatively small. Another barrier was the hypocrisy of the Dutch themselves, whose lives and religion often disagreed. While missionary activity was more successful around Albany, it was less fruitful around New York where there had been greater mistreatment, especially during the New Netherland period.

- Eric O'Brock

Next - Reformed Revival

**A PUBLICATION OF**

**FOURTH  
REFORMED CHURCH**



1226 Union Ave. N.E.  
Grand Rapids, MI 49505

Pastor Tim Meendering  
Phone: 454-1561  
www.fourthchurch.com

**Sunday Service**

9:30 AM

**Lifeline Groups**

5:00 PM

**Christian Education**

11:15 AM

**Our Vision**

Seeking to be a joyful,  
welcoming  
community that is  
transformed by the gospel,  
nurtured in God's  
Word, and led by His  
Spirit - to redeem the  
city and beyond."

**A COMMUNITY REDEEMED TO  
REDEEM OUR COMMUNITY**

## Christian Ed Cont.

Since September, I have had the opportunity to teach a small group of children (kindergarten/1st grade) about Jesus through sharing Bible stories as well as personal stories together. There is certainly never a dull moment when working with these young children; their eagerness and enthusiasm not only to memorize Scripture, but for all of life, is truly a gift from the Lord. My heart has been blessed by each one of these children as I see the Spirit working in their hearts through the questions and responses that I hear each week, as well as their care for and sensitivity towards one another. As someone who was apprehensive to raise my own questions in school, I am refreshed by my students' raw questions that come without a hint of fear of judgment from the group. May the Lord continue to show his faithfulness in the lives of our young children.

- Elise Leasure

### Jesus Teaches Us How To Live - Jesus Is The Son of God - Jesus Died and Rose Again

The 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade class has been listening to and talking about four stories Jesus told-stories that teach us important things about how to live together as children of God, as people waiting for the second coming of our King. During this time the kids have written down things on their mind and then have spent time praying about and answering these anonymous letters.

- Becky Tubergen



Dear Pete,  
I have a friend who has a broken foot. How do I help her?

Worried

Dear Worried,  
I think you should be a nice friend to her and compliment her and put her before you.

Pete and Friends

Dear Pete,  
I need help to respect my parents and to be nice to my brother.

Kid

Dear Kid,  
Try to maybe play with your brother and to obey your parents.

Pete and friends

Dear Pete,  
I am struggling with math at school.  
Sincerely,  
Mr. Boby Boby

Dear Mr. Boby Boby,  
Tell your math teacher and maybe she or he can help you. Or, ask a your friend and they will help.

Pete and Friends

Dear Pete,  
My Friend is very sad because her mom passed away and I need to think of ways to help her.  
Sad

Dear Sad,  
You can play or pray with your friend. You can talk about heaven.

Dear Pete,  
Me and my brother fight a lot. I need help to stop.

Confused

Dear Confused,  
I hear you, it can be tough getting along with brothers and sisters. Jesus wants to hear from you too. Maybe you can play with your brother and have fun with him.

Pete and Friends

