

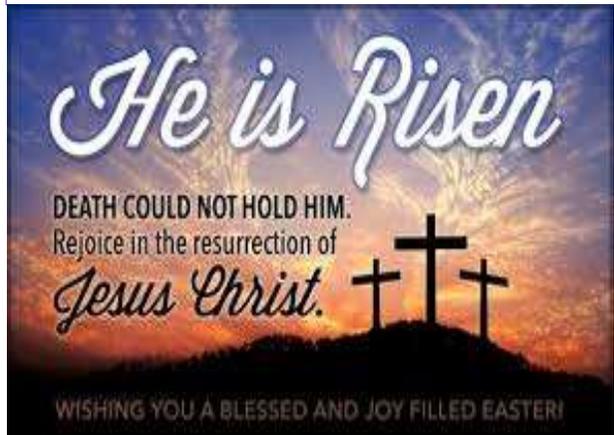


The Herald

Newsletter of the
Scots International Church,
Rotterdam

a congregation of the Church of
Scotland International Presbytery

Easter 2019 (April/May)



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IN THIS EDITION:

Letter from the Minister	2
Holy week and Easter services	4
Forth coming services April and May	5
Lenten Study Series	7
Stewardship Campaign 2019	7
Youth presbytery	9
Herald deadline Spring issue	11
Birthdays	11
Who's who in the church	12



Letter from the Minister

Dear Friends,

I find it hard to believe that this will be the 17th “Letter from the Minister” that I’ve written for *The Herald* - it just goes to show that time flies when you’re enjoying yourself! I had hoped that, by the time I was writing this, the outcome of the great British Brexit fiasco would have been clear and my future with you would have been settled, but it now seems that the bandwagon will roll on and, as I write, the UK could leave in April with no deal – in which case Moira and I will require to resume our residence in France immediately - or in May with a deal, or maybe there could even be no Brexit (though I doubt it!) – in either of which events we can remain here.

More importantly, the Church year moves on and we’ll soon enter Holy Week and Easter – a time that is very much at the heart of our Christian faith. That’s why we hold additional services in Holy Week – specifically on the Thursday evening when we remember the Last Supper Jesus shared with his disciples in the upper room in Bethlehem, and then on Good Friday when we remember all that happened with Jesus’ arrest, trials and finally his crucifixion. What a weird week that must have been for the disciples: the elation of Palm Sunday with Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem; the excitement of being in Jerusalem at the time of Passover and listening to Jesus’ teaching in

David's City; and then the Passover meal, before setting out in the dark to the Garden of Gethsemane. And there the mood changes – even Jesus struggles with what lies ahead of him and the disciples struggle even to stay awake. Then comes the betrayal and Jesus being taken away, first to the Jewish religious leaders and then to Pilate – the representative of the power of the Roman Empire.

Somewhere around this time most of the disciples melt into the background and it seems to be the women who stayed with Jesus through it all. No doubt the disciples were in fear of their own safety – after all, their leader had just been arrested and the authorities were doing their best to ensure he was put to death. So, keeping a low profile maybe wasn't too surprising. And yet might we see the women showing greater faithfulness than the men?

What can we take from this story? Many things, I'm sure – but I want to mention only two. Firstly, it shows how things can change – quickly and dramatically. Most of us will have experienced this in our own lives with their ups and downs, highs and lows, joys and sorrows. But the Church too has experienced this – and is perhaps experiencing it as much today as it ever has. Strangely, in the Western world, the Church is in decline. But, worldwide Christianity is growing. Truly, it is a time of change. For 2000 years the centre of Christianity has been in the West, but today it's in the South. Yes, even the Church changes!

Secondly, the Easter story shows the central role of the women who followed Jesus and in most churches today women play a central role – not just in the ministry of hospitality, but in the role of Elders and as Ministers. Every single one of us, regardless of gender, ethnicity, status, or sexuality has a role to play in the body of Christ.

Let's rejoice, then, in the challenges that change brings and in the value of each other and all we bring to the family that is the Scots International Church Rotterdam. Tell your story – and listen to others' stories – they all contribute to the overarching story: God's story. Be sure, there will be challenges ahead for every congregation in the International Presbytery, as there are for every congregation in Scotland (and in most churches in Western Europe). What matters is how we respond to these challenges. Can we be like the disciples who, following Jesus' crucifixion thought the bottom had fallen out of their world, but who, through the power of the Holy Spirit, followed in the way of Jesus and took the Good News into the world so that others might respond to Jesus and follow in his way. May that be, for us, our resolve this Easter.

Wishing you all peace and joy this Easter and renewed zeal and vision for the future of the Church in general and this congregation in particular.

Derek

HOLY WEEK and EASTER SERVICES



Palm Sunday – 14th April
celebration of Palm Sunday at 10.30 am

Thursday of Holy Week 18th April 7.30pm

The Last Supper recalled
as we celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion

Good Friday 19th April 7.30pm

Worship for Good Friday



Easter Day – Sunday 21st April

Begin the day with Breakfast in the Hall at 9.00 am –
followed by our Easter Day Service – including the admis-
sion of new members by profession of faith - at 10.30 am



28th April
10.30am

2nd Sunday of Easter
Morning Worship including the Sacrament
of Baptism



12th May
10.30am

4th Sunday of Easter
Morning Worship
followed by an opportunity for accompanied
prayer

19th May
10.30am

5th Sunday of Easter
Morning Worship led by one of our new Wor
ship Teams

26th May
10.30am

6th Sunday of Easter
Morning Worship led by the other new Wor
ship Team

2nd June
10.30am

7th Sunday of Easter
Sacrament of Holy Communion

Worship Teams

You will note that on Sundays 19th and 26th May – when Derek is away at the General Assembly – the services are to be led by the new Worship Teams that have recently been trained in the leading of worship and it is to be hoped that they will be well supported in their first exercise of their new ministry.



Come along to our
Joint Lenten Study Series

with St Mary's Anglican Church,
Pieter de Hoochweg 131

Topics: Unsung Heroes of Faith (for St Mary's sessions)
and **Witnesses to Jesus' crucifixion** (for SICR sessions)

The final two meetings are at 7.30pm on
Wednesday 3 April at SICR
Wednesday 17 April at St Mary's

Stewardship



Campaign 2019

At our Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday 3rd March we launched this Campaign and, by way of a reminder, this is a reprint of part of the leaflet issued then:

What can I do?

The Consistory is asking each member (and adherent) to review what they currently give to the congregation through the weekly offering (or in other ways) and to consider if they can reasonably increase that giving. If you look at last year's figures we need to increase our total congregational giving by around 40% if it is (together with rental income) to cover our annual expenditure.

In addition, for smaller maintenance work, it would be helpful to know what skills are available within our membership that we can call upon when required. If you can help in any way, please let the Church Office know. Another small way in which we can all help is to be sure to put in our €1 for tea/coffee on a Sunday morning and a bit more when there's soup as well!

How can I give?

Bank Transfer - This is the simplest method as it enables payment to be made direct to the Church bank account monthly, quarterly or annually as you choose – the account is Scots International Church, NL17 INGB 0000 1751 87. If you are willing to pay in this way, please contact Jim Taylor (the Treasurer). What you give will, of course, be confidential to you and the Treasurer.

Weekly Offering - This is what we give on a Sunday morning, either in the Open Plate or using the **Weekly Offering envelopes**. These are a useful reminder of our obligation to give regularly as we know if we've missed a week (or more) and need to make it up. If you don't already use envelopes and would wish to start, again please contact Jim Taylor.

Contacts

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If you haven't already done so, please review your giving to the congregation and be assured that the Consistory, the Stewardship Team and the Property Working Group are all looking at both the possibility of making savings and of pursuing other forms of fund-raising. The situation is urgent – as Jim Taylor indicated at the Annual Meeting we could, on current figures, have insufficient funds to meet our ongoing expenses in 2-3 years time.

Youth Presbytery at SICR

(By Elaine de Zanger)

The SICR hosted the annual Youth Presbytery from 15th to 17th February, with representatives from: Sri-Lanka, Bochum, Paris, Budapest, Rome and Rotterdam.

Friday afternoon everyone arrived at different times. We all had dinner together and after that we did a quiz to get to know each other better.

Saturday morning we gathered for breakfast in the church. After breakfast we had discussions with topics like:

You and faith or *how would you describe your faith? When there's a discussion about faith do you stand up to be counted? Does faith figure in your life on social media? How can we communicate our faith without preaching?*

You and the world, *what do you see as the greatest challenges facing the world? How does the Christian faith relate to these challenges? What can we do to make to world we inhabit more like the kingdom of God?*

Faith and culture, how does the variety of cultures in most countries impact upon society? What separates and what unites us in a Christian context?

The church and the future Is the church fit for God's mission in the 21e century? What are the church's greatest problems and its greatest resources?

We had a guided tour thru the city of Rotterdam and had a go at bowling.

In the evening we made pizzas in de church and talked about the day.

On Sunday after the service the church hosted us for a potluck lunch.



Herald Deadline

Items for the Spring (June/July) Issue of the Herald should be given to Bob Hensen or sent to the church office by **22-05-2019**.

We hope the next Herald will be available from **02-06-2019**

APRIL 2019

Shanny D. Spranger-Butarbutar
 Elizabeth A. Baiye
 Karen Baiye
 Olaf de Zanger
 Tine de Groot-Laban
 Frank Knoester
 Gladys Acquah
 George Ross
 Emmanuel Asare-Awuku
 Joke Cromwell

MAY 2019

Klazina Rigters
 Mike Jang
 Gwen Wenfua
 Grace Amoanyi Fosu
 Mavis Etienne - Massicott
 Bridget Teisman-Nintai
 Patricia Brown-Cuvulay
 Anthony Evovo
 Rizal Sebastian
 Ladislav Brhel
 Anita Ouweleen
 Tita Dierx
 Nnenna Koka
 Anneke Mulder
 Fred Booman

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



The participants of the International Presbytery in Paris on 8,9 and 10-03-2019. Special attention for Rev. Irene Bom as the new moderator and Rev. Joanne Boiten (2nd from left, who is now residing in France).

WHO'S WHO IN THE CHURCH

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Derek Lawson

Worship & Nurture Working Group Convener:

Rizal Sebastian

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Netty Dijkstra

Joseph Hoang Nguyen

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Emmanuel Asare-Awuku.

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Creche: Wenli Wan & Chidinma Chukwu

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Olaf de Zanger.

Finance & Governance Working Group Convener:

Fred Booman.

Fellowship & Communication Working Group

Convener: *Bob Hensen.*

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