

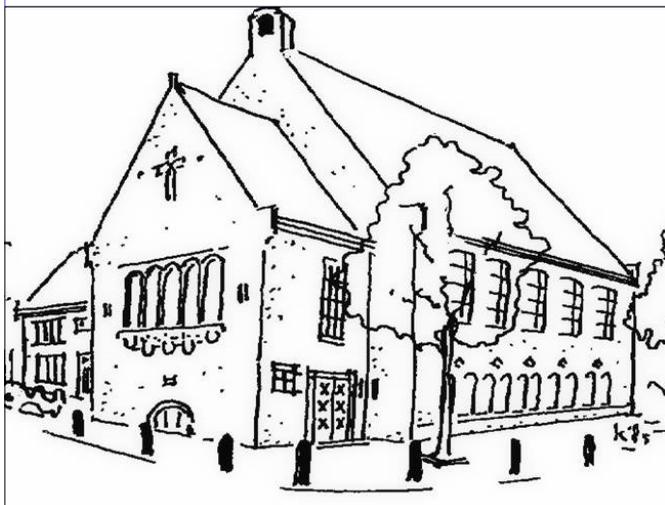


The Herald

Newsletter of the Scots International Church, Rotterdam

a congregation of the Church of Scotland
International Presbytery

Summer (July)2017



IN THIS EDITION:

LETTER FROM THE MINISTER	2
WHAT'S ON OVER THE SUMMER	4
PRAYER GATHERINGS AND SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY	5
PROPERTY CONVENER	6
CONSISTITYION FOR THE SICR	9
FROM THE CONSISTORY	9
SUMMERCLUB	10
WHO IS WHO IN THE CONSISTORY	11
ABIGAIL VAN DER VELDEN	12
PRAYER MATTERS BLOG	13
BIRTHDAYS	15
WHO IS WHO IN THE CHURCH	16



Letter from the Minister

Friends,

They say time goes quickly when you're enjoying yourself, and I have to say it seems no time at all since I wrote my last letter for The Herald so I guess I must be enjoying myself as your minister here in Rotterdam. We have, since then, enjoyed some really hot weather and some very wet weather and are now in to the time of year when most people take their holidays. I hope therefore that any holidays you've had, or have still to have, will have been or will be blessed with good weather. Moira and I are having a week's holiday in Scotland at the end of July for our son's wedding – a great opportunity to meet up with family and friends. In today's world it's easy to keep in touch with people electronically, but to meet face-to-face is so much more rewarding. We all need to maintain relationships with family and friends – as well as with God – for we can hardly claim to love God and fail to love our fellow human-beings, especially those to whom we have ties of kinship, whether as family or friends.

Over July and August my sermon topics are centred on "The Story We Find Ourselves In", which is, of course, God's story. Hopefully, these will make us all look again at that story and maybe even re-assess our understanding of it. It's very easy to stick with an understanding of faith that we developed in our

childhood or when we first came to faith, but we need always to be re-evaluating our understanding of the Christian faith in the light of our understanding of the world and of what God is saying to us in the Bible. And that's not always an easy thing to do. It's much easier to just stick with what we think we know and not question it; but therein lies the basis for a fundamentalist approach to faith. Our faith can never be something static. Among the many gifts we receive from God are the ability to think for ourselves and the freedom to choose. If we are to honour God, then we need to make use of all the gifts he has given us and we shouldn't just unquestioningly accept our received understanding of faith – or indeed any interpretation of it that is proposed by me or any other preacher. Rather, we all need to stop, listen and think – and pray!

But faith is about so much more than what we think and believe. It's every bit as much about how we act, how we live our lives 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. It's about relationships: our relationship with God, of course; but also our relationship with other people and with all of God's creation. That means that our life has to reflect our faith, so that what we believe can be seen by others in how we live.

If, therefore, our church – the Christian community of which we are part – is to be a vital part of our life, we need to invest in it – and I don't mean financially (at least not principally!) Rather, we need to develop relationships within it, we need to be an active part of the family (within the limits of our physical ability), and we need to contribute to making it truly the Body of Christ. This is what I'd like to encourage us all to do in the coming months: that we might be seen to be one body, enriched by its diversity and serving God within the wider community in which God has placed us.

May you therefore be invigorated by your summer break –

ready for a new year of Church life and worship, that, together, we may truly be one body in which we each respect each other's views, for we will never all have precisely the same understanding of the Christian faith. May our congregational life reflect the words of the hymn "We are one in the Spirit":

We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand ...

We will work with each other, we will work side by side ...

... and they'll know we are Christians by our love.

May God grant us all the grace, the wisdom and the strength to do so!

Derek



August

- 6th 10.30 Sacrament of Holy Communion
"The story we find ourselves in" – "Conversations"
- 13th 10.30 Worship –
"The story we find ourselves in" – "Christ"
- 20th 10.30 Worship –
"The story we find ourselves in" – "Church"
- 27th 10.30 Worship –
The story we find ourselves in" – "Consummation"

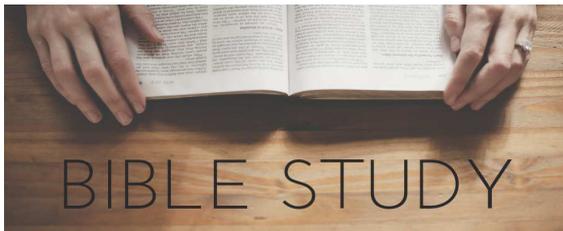
September

- 3rd 10.30 Sacrament of Holy Communion and Service of Re-Commitment
- 10th 9.15 Bible Study - The Apostles' Creed : "I believe..."
10.30 Worship.
- 17th 9.15 Bible Study - The Apostles' Creed : "God the Father"
10.30 Worship
19.30 Praise Service
- 24th 9.15 Bible Study - The Apostles' Creed : "God the Son: His Identity and Birth"
10.30 Harvest Celebration

October

- 1st 10.30 Sacrament of Holy Communion
- 8th 10.30 Worship. Service to be led by Rev.Joost Pot.
- 15th 10.30 Worship
19.30 Service for Wholeness & Healing

Prayer Gatherings and Sunday Morning Bible Study



At the time of writing, it is likely that Sunday morning Prayer Gatherings will be discontinued (though some other time for prayer will, hopefully, replace them).

Sunday morning Bible Studies (at 9.15am) will re-start in September (10th, 17th and 24th) – when we'll begin to look at "The Apostles' Creed" – continuing on 15th and 29th October and concluding on 19th November.

Property Convener

The Church of Scotland does not require congregations to make very many specific appointments, but it is a requirement that there be a Property Convener in every congregation. It is now over 9 months since André van der Velden retired (for the second time) and, although Fred Booman agreed to step in and ensure completion of works already begun, he made it clear to the Council that he was not taking on the role of Convener. I have no doubt he did not expect to still be fulfilling that role in July 2017!

Despite approaching possible candidates and making general appeals for someone to come forward, we are still without a Property Convener – a situation which cannot continue if we are to properly look after our buildings (and to comply with Church law!)

The purpose of this note is to encourage anyone who has any interest whatsoever in at least thinking about taking on this role to contact me **as soon as possible**. Please be assured that the new Convener will not be expected to be "hands-on", nor the one (and only) person responsible for doing the work. He (or she) will be responsible for a Property Team with a detailed set of guidelines and procedures for ensuring works are properly costed, instructed and attended to. Indeed the Council is currently investigating having a survey of the properties carried out with a view to then drawing up a maintenance and repair plan, which should

guide the Property Team in its work over the coming 2-3 years.

Even if you don't feel your skill would be in convening the Team, I'd also be pleased to hear from those who'd be interested in being part of the Team. This is an urgent matter as we can't afford for our buildings to be neglected. As I headed an article on this subject back in the Winter edition of *The Herald*, "**Your Church needs you!**"

Derek

Constitution for the SICR

I have previously mentioned the possibility of our proceeding to adopt a new Constitution for the SICR – or perhaps, more accurately, to approve what would be (so far as I can determine) the very first Constitution for our congregation, as, despite our celebrating 375 years in existence next year, it appears we have never had one! The Consistory did in 1905 adopt a document entitled *Regulations for the Consistory*, but time has rather overtaken these and the Consistory today (and probably for the last 50+ years) certainly doesn't function under these Regulations.

The Consistory and Council have now approved a draft Constitution which has been sent to both the Church of Scotland and the Protestantse Kerk in Nederland for their approval, as our congregation, although primarily a congregation of the Church of Scotland International Presbytery, is also recognised as a congregation within the PKN. Assuming these approvals are forthcoming, a meeting of the congregation will then be called when you will be asked to approve the new Constitution. Copies of it will be available on the Church website and in print over the 4 or so weeks before that meeting.

Essentially, the Constitution will provide that we have only

a Consistory, which will be responsible for both the spiritual and the temporal affairs of the congregation. The Consistory will then appoint a number of Teams or Working Groups to be responsible to it for the different aspects of our congregational life. These teams will consist of both Elders and members of the congregation. The present Deacons will be given the opportunity, should they wish, to be ordained to the Eldership, after some instruction in the role and responsibilities of the Elder.

Hopefully, the Congregational Meeting will take place sometime in the autumn.

Since my original note about the Constitution, I'm pleased to report progress with the Church of Scotland in obtaining its approval – though we're not quite there yet. I've therefore updated the PKN, but, unfortunately, the Kerkjurist there is on holiday until 7 August, so it's likely to be mid-August before I have his approval – hopefully!

Assuming everything proceeds smoothly, I would hope we would be able to put the draft Constitution to a Congregational Meeting in either September or early October, but due intimation will be made over 2 or 3 Sundays and in the Weekly Bulletin. A copy of the draft Constitution will also be sent out with the Bulletin – hopefully either the last week in August or first week in September. Please therefore be sure Bob has your up-to-date email address!

Derek

In this electronic world where the internet and smartphones are such a part of our daily lives, I felt the following prayer, entitled "Computer/Smartphone Prayer", would be useful for us all.

It was written by David McNeish and comes from a book of prayers entitled
We Bring You Everything and Tip it Out in Front of You,
published by Wild Goose Publications.

**“As I connect with others
bring me closer to you
and further from all that seeks to harm.”**

Derek

From the Consistory

The Consistory of the SICR met on Tuesday 6th June and considered pastoral, worship, planning and other matters. On Pastoral issues the consistory looked at each of the sick and home-bound on their and the Prayer Request list.

The Consistory went through our ‘Contact List’ of members and adherents and noted those who had moved away, were known to attend another church or were not familiar to anyone. It was decided that the Minister and the Consistory Clerk would send e-mails or letters to those we were not sure about and ask them whether they would want to remain members or adherents or to be taken off.

The Consistory regretted that the prayer meetings before-the-service were so poorly attended and agreed that these should be upheld, while a different format, day and time could be found. The Consistory concluded that ‘Prayer is the heart of Christian faith’ and we should ask God to ‘do a fresh work’.

The Consistory also looked at the Draft Constitution of the SICR and were informed that the same was set to the Church of Scotland in Edinburg and the PKN-jurist in Utrecht. It all goes well it could be put before a Congregational Meeting in September

The Consistory was also informed that a small team was working on planning our 375th Anniversary in September 2018.

Finally the Consistory directed that a letter with a warning should be sent to the Hoeksteen to reduce their excessive amplification of the sound of their worship.

Ato Bob

Summer Club:

Sunday School will be on break so **Summer Club** will keep the children occupied after the Children's Message.



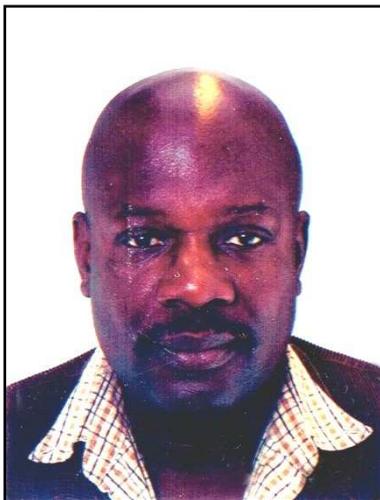
Get involved in Summer Club! Volunteers urgently needed!

We are looking for volunteers to help run games and activities with the children during the summer months. If you are available to sign up for any Sunday between 30th July and 29th August, or have some ideas you want to discuss, contact Rebecca Taylor on joyrebs@gmail.com or 0627012456.



The pictures are from 02-07-2017.

Who is who in the consistory



Peace Nicholas Acquah was born in Ghana and grew up in a family of four sisters and three brothers. He was a member of his school's football team and also represented his school at interschool table tennis matches and sang in the school choir. His family attended the Anglican Church and he was a member of the church choir. He enjoyed attending Boy Scouts but eventually had to give this up, as the family had to move often for his father's work, often to small places without a troop to join.

After completing primary and secondary schools, he followed a three-year programme in the School of Mines at the University of Science and Technology in Tarkwa, Ghana. His first job was at the Coced Processing Factory where he worked as a maintenance engineer

Peace travelled the world on a number of ships for twelve years as second engineer, finally making his home in Rotterdam in 1993, where he married his wife, Adje Acquah Moes. They are the proud parents of Lloyd Carl and Kay Karen, both born in Ghana. Kay Karen is still living at home with them in Rotterdam.

When Adje became ill in 2004, Peace chose to stay closer to home and took up a position as a maintenance technician in an oil refinery.

The family joined SICR in 1994. Peace served as a deacon from 2008 until 2012, when he was appointed as an elder of the church. He also took over Adje's Sunday School class when she became ill, has continued up until today.

Peace's pastoral area is Rotterdam Inner North, and his responsibility is the organisation and supervision of the cleaning of the church.

Subject: News for The Herald re. its first editor: Gayle van der Velde

Dear Mr. Hensen:

It's been almost a year since I was in The Netherlands and visited the Scots Church. I enjoyed meeting you and I'm delighted the copies of The Herald I brought will be placed in the city archives of Rotterdam. During my visit, I mentioned my book and several old friends expressed interest. I wanted to let you know it's out and available at the publisher's website (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, USA, prpbooks.com) and on Amazon.com as well as other booksellers. Would you be so kind as to announce its availability in The Herald? In case, I'm adding an informational note at the end of this email. And of, course, you can get information about the book at the publisher's website and see inside the book on Amazon.com.

Since I was in NL, the name of the book has been changed to: *Johanna and Henriette Kuyper, Daring to Change their World*. It has my "pen name" on the cover: Abigail van der Velde. The publisher added photographs of the Kuyper family, a timeline to set the story in historical context, and other features to help readers connect to the story as well as the people, culture, and history of The Netherlands.

If you read it, I would be very interested in your thoughts and response. (I expect the book will be published in NL, in Dutch, and be released in 2018 -- if all goes well.)

If you have any questions or would like more information for an article in The Herald, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Abigail van der Velde (Gayle van der Velde)

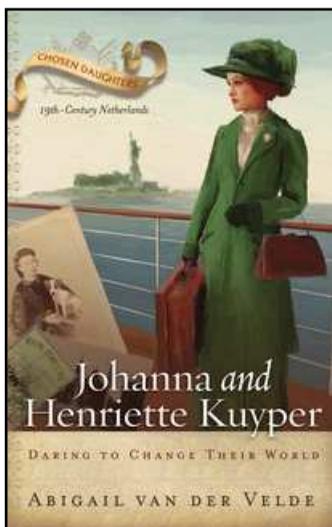
Johanna and Henriette Kuyper: Daring to Change Their World (Chosen Daughters)

Paperback – June 2017

At the turn of the 1800s, two women challenge society in the Netherlands. Johanna is a traditional wife eager

to both support and challenge her strong-willed husband, the political leader Abraham Kuyper. Henriette is an international traveler, champion of women's suffrage, and wartime correspondent—among much else! Both mother and daughter risk reproach and defy custom—changing their world for good and for God's sake.

by [Abigail van der Velde](#) (Author)



PRAYER MATTERS BLOG

When I was appointed as Presbytery prayer promoter in March 2017 I decided to start a blog as a way to reach and impact the different congregations in our far-flung Presbytery.

The aim of the blog: **to prompt and resource prayer.**

As a rule I post something once or twice a week. Here is a sampling of the kind of posts I've published to date: reports on prayer events like "The World Day of Prayer"; morning and evening

prayers; meditations of various kinds; children's prayers; a prayer response to world news like Steward Lamont's guest post following the wild fires in Portugal; "prayer sheets" focussed on a specific theme (e.g. "God makes all things new" and "Ever sustaining") to use privately or with others.

At special times of the church year I post a series of daily meditations. For example, the 8-part series, "Windows on Holy Week", and the 12-part series, "The Gift" (Preparing for Pentecost).

||| OTHER RESOURCES

Besides blog posts there is a "Teach us to pray" section with details of a range of online and other resources, including an article on Prayer from the Church of Scotland website. Here's a short excerpt from that article:

"Using the Lord's prayer is a wonderful way of gathering all your prayers into one. In doing so we say with people around the world and across century's the words of Jesus that teach us how to pray. These are the words that celebrate the welcome, forgiveness, grace and goodness of God." (<http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/worship/prayer>)

||| HOPES

I've hardly scratched the surface of what is possible where the PRAYER MATTERS blog is concerned. I hope that in the weeks and months to come many more of our church members will sign up for email updates and that I can include articles about prayer initiatives where you are, for our mutual encouragement and inspiration.

I invite you to visit the website regularly and/or sign up to receive new posts by email: www.irenebom.com/prayer_matters

Whatever you do, "do not lose heart" (Luke 18:1) and keep on praying.

"Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen."
(Eph 3:20-21, NRSV)

Rev. Irene Bom (Prayer Promoter for the Int. Presbytery).

Herald Deadline

Items for the Autumn(September) Issue of the Herald should be given to Bob Hensen or sent to the church office by **Wednesday 27-09-2017**
The next Herald will be available from 07-10-2017

AUGUST 2017

SEPTEMBER 2017

01 Cynthia Steward (James Christian)
01 Mary Tataw Eyere Tataw
02 Wisteria Cairo
05 Virginia Hendriks
06 Jan Ruigendijk
09 Dorcas Nthoki-Nyamai
14 Joyce Mensah
14 Joost Pot
14 Julia Victoria Wagenaar
16 Stella Agborngot
16 Obinna Omomut
17 Sharon Cromwell
18 Jean Galloway
19 Beverly Bouwman
21 David Dziworshie
22 Evert Dorn
25 Henriette Lane
27 Daniel Oppong-Sarfo
27 Solomon Stifanos
28 Max Ferdinandus
29 Thomas Ewing
30 Margriet van Overbeeke

01 Dirk Bouwman
02 Johan Wagenaar
04 Hank Meldrum
04 Jim van Putten
08 Michelle Baffuo Essel
08 Liz van der Velden
15 Ingrid Evovo-Belksma
15 Zaneta Massicott
15 Stephanie Wenfua
15 Bethel Ngiemah Wenfua
16 Chanté Fleming
17 Allen Foster
17 Moira Lawson
18 Fanny Mensah
19 Jaco Jacobs
20 Brendan van der Velden
22 Ian Thomas Calvert
24 Kelly Bouwman
27 Sharon Keerthana Ganesh
29 Andil Aboudou
29 Sinead Wolfert-Schot
30 Shanon Fleming

**Happy birthday and may the Lord
bless you in the coming year!**



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Anneke Pot

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Jim Taylor

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Vacant

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