



The Herald

Newsletter of the
 Scots International Church,
 Rotterdam
 a congregation of the Church of
 Scotland International Presbytery

September / Autumn 2018



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Letter from the Minister

Dear Friends,

By the time this edition of *The Herald* is published we'll have celebrated our 375th Anniversary. So, I'll begin with a word of thanks to the Rt Rev Susan Brown for fitting our celebrations in to her busy schedule as the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. It was a great joy to have her celebrate with us on 16th September, along with our other invited guests, not least the British Ambassador

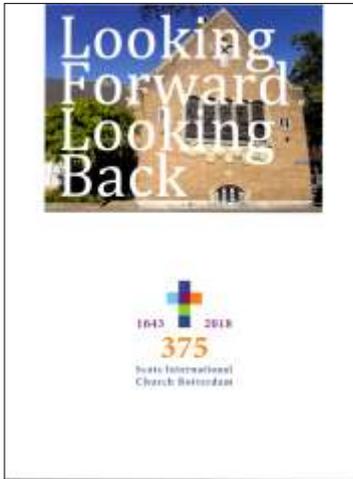


(see picture) and the Rev John Russell, the oldest surviving minister

of the Scots Kirk. I also hope that everyone has learned a little more about the history of our congregation in recent weeks, not least through the *Looking Forward, Looking Back* booklet that was produced.

However, what really matters is the





present and, more particularly, the future: the future into which Jesus is always calling us. It has to be said there are uncertainties ahead, for the Church of Scotland will by 2023 be critically short of ordained Ministers of Word and Sacrament – added to which the outcome of Brexit could make it more difficult to attract ministers to congregations in Europe. The International Presbytery will have to determine how it can provide ministry to all its congregations with possibly as few as half the current number of ministers. This will not be an easy task and will be one of the main topics to be discussed at the October meeting of Presbytery in Amsterdam. Whatever the outcome of that meeting, all congregations will require to think “outside the box” as to how to sustain ministry in their own context. To some extent, we are blessed here in Rotterdam as, not only do we have in our congregation both Joost Pot and Irene Bom, but we also have Eric Foggitt as a regular contributor to our leading of worship – and to all of them I am deeply grateful. Following the Presbytery meeting in October, I’ve no doubt that the Consistory will, along with all the other Consistories/Kirk Sessions in Presbytery, require to take time to consider how we should respond to this changing situation.

This should not, however, be a cause for gloom or despondency, but rather a challenge to be met in reliance on the power and wisdom of the Holy Spirit, and on the gifts we have all been given. After all, the congregation here has not just survived 375 years, but has developed and changed

over that time to become what it is today: a truly international body sharing its faith in Jesus through worship and other activities in the English language.

As I mentioned, it's not only the situation in the Church of Scotland that makes the future uncertain, for the whole Brexit situation is unhelpful and has caused Moira and I no little concern. For over 6 years our European citizenship has allowed us to live (and for the last 2+ years work) in Europe without requiring visas or work permits. Inevitably, unless somehow Brexit is stopped in its tracks (which we certainly pray for), we're going to lose that citizenship and our intention to resume our retirement in France once my time here is completed may become more problematic. Unfortunately, this is a challenge we cannot do anything much to influence.

I trust everyone found time over the summer to relax – even if the heat made that quite difficult at times! As we now resume another church year, may we all be strengthened in our commitment to each other as well as to God and, through him, to the whole of his creation. Let me conclude by offering you this prayer (from *The Word in the World*):

Holy Spirit of God, guide me, for I would follow Jesus.
Open my mind and heart to his truth;
enliven my imagination to his presence;
excite my emotion to his offered love;
increase my gratitude for his living, dying and rising;
and strengthen me in my commitment,
that I may walk in step with him, my Lord and Saviour. Amen

Moira and I wish you every blessing as we step out together into the 376th year of our church family here in Rotterdam.

Derek



NOW
(16-09-2018)



and **THEN**
(02-09-1952)



Susan Brown and Derek
The today's consistory



The presented plate



The lunch

Forthcoming Services

October

7 th	10h30	Sacrament of Holy Communion
14 th	10h30	Morning Worship led by Rev Joost Pot
21 st	10h30	Morning Worship
	19h30	Praise Service
28 th	10h30	Morning Worship led by Rev Eric Foggitt

November

4 th	10h30	Sacrament of Holy Communion
11 th	10h30	Remembrance Sunday Service
	19h30	International Peace Service
18 th	10h30	Youth Service
	19h30	Service for Wholeness & Healing
25 th	10h30	Stir-Up Sunday

Pastoral Care Working Group

Under the new Constitution, one of the Working Groups set up by the Consistory is the Pastoral Care Working Group, which will support myself in the pastoral care of our members and adherents. As the Convener of the Working Group, I'd want to stress that this is an important ministry within any congregation and especially in one as diverse as ours. I'm therefore anxious to recruit volunteers to help in visiting and therefore anyone who feels this is something for which they are gifted, please contact me.

Equally, though, I'm anxious to hear from those who would like a regular visit from someone in the congregation as we seek to be a true family for all those who are part of our community. Whether you'd like to be visited monthly, quarterly or less (or more) frequently, again, please contact me. Please note visiting is not confined to the elderly or housebound as there may well be others within our church family who feel themselves isolated or a long way from their own family – we want to hear from you as well!

Derek

Prayer Breakfasts

Please note that these will be held on the following Saturdays from 9.00am to 10.30am in the Church Hall. A contribution of €3 is requested from those who come along to cover the cost of breakfast.

October 20th November 17th December 15th

Please note there is no compulsion on those who come to actively participate in praying as there is opportunity for silent prayer in which everyone can take part.

Derek

The International Peace Service

When I came to Rotterdam I was delighted to find out about this annual service; but, if I have one disappointment in my time here, it's the poor attendance of our own members at this important act of worship. I'd therefore commend it to you all – it will be on **Sunday 11th November at 7.30pm** in the Church.

The Scots Church has hosted this service every year since 1925 (except for a few years during and just after WW2) and has invited to it, not just our own members, but members from across the Christian Churches here in Rotterdam. Attendance has in recent years declined, but, as we look around at the world today, can any of us doubt that the need to pray for and work for peace in the world is any less now than it was back in 1925?

Given that justice and peace are integral components of our Christian faith, it falls to each and every one of us to play our part in pursuing them, both in our lives and in our worship. I'd therefore encourage all who can to come along to this service on the 11th of November, when the guest speaker will be Edwin Ruigrok, who has been a Policy Advisor at PAX for over 11 years and previously worked in both Africa and Asia.



Derek

Clean-up-day.

On Saturday the 1st of September there was a clean-up-day at church.

The intention was to start at 10 am, but some were much earlier to open up or even just to start!

Over the day 25 people came to help, all ages were there to participate. Young and old and everyone was actually working.

It was great to see what was achieved.

Thank you everyone

Olaf

OMDROTTERDAM2018

The Open Monument Day (OMD) brought over hundred visitors to the Scots International Church Rotterdam. Many of them came because they had passed the building so many times (i.e. by visiting the eye hospital) and now took the opportunity to look inside the church.

In the morning it wasn't so busy, but from 2 pm onwards visitors kept on coming in.



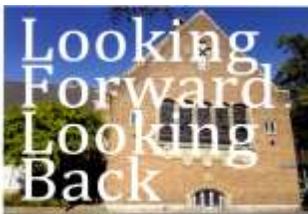
The Hef bridge (former railwaybridge) was in motion especially for the Open Monument Day Rotterdam.

The last group leaving around 5.30 pm. Most people came on their own, but also in groups visited. Seamen church walking tours visited as did tours organized by Urban Guides.

The visitors were surprised by the beauty of the building. Photographs were taken of the sanctuary, but also of the organ, the pulpit, the stain glass windows. Many listened to the 375 history of the Scots Kirk in Rotterdam by Bob Hensen and Ruud Witte. Many visitors had no idea that the SICR is one of the oldest congregations in Rotterdam and that we have all of our history from the very beginning until today. Bob/Ruud showed them the copy of the first minutes of the consistory, September 1643 hanging outside the sanctuary.

Many visitors were surprised to hear that every week around 130 people come to the Sunday service and that we are a lively congregation, young and old, international students, 4 choirs/ music groups. Visitors went homewards with a whole new vision on our building in the heart of Rotterdam.

Christine Galloway/Ruud Witte



375th celebration

The 'free' 375-anniversary booklet (see left) will be available during some Sundays in October as many could not pick them up. The 'mosaic' coasters will also be on sale for 10 euro (4 coasters) together with the 'St Andrews cross' bracelet at 0,50 euro cent. Ask Bob or Christine

Showers which were not a blessing

On Wednesday morning the 5th of September 2018 there was a cloud burst above Rotterdam which lasted about three hours. Unfortunately the gutters hadn't been cleaned for a number of years and there was a build-up leaves in them.

Another factor which didn't help this morning was that the gutters had a different diameter than the gutter-pipe (this was much smaller) causing a build-up of water on the roof.

This excess water finally leaked through the roof of the sanctuary and further into the sanctuary.

It is amazing what a number of volunteers (Derek, Moira, Stanley, Fred, Steve) managed to do, mopping up as much they could, saving the sound system.

The damage is extensive and in due course a lot of painting etc. will need to be done, as ceiling tiles will need to be replaced and all.

On our request a contracting company came and cleared out part of the gutter, they completed the job within two weeks. We had to call them as it is too high and risky for volunteers to go up ladders.

The costs to re-do everything will be considerable, so we are trying to establish if the insurance will cover this.

During the next morning it appeared that not all electricity is up to scratch and therefor this will need seeing to as well

We hope you will all bear with us and understand that we have plenty to keep us going.

Olaf de Zanger Convener Property Team



*Found in the building during the Cleanup: **THE HERALD**
Vol. 1, no 1. April 1984. Thirty four years ago!!*

Herald Deadline

Items for the November/Christmas Issue of the Herald should be given to Bob Hensen or sent to the church office by **14-11-2018**.

We hope the next Herald will be available from 25-11-2018

Birthdays**October**

Natalia Brhel/Brhelova
 Felix Johannes Brits
 Marion Brits-Pot
 Beryl Esi Essel
 Johanna Essel
 Edwin Etienne
 Patricia Ewing
 Mavis Fleming
 Bilola Malaika Gwanmesia
 Cara Howe-Taylor
 Matthew Lane
 Thomas Paton
 Ann Schuurisma
 Annemarie Smith
 Henny Vermeulen
 Erica Wenfua
 Elaine de Zanger
 Flora van der Zwaan

Malaika Aboudou
 Robert Simon van der Huilst
 Sally Agtboraten-v/d Starre

November

Elizabeth Adzra
 Ann-Lynne Bouwman
 Eunelda Cairo
 Sow Kheen-Elizabeth Dorn-Lee
 Gilberto Fleming
 Denis Galloway
 Irene van Ginkel
 Bob Hensen
 Betty Polley
 Rinus van der Starre
 Meriam van der Velden
 Raneë Damanik
 Ricky Lim
 Kelechi Omomut

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



For subscription and how
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hard copy of the magazine
see Ruud Witte

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Rizal Sebastian

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