



The Herald

Newsletter of the
Scots International Church
Rotterdam

a congregation of the Church of Scotland
International Presbytery

2019-4 (August-September)



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Letter from the Minister

Dear Friends,

It's into the second half of July and Moira and I are still in Rotterdam! Whether that will continue beyond the end of October, God alone knows. We simply wait and pray. But that's enough about Brexit!

Summer has certainly arrived and I pray we may all benefit from some warmth and sunshine and find time to re-charge our batteries before the seasons move on into autumn. But we also need to keep re-charging our spiritual batteries, both by continuing our active participation in the worship we share together as the congregation that is the Scots International Church Rotterdam, in Bible study (whether corporate or private) and in praying regularly (again both individually and corporately). It's not that our spiritual lives are in some way separate from our daily lives: they are (or should be) an integrated whole. Indeed, all we do 24/7 is part of our spiritual life.

That makes what we do each and every day part of what we offer to God in response to his love for us – a love most clearly revealed in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Today, we call ourselves part of the Christian Church, but in the years after Jesus' death there was no such thing. Initially, his followers re-

mained part of the Jewish faith and continued to worship in the synagogues. Gradually, though, they began to separate and, in some places, be excluded from the synagogue. Even then they tended to be known as “the Way”: that is, people who chose to follow in the way of Jesus.

Why do I mention this? Because it’s a reminder to us all that the Christian faith isn’t about accepting certain creeds and dogmas but is rather about a way of life: doing our best to follow the example set by Jesus himself 2,000 years ago. I don’t for a moment pretend that that is easy in the world of today, where the pressures to conform to what is regarded as ‘normal’ in society are huge – something that is as true for adults as for children. In order to encourage our children – as well as friends and neighbours who have no connection with the Christian faith – our lives need to be the living expression of our faith. Jesus never sought intellectual agreement from those he challenged to follow him; rather, he wanted them to ‘walk the walk’ and not merely ‘talk the talk’. The world will judge our faith by the sort of lives it produces!

Will our lives stand up to such judgement? Do our lives reflect the faith we proclaim on our lips and with our minds? If we’re honest, I suspect we all (or at least most of us) fall some way short. Sometimes it’s easier just to ‘go with the flow’ than to stand up for what we believe, for what our faith tells us is right. We don’t want to fall out with friends or family or work colleagues, we don’t want to be seen as ‘different’, we don’t want to put ourselves in a situation where we have to explain our Christian beliefs. Never, though, should we claim that we have the whole truth – for only God has that. Our understanding of the Christian faith will always be provisional and we need to be willing to acknowledge that our understanding may not be the same as that of others and be willing to be tolerant of different views – at least in so far as they don’t go to the substance of our faith.

And this brings us back to our need to re-charge our spiritual batteries. We need to be sure our faith is nurtured, that we have spiritual food for the journey of faith on which each and every one of us is engaged. We can never stand still, never think we've got it all worked out. That way lies the end of the journey of faith and, ultimately, of faith itself. We need the encouragement of each other on our journey, we need to share our stories with each other – and we need to invite others to come and experience our worship together – not as an end in itself, but as a door through which they may begin to travel their own journey of faith. Beware, though! That journey will depend (to some extent) on how your life reflects your faith. Will they see in your life, the things that your faith proclaims? In short, will your life provide evidence of both your love of God and your love of your neighbours?

I began by saying that we need to re-charge our batteries and, for many, this may involve getting together with family members over the summer period – either in their coming to you, or in your visiting them. And so I would pray a blessing on all family reunions, as well as for your own health over the summer months, and would ask that you don't overlook your need for spiritual renewal, a need that continues even when the 'normal' activities of the church take a break over the summer. I therefore look forward to seeing all of you who are physically able at worship sometime over the summer, so that we may continue to share the journey of faith and be nourished by each other's faith and how we live it out.

May you find joy and peace over the summer and may we all make the following words of Michel Quoist, a French Catholic theologian, our daily prayer:

“Lord, come to me, my door is open.”

Derek

September

1 st 10.30	Sacrament of Holy Communion
8 th 10.30 Pentecost	Morning Worship for the 13 th Sunday after Pentecost
15 th 10.30 Pentecost	Morning Worship for the 14 th Sunday after Pentecost
22 nd 10.30 Pentecost	Morning Worship for the 15 th Sunday after Pentecost
29 th 10.30	Harvest Thanksgiving

On the 2nd Sunday of each month there is the opportunity for accompanied prayer immediately after the Service. Anyone wishing to be prayed with is asked to come to the front of the church at the end of the service.

New French Retreat Blessed

A new centre for Christian retreat in France, created by a Church of Scotland minister, was blessed last month.

The blessing of Colomba le Roc, in the Lot region of south-west France, and the dedication of their chapel to St Hild of Whitby, took place on June 9 – the feast day of St Columba and this year the Sunday of Pentecost.

Colomba le Roc is the work of the Rev Joanne Evans-Boiten, a minister who hails from the Netherlands but who is ordained in the Church of Scotland and a member of the International Presbytery.



From left: Rev Irene Bom, Moderator of the International Presbytery, Père Jean, Archimandrite Russian Orthodox Church, Ds Rolf Boiten Community Spe Gaudentes, Rev Joanne Evans-Boiten , chaplain Colomba le Roc, Père Florent Vicar General Cahors, Rev June Hutchinson Anglican Church midi Pyrennes Aude, Pasteur Herizo Ratovomanana Eglise Protestante unie de France, Pasteur Frederic Nicolas Eglise Evangelique. Photo: Gilles Chevriau

It is a place of hospitality and sanctuary where all are welcome and where daily life is inspired by the Christian faith. Joanne said: "We hope you will find Colomba le Roc to be a safe place where you can shelter for a while and allow yourself to be strengthened and encouraged, so that, refreshed and inspired

by God's love, you can return to your everyday life."

The centre is ecumenical in outlook, and its liturgy is inspired by the Celtic tradition. Joanne added: "The name Colomba le Roc not only points to the Scottish Celtic Christian tradition, but it also reminds us that the Holy Spirit guides us; that Jesus Christ, through his life and ministry, is the rock on which we build; and that peace, God's shalom, is what we pray and aim for in life."

The blessing was carried out by the Rev Irene Bom, Moderator of the International Presbytery, and the ecumenical service of dedication was led by the Vicar General of Cahors, Père Florent Millet. Also involved in the service were representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church, *Eglise Protestante Unie de France*, the Anglican Diocese of Midi Pyrenees-Aude, and the French Evangelical Church. A multi-denominational choir sang in both French and English.

Representatives of the church in Athelstaneford, East Lothian, and the Scots International Church in Rotterdam took part in the blessing of the bell.

The service was followed by the traditional French '*vin de l'amitié*' and a 'Scottish tea'.

Stewardship Campaign 2019

Update

At the AGM in March the Treasurer's Report showed a steady decline in income over the past few years. A Stewardship Campaign was launched to raise the awareness of the congregation

and encourage increased regular contributions with a target to balance the Ordinary General Fund.

The summary below compares the first seven months of 2019 to



the same period last year. Income has increased by €4000 and expenditure has decreased by €2000, which has reduced our Ordinary General Fund deficit by €6000 to €11000. Balance of the general fund is due to the extra-ordinary income which includes proceeds from the Auction of Talents of just over €3000 and one-off gifts.

This is good news but the projection to the end of year is less favourable. Although offerings will increase by €6000 we will lose the income from the Hoeksteen Church who left in June, resulting in an Ordinary General Fund deficit of €20000 (reducing to €7000 after taking into account extra-ordinary income).

Thanks to all those members who have increased and maintained their new level of offering. We still, however, have some way to go and so the Consistory continues to encourage all members to review their level of regular giving so that our own regular offerings become sufficient to sustain the viability of the congregation in the coming years.

Accounts for Period ended 31 July 2019

GENERAL FUND SUMMARY

	2019		2018	
	€	€	€	€
INCOME				
<u>Ordinary General Income</u>				
Offerings	34,055		30,765	
Other Ordinary General Income	1,501		580	
Use of Premises (long contracts)	8,864			
			<u>9,059</u>	
Total Ordinary General Income		<u>44,420</u>		<u>40,404</u>
EXPENDITURE				
	29,881		31,596	
Local Staffing Costs	1,073		866	
			<u>866</u>	
Total Ministry Costs		<u>30,954</u>		<u>32,462</u>
Buildings Costs				
Utilities	10,966		11,751	
	7,968			
Maintenance/insurance/Tax/cleaning etc.			<u>6,866</u>	
Total Buildings Costs		<u>18,935</u>		<u>18,617</u>
Other Local costs		<u>5,529</u>		<u>6,343</u>
Total Ordinary General Expenditure		<u>55,418</u>		<u>57,422</u>
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)		<u>(10,997)</u>		<u>(17,017)</u>
<u>Extra-ordinary Income</u>				
Gifts	4,796		95	
Lower hall rental (short contracts)	6,438		3,222	
Other extra-ordinary Income	92		<u>2,260</u>	
Total Extra-Ordinary General Income		<u>11,326</u>		<u>5,577</u>
EXCESS GENERAL INCOME		<u>328</u>		<u>(11,440)</u>

Starting a House or Family Devotion

My family and I have found it very beneficial to hold a regular House or Family Devotion. We started this just over two years ago and still gather daily (except Sundays) from five to six pm for an hour of praying, praise, Bible reading and study of God's Word.

I like to share this experience with you readers and hope you will use this to your spiritual advantage.

Apart from attending SICR Services and Bible Study you can enrich your Christian religious life by Bible Reading and Praying. But I guess you know that. (see next page)

Herald Deadline

Items for the Autumn (October and November) Issue of the Herald should be given to Bob Hensen or sent to the church office by **18-09-2019**.

We hope that issue will be available on **29-09-2019**

August 2019

Mary Tataw Eyere Tataw
 Wisteria Cairo
 Virginia Hendriks
 Dorcas Nthoki-Nyamai
 Joyce Mensah
 Joost Pot
 Shrarani Joshi
 Jean Galloway
 Beverly Bouwman
 David Dziworshie
 Evert Dorn
 Lynda Bureau
 Daniel Oppong-Sarfo
 Solomon Stifanos
 Max Ferdinandus
 Margriet van Overbeeke

September 2019

Gabi Jang
 Johan Wagenaar
 Hank Meldrum
 Jim van Putten
 Liz van der Velden,
 Ingrid Evovo-Belksma
 Chanté Fleming
 Allen Foster
 Moira Lawson
 Fanny Mensah
 Jaco Jacobs
 Brendan van der Velden,
 Kelly Bouwman
 Sinead Wolfert-Schot
 Shanon Fleming

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

I have found it very beneficial to set up a House or Family devotion.

Choosing a set time of the day, e.g. before or after meals in the afternoon/evening the family comes together for an hour of devotion. Family members take turns to lead, open with a prayer, and suggest songs and Bible texts.

Discussion on Bible passages can then take place as well as having a closer look at the lyrics of songs and hymns. Closing with a prayer of thanksgiving can be by another family member.

Tools you can use: Church of Scotland and other websites, Daily Bread, and Daily Readings from the Order of Service. Obtaining an NIV Study Bible from Amazon or Bol.com is a good investment for your devotion. The SICR still has a good number of 'Songs of Praise', our former hymn book available against a donation from the Book Stall. Give it a try and let me know!

Ato Bob (bob Hensen).

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Derek Lawson

Worship & Nurture Working Group Convener:

Rizal Sebastian

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Joseph Hoang Nguyen

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Creche: Wenli Wan & Chidinma Chukwu

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Olaf de Zanger.

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