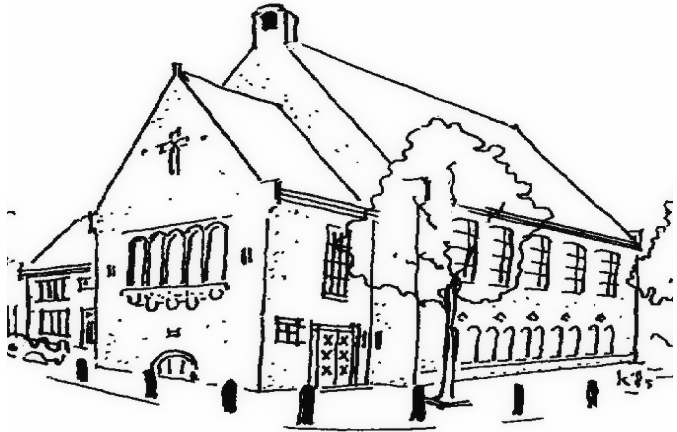


The Herald

Newsletter of the Scots
International Church,
Rotterdam
January/February and
March 2012



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LETTER

from the Pastor

My dear friends

Let me begin by wishing you all a very happy New Year! As we are people of hope, this is not an empty phrase but one that we make with conviction. We have a good reason for hope in an uncertain world. We look back in gratitude for God's blessings and look forward with expectancy that the living Lord will continue to act. I hope you find peace and prosperity in your relationships in 2012.

Looking back on 2011, we have a lot to be thankful for. The church is in a better financial position that it has been for a very long time. We are able to help other churches by not depending on grants as we have done in the past. The renewal of church property has benefitted us all and we are grateful for all the work that has been done upon it. This is till a work in progress but let me personally thank Andre van der Velden (property) and Jim Taylor (finance) for their hard work and attention to detail.

In 2012 we look forward to in the visit of the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and to receiving two students on placement for there months from the Orthodox Faculty of theology in Iasi. We will run discipleship programmes "Christianity Explored" (part two) and the "Alpha" course. In the coming year we will explore connections with the Steeple Church Dundee and possibly with congregations in Hungary and Romania.

As you may know by now, I am to take study-leave from mid January to the end of March. I will conduct the service on 15 January when my grand-daughter Lisa will be baptised. I have been asked to conduct the service on 4 March when we turn out to greet our guest from the Church of Scotland. I will return to normal duties in Easter week and conduct the family service on Easter Sunday 8 April.

We had many visitors in services over the Christmas season.

Many thanks to Anneke Pot for planning the Carol Service, Molly Foster for organising the Carol Singing in the 'buurt' and Mavis Fleming for making sure that we were always well fed. We also appreciate the leaders of the Sunday School and Youth Group for preparing the Christmas parties.

A word for the New Year that was quoted by the British monarch, King George VI, in his Christmas broadcast of 1939 as Europe plunged into war.

"I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year, 'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.'

And he replied, 'Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of Christ.' That shall be to you better than a light and safer than a known way."

Your friend and minister,

Robert A. Calvert

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

A special item on the agenda has been the visit of the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. The presbytery asked us to host him in the latter half of Sunday 4 March and so we felt that the only option was to change the time of our monthly communion service. The idea is to meet for fellowship from 15.30, worship with all our choral groups at 17.00 and aim to finish before 19.00. Since this is a special event we hope that it will be well supported. On Monday morning we host the Very Rev. David Arnott for a brunch meeting with members of the board of Skin-Rotterdam and the Rotterdam Gemeente.

Mission Offerings taken upon the first Sundays of January and February will be given to the Mamre project that provides hospitality and a meal to uprooted people and refugees on Wednesday mornings. The mission offering in March will be given to the Living Water-Link project in Nigeria.

The Scots International Church functions through the management of twelve elders (Consistory) and twelve deacons who meet with the elders (Council). The Consistory is responsible for pastoral, major policy and Presbytery matters whereas the Council oversees the regular matters of finance, property, social and publicity interests.

The Annual General Meeting on 26 February will bring reports from our treasurer, Jim Taylor, and Clerk to the Consistory, Richmond Mensah.

Several teams offer a more 'hands on' role for you to be involved if you are interested. The teams that are under the supervision of the Council are: Finance (Jim Taylor), Property (Andre van der Velden), Social (Mavis Fleming), Publicity (Bob Hensen) and Caretaking (to be announced). The Pastoral team (Molly Foster) is under the supervision of the Consistory.

During the minister's study leave, Rev. Brian Turnbow has voluntarily offered his services. He will be staying in the church at the Muller House (Schiedamse Singel 6). From the middle of February to mid-May we are pleased to receive two students from the Orthodox Faculty of Theology in the University of Iasi (Romania). They will also stay at the Muller House.

SKIN-Rotterdam represents migrant churches in the Rotterdam area and its board meets every month on a Monday evening in our church. The Stichting employs a full-time co-ordinator (Madelon Grant) and we may have a vacancy for a member of this congregation to join the board. Let Robert Calvert or Capt. Tjakko Bouwman know if you are interested.

Many new members and baptised were received into the church family in December. On Sunday 11 December Naomi Schell and Shahbaz Ali were baptised, Revanuis Mbuono and Neville Gwanmesia by certificate of transference, Harmen and Sofie Rebel by resolution of the Consistory were received as members of the church. On Sunday 18 December Veronica Pachano was baptised and received as a member of the church together her and Marcel's son Tobias who was baptised. On Christmas Day Genevieve Marshall was baptised and Alan Aldus was confirmed as members of the church. Previously on October 30 we baptised Sunderland and Castiel, the twin sons of Christine Houser and Patrick. On 6 December we baptised Noa Sophia, daughter of Kerrie and Robert van de Coterlet by arrangement with Killin Parish Church in Scotland.

In order to find new directions for the Learning Centre, Robert Calvert and Peter Dijkstra (Hogeschool Rotterdam) are hosting a series of "listening meetings" to hear the needs and passions of others. The next one will be on Wednesday 11 January from 19.00

to 20.00. It will take place in the downstairs room at Schiedamse Vest 121 and you are very welcome!.

Minister's study leave

The Presbytery of Europe and the Church of Scotland encourage ministers to take study-leave and last year two other ministers from the presbytery did so. The previous occasion for me was in the spring of 1994 when through Glasgow presbytery when I went to Chicago for three months to study community development ministries. It is interesting that Brian Turnbow is from Chicago and originally came to us on placement from Northern Seminary in 2007. I am grateful to Brian for voluntarily offering his services. He will be able to conduct worship and preach on Sundays and offer some pastoral support for the discipleship programme and others. Rev. Andrew Gardener (Brussels) will represent the presbytery's interests and together with the Consistory offer the pastoral support that is needed. In a different connection, Rev. Irene Bom will be in charge of children's messages over the first six months of 2012. She plans to involve others and seek feedback from parents. My study leave does not require me to leave Rotterdam and I expect to attend the church as a regular member on most Sundays but I will not be available from Mondays to Fridays during the day. The theme of my study this time is migration and Christian identity. Migration is the reason that churches like ours exist and with the economic and political migration from the 1990s it continues to be a hot topic today. In general the church has been slow to consider the impact of migration. Many migrants from other continents have religious faith and it proves to be an essential aspect of their identity. At a time when the church in Europe is struggling it is a little surprising that engagement with them has been so slow. We currently have four migrant churches with African pastors using our church premises. As a pastor in Rotterdam between 2003 and 2007 I interviewed a number of pastors from migrant churches in Rotterdam. Out of this came the published guide on migrant churches in Rotterdam and the establishment of SKIN-Rotterdam to represent the interests of migrant churches. From 2007 to 2011 I found it difficult to read and write Ph.D. research in a full-time pastoral work. I hope that these two and half months will progress the thesis to the point that it will be nearer the finishing line!

Robert

Greetings from Brian Turnbow

Dear friends at SICR, it is hard to believe that only a year ago I was with you during the European meeting of the Taizé Community in Rotterdam. It was good to see so many familiar (and new) faces at the church and to know that you continue to be a light in the city. I am grateful for the



opportunity to be with you once again for an extended period and to serve the congregation while Robert is on study leave. I also look forward to enjoying an authentic Dutch stroopwafel (or two) again! You are often in my thoughts and I pray that God's presence will abide with you during the Christmas season and into the New Year.

Brian

The following are likely to be the main bible readings for the coming Sundays:

January 1	2 Chronicles 7: 12-22
January 8	Mark 1: 4-11
January 15	John 1:43-51
January 22	1 Corinthians 15:51-58
January 29	Mark 1:21-28
February 5	Malachi 3:1-4
February 12	2 Kings 4:1-14
February 19	Mark 9:2-9
February 26	Jonah 1
March 4	Mark 8: 31-38
March 11	Jonah 2
March 18	Jonah 3
March 25	Jonah 4
April 1	Mark 14: 1-10

CONGREGATIONAL DIARY**JANUARY**

Sunday	01	10.30	Worship, Covenant Service, Communion
Sunday	08	10.30	Worship, Choir
Monday	09	19.00	SKIN-Rotterdam Board meeting
Wednesday	11	19.00	"Listening meeting" on the Learning Centre
Thursday	12	19.30	Christianity Explored: "The Church"
Sunday	15	10.30	Worship, Sonrise, Baptism
Thursday	19	19.30	Christianity Explored: "The Holy Spirit"
Sunday	22	10.30	Worship, Choir
Thursday	26	19.30	Christianity Explored: "Prayer"
Sunday	29	10.30	Worship, Joyful Singers

FEBRUARY

Thursday	02	19.45	Christianity Explored: "The Bible"
Sunday	05	10.30	Worship, Communion, Choir
Monday	06	19.00	SKIN-Rotterdam Board meeting
Tuesday	07	19.45	Council meeting
Thursday	09	19.45	Christianity Explored: "Continuing as a Christian"
Sunday	12	10.30	Worship, Sonrise
Tuesday	14	19.45	Consistory meeting
Thursday	16	19.45	Christianity Explored: "Choices - King Herod"
Sunday	19	10.30	Worship, Choir
Thursday	23	(N.B. There is no the holiday period)	"Christianity Explored" as it
Sunday	26	10.30	Worship, Joyful Singers
		12.00	Annual General Meeting

MARCH

Thursday	01	19.45	Christianity Explored: "Choices - James and John"
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Sunday	05	17.00	Worship, Communion, Choir, 'Moderator' to preach
Monday	06	19.00	SKIN-Rotterdam Board meeting
Thursday	08	19.00	Alpha course: "Is there more to life than this?"
Sunday	12	10.30	Worship, Sunrise
Thursday	15	19.00	Alpha course: "Who is Jesus?"
Sunday	19	10.30	Worship, Choir
Thursday	22	19.00	Alpha: "Why did Jesus die?"
Sunday	26	10.30	Worship, Joyful Singers
Thursday	29	19.00	Alpha course: "How can we have faith"

Visit of the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 2012

The Right Reverend David Arnott, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, will visit us on Sunday 4th March 2012. As a regular worshipper in our church you are aware of that, but may wonder: What is a moderator and who is he?

The Church of Scotland of which our Scots International Church Rotterdam (SICR) is part, knows the Presbyterian governing system which means that no one person or group within the Church has more influence or say than any other. The Moderator is not the head of the Church: the Church of Scotland holds that Jesus Christ is 'the King and Head of the Church', nor is the Moderator the leader of the Church of Scotland, or its spokesperson. When asked for an opinion on important issues, the Moderator is expected to have in mind the views of the General Assembly or the relevant Church council or committee.

The Moderator is appointed annually by the General Assembly of the



Church of Scotland, which holds in the last week of May. After the Assembly, the Moderator spends much of the rest of his or her time in office travelling as a Church representative in Scotland, other parts of the UK, Ireland and overseas in an ambassadorial capacity. Every Moderator carries out a series of visits to several Church of Scotland presbyteries, as well as undertaking a number of international tours.

Rt. Rev. Andrew David Keltie Arnott is a very experienced Scots Church (retired) Minister, having gone through a great number of very varied appointments and assignments. Throughout his church career he has served on various Church of Scotland boards and committees both at presbytery and national level. A regular presenter on BBC Radio Scotland's Thought for the Day for more than 35 years he has also contributed to Radio 4's Prayer for the Day, Scottish Television and Grampian Television. He also speaks French and Spanish.

Mr Arnott and his wife Rosemary have three grown-up children and six grandchildren. He enjoys cooking, golf and photography and is passionate about Peebles Rugby Club.

If you are interested in the organization of the Church of Scotland, use this link:

http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/about_us/how_we_are_organised

If you want to know how the Church of Scotland began 1500 years ago, use this link:

http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/about_us/how_we_are_organised/history

International Peace Service at SICR

Sunday 13th November 2011, saw the now traditional annual Peace Service at our church.

The Peace Service took place in the evening, while the morning service was the also traditional annual 'Remembrance Service'. The latter is directly related to the 'Remembrance Sunday' held on the second Sunday in November, throughout the United Kingdom and also respected by Anglican and Scots churches outside the U.K. It is the Sunday closest to November 11, Armistice Day when on 'the eleventh of the eleventh at the

eleventh hour in 1918, the end of the First World War hostilities was marked. Nowadays it is the commemoration of the contribution of British and commonwealth military and civilian



servicemen and women in the two World Wars and more recent conflicts.

Now back to the International Peace Service. This

reflects the nature and position of our Scots International Church here in Rotterdam.

This year our visiting choir was the "Christelijk Gemengd Koor Delfshaven", where as you know in Rotterdam the Pilgrim Fathers church is situated. They are quite a large well practised choir filling four of the front benches. The 'Sonrise' group with Rev. Irene Bom, Margriet van Overbeeke, Peace Acquaaah, Willemijn Gwanmesia and Hank Meldrum also took part. Nettie Dijkstra played the organ and Rev. Paulus Mohan Paltoe (St. Jyotie Jeevan) played and sang two lovely songs in Dutch and Hindi.

The relatively well attended service consisted of a liturgy of prayers, bible passages, hymns, and a responsive call for peace in the city, a sermon and ending with the Lord's Prayer. Ministers from various



churches that took part were: Rev. Mikael Jonsson (Swedish Lutheran Church); Pastor Christopher Oyenekan (Redeemed Christian Church of God); Pr. Bernard den Boer (Portuguese-speaking & Cape Verdian Roman Catholic Church); ds. Stanley Dissels (Het Zout der Aarde); ds. Joachim Busow (German Evangelical Lutheran Church); Pr. Line Nicolaisen (Danish Lutheran Church); and ds. H. Haafkens (Wallonian Church). The international atmosphere was further enhanced by all clergy using their own language, while the text of the common hymns to be sung was also provided in several European languages.

The sermon "Seek the Peace" was given by Rev. Greame Clark, a Baptist Minister in Paisley near Glasgow, who spoke in particular how we embrace the peace in our daily lives.

*"On behalf of Denis and myself we say thank you to everyone who visited, sent cards, flowers and made telephone calls, all helping with the slow recovery after Denis's painful operation"
Jean and Denis Galloway.*

A PEEK AT THE CHRISTMAS TEA



Cool singing in the Cool!

Thursday evening 22nd December a small group of Scots Church members joined people of their Cool neighbourhood for carol singing.

A small community garden and playgroud was beautifully decorated and lighted, with a striking nativity scene, as the dressing was more Middle-Eastern. After the singing the around 25 - 30 people returned to the church for hot chocolate, glühwein and bites.

**THE BABY AND THE RAGGED OLD MAN**

Author Unknown

This is a first-person account from a mother about her family as

they had dinner in a small restaurant many miles from their home on Christmas Day. Nancy, the mother, relates:

We were the only family with a small child in the restaurant. I sat Erik in a high chair and noticed everyone was quietly eating and talking.

Suddenly, Erik squealed with glee. He pounded his fat baby hands on the highchair tray. His eyes were wide with excitement and his mouth was bared in a toothless grin. He wriggled and giggled with merriment.

I looked around and saw the source of his merriment. It was a man with a tattered rag of a coat, dirty, greasy and worn. His pants were baggy with a zipper at half-mast and his toes poked out of would-be shoes.

His shirt was dirty and his hair was uncombed and unwashed. His whiskers were too short to be called a beard and his nose was so varicose it looked like a road map. We were too far from him to smell, but I was sure he smelled. His hands waved and flapped on loose wrists. "Hi there baby, hi there big boy. I see ya, buster," the man said to Erik.

My husband and I exchanged looks, "What do we do?"

Everyone in the restaurant noticed and looked at us and then at the man. The old geezer was creating a nuisance with my beautiful baby. Our meal came and the man began shouting from across the room, "Do ya know patty cake? Do you know peek-a-boo? Hey, look, he knows peek-a boo. Nobody thought the old man was cute. He was obviously drunk. My husband and I were embarrassed. We ate in silence, all except for Erik, who was running through his repertoire for the admiring skid-row bum, who in turn, reciprocated with his cute comments.

We finally got through the meal and headed for the door. My husband went to pay the check and told me to meet him in the parking lot. The man sat poised between me and the door.

"Lord, just let me out of here before he speaks to me or Erik," I prayed. As I drew closer to the man, I turned my back trying to side-step him and avoid any air he might be breathing. As I did, Erik leaned over my arm, reaching with both arms in a baby's pick-me-up position. Before I could stop him, Erik had propelled himself from my arms to the man's.

Suddenly a very old smelly man and a very young baby consummated their love relationship. Erik, in an act of total

trust, love, and submission laid his tiny head upon the man's aged shoulder. The man's eyes closed and I saw tears hover beneath his lashes. His aged hands full of grime, pain and hard labor gently, so gently cradled my baby's bottom and stroked his back.

No two beings have ever loved so deeply for so short a time. I stood awestruck. The old man rocked and cradled Erik in his arms for a moment, and then his eyes opened and set squarely on mine. He said in a firm commanding voice, "You take care of this baby." Somehow I managed, "I will," from a throat that contained a stone. He pried Erik from his chest unwillingly, longingly, as though he were in pain.

I received my baby, and the man said, "God bless you, ma'am, you've given me my Christmas gift."

I said nothing more than a muttered "Thanks." With Erik in my arms, I ran for the car. My husband was wondering why I was crying and holding Erik so tightly and why I was saying, "My God, my God, forgive me." I had just witnessed Christ's love shown through the innocence of a tiny child who saw no sin, who made no judgment, a child who saw a soul, and a mother who saw a suit of clothes.

I was a Christian who was blind, holding a child who was not. I felt it was God asking . . . "Are you willing to share your son for a moment?", when HE shared HIS for an eternity. The ragged old man, unwittingly had reminded me, "To enter the Kingdom of God, we must become as little children."



Our church in Christmas time

Happy Birthday !!

Birthdays for the month of

January

01 Helena Brhel/Brhelova
 01 Jana Brhel/Brhelova
 03 Cindel Fleming
 04 Sean Luc de Lange
 04 Prince Adarkwah
 06 Peace Acquaaah
 06 Destiny Amadin
 09 Maarten Brandse
 10 Florence Foyat-Bergna
 10 Irene Bom
 10 Matthew Emmanuel Sebastian
 12 Mildred Asare-Awuku
 15 Merlin Zawadi Gwanmesia
 16 Christilito Cuvulay
 18 Lee Bouwman
 23 Zoë Calvert
 26 Cor Vermeulen
 30 Julia Gwanmesia
 30 Bridgit Amadin

February

03 Joke te Winkel
 04 Pjotr Lane
 06 Elsie Chapman
 08 Ewout Stoutjesdijk
 09 Mathias van Horssen
 10 Cynthia Massicott
 10 Celine Abunam
 11 Katherine Rietveld
 11 Jennifer Fleming
 12 Ruud Witte
 13 Steve Russell
 16 Roxanne Cromwell
 23 Oritsholaye Tobias
 Stoutjesdijk
 24 Dieudonné Gwanmesia
 24 Catronia Ewing

24 Elisabeth Ashu
 27 Tjerk Vollema

March

01 Licia Knoester
 01 Gifty Dziwhorshie
 02 Adje Acquaaah
 03 Nyomi Cairo
 03 Fayola Cairo
 03 Wyatt Samuel Kamara
 04 Quniten Lambartino Massicott
 07 Gabriella Balke-Budai
 07 Wiah Bestman
 08 Emma de Zanger
 09 Margaret Asemota
 09 Dorothy A. Kingsale
 10 Aletia Baiye
 10 Helene Oben
 10 Nelly Schonewille
 11 Annemarie Fleming
 12 Sijmen Griesdoorn
 12 Faith Abunam
 13 Maxine Fleming
 13 Esther Hensen-Gwanmesia
 19 Jim Taylor
 20 Marie Jose Schonewille
 22 Feline Griesdoorn
 23 Helen Tesema
 24 Kwena Koka
 28 Wyatt Samuel Kamara
 29 Martin Asare-Awuku
 29 Margaret Asemota
 29 Molly Foster
 30 Jane Stoutjesdijk
 31 Eric Schouwink

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