



The Herald

2020 Autumn/Winter



**Newsletter of the
Scots International Church, Rotterdam,
a congregation of the
Church of Scotland and of the
Protestantse Kerk Nederland**

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Letter of our Interim Moderator, Rev. Dr. Lance Stone

Dear Friends,

Being something of a fan of The Beatles, there is one of their songs that comes to my mind as I write this letter: 'Hello Good-bye', for that is rather how it feels to me.

On the one hand I am saying 'Hullo' as your new interim Moderator, taking over from Rev Jan Steyn – but on the other hand I am also saying goodbye, as God willing on October 30th we will induct your new minister, Rev Graham Austin.

I think that you have been very blessed to have such a short vacancy! This period of pandemic, however, has been very testing for all churches and especially so, I am sure, for one in vacancy like yours. It has meant extra responsibilities and pressures falling on some shoulders. I would like to take this opportunity of thanking the Nominating Committee for doing their work so efficiently and moving things forward to well, to the Consistory for steering the church through this period, to all those who have led and organised worship, and to Rev Jan Steyn for his work as interim moderator that made it so easy for me to take over. In all this we can surely see the hand of God and the wind of the Spirit at work.

But Covid, of course, is not the only challenge facing the Church at present. The Scots International Church in Rotterdam is part of a denomination, the Church of Scotland that is currently in some crisis and is having to make enormous changes in order to face the future. Being church in a modern, secular and multi-faith city is a huge challenge. This church here in Rotterdam is relatively buoyant and there is so much that is encouraging, but make no mistake - only God can ensure your future. We must keep close to God, open to God's word and open to the Spirit. And I am sure that God has called Graham Austin here because he has chosen and equipped Graham with the gifts to do that.

It has been good for me to have this short time with you – to conduct worship and to chair Consistory a couple of times and to plan the service of Induction. I wish you every blessing.

Lance



Arrival of Graham and Dee

Well we've arrived!

New country, a new church and a new home.

New people to meet, new experiences to encounter and new ways to learn.

New words to learn, new foods to taste and new sounds to hear.

New sights to see, new roads to walk and new corners to explore.

The new is always a scary road, we like the familiar because it is comfortable and safe. However change in every age and walk of life is inevitable. In this time of pandemic, especially, everything has changed, and everyone has adapted and are living, for a season, under a 'new normal'.

For Dee and I this move is a big change, and we will need to adapt to our new circumstances.

Of course, we picked the best time to move – in the midst of a pandemic. This meant that the induction service, the following social and my first Sunday were not what you or we would have wanted. There are also the restrictions on the physical services and other church activities that mean getting to know each other will take longer. However, we are so grateful for the welcome we have received in the form of phone calls, cards and manse garden visits.

Now our journey together begins in a time when we don't know, clearly, what is ahead. But this we do know, in Jesus, God travels with us. This we do know we are called, whether at home or in church, to worship and prayer, to faithfulness and discipleship, to love and service in the name of Jesus.

Let us remember that Covid-19 does not restrict us in these things, it cannot halt concern nor limit care, it cannot reduce prayer nor distil love. Indeed, we have even more opportunities to share God's love with one another and the communities around us.

During these strange times, can I encourage you all to continue to attend worship whether that is online or in person. Find the space to pray for each other and to be in contact with one another so that we can provide mutual support.

I finish with the words I left my previous congregations which, I hope, will encourage them through their new vacancy as I pray it will help us in our newly filled vacancy: keep the faith, love Jesus and praise God.

Philippians 3:14 'I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.'

God bless
Graham and Dee

NOVEMBER 2020

1st 10:30 Worship & Praise Service

First Service for Rev. Graham Austin, inducted on 31st October 2020

8th 10:30 Remembrance & Worship Service

Annual Remembrance for those who died in WO/II and Peace Keeping

15th 10:30 Worship & Praise Service

22nd 10:30 Worship & Praise Service

29th 10:30 Worship & Praise Service

Some Services will be Live Streamed on <https://kerkdienstgemist.nl/stations/1016/events>

For more information surf to <http://www.scotsintchurch.com>

Please register to attend services at:

<https://www.scotsintchurch.com/2020/06/28www.scotsintchurch.com/register-for-our-church-service/>

A brief vacancy for the Scots International Church

The Scots International Church Rotterdam became vacant again on 26.01.20 when our Rev. Derek G. Lawson had to leave and continue his retirement in France. They were a good and challenging four years. Derek inspired us and kept us on our toes, in particular by adding new hymns to our repertoire.

After the Service on 2nd February, in a Congregational meeting, we selected by secret ballot a nine member Nominating Committee (NomCom). These nine Scots Church members, being *Anneke Pot, Annemarie Fleming, Erna Booman, Irene Jardine, Raneer Damanik, Rebecca Taylor, Richmond Mensah, Ruud Witte, and Rizal Sebastian* took up their task with courage and faith. They worked in confidential isolation guided by our Interim Moderator Rev. Jan Steyn, minister of the Scots church in Paris, France.

Following Derek's last Sunday 26th January, the SICR expected to host successive Locum ministers, starting with Rev. Alex Douglas accompanied by his wife Jill. They proved to be a charming couple, so we enjoyed Alex's sermons, his pastoral visits and Jill's lovely company. Unfortunately they had to leave a week earlier as planned due to a family emergency back in Scotland.

As then COVID19 – Corona pandemic, reared its ugly head, Locums lined up by our Interim Moderator never materialized, the SICR had, so to speak, fend for itself.

With our own resources like Rev. Irene Bom, our Emeritus Rev. Joost Pot

and the Worship Team, Worship Services continued throughout the vacancy period.

Rev. Irene accepted to be a Temporary Locum, while two Worship Teams conducted alternatively Live Video and Audio Services accessible online.

Rev. Kleber Machado and Br. Jacob Theunisz also conducted some Services as Locum.

The NomCom broke their silence when on Sunday 30th August they announced that they had found their Single Nominee in the person of Rev. Graham Austin, who would preach on Sunday 13th September. That Sunday the SICR Congregation voted unanimously accepting the NomCom's choice, hence we had a minister designate.

Rev. Graham Austin and his wife Dee arrived Tuesday afternoon 27th October to take up their ministry, accompanied by Graham's sister and her husband. The latter had unfortunately to go into ten day quarantine.

Rev. Graham and company were received and welcomed to the Manse by the Consistory Clerk, Bob Hensen, who showed them that the Ad Hoc 'Manse welcoming Team' had done a good job on the up-keep as well as doing a full shopping to stock the Manse.

Friday 30th October saw the Induction Service of Rev. Graham Austin by members of the International Presbytery, as minister of the Scots International Church Rotterdam. The occasion was attended by members of the Consistory as well as members of the NomCom.

Now after nearly two weeks, the 'Wittebroodsweken' or honeymoon period is past. This means that it is time start to know each other better and find out how we can work best with each other. Graham will get to know the SICR Consistory, congregation and vice versa.

I am convinced that, despite the dark cloud of restrictions still hanging over us, we are off to a fresh start and benefit of the life of the SICR and Graham as their minister.

By Ato Bob



Congregational Report SICR October '20

Covid-19 and the church

As all other congregations The Scots International Church Rotterdam (SICR) have had only online services for most of the time over the last seven months. Due to Covid-19 members of our congregation couldn't come to church. And even when restrictions were relaxed, most members stayed at home and listened to our services who as always were broadcasted live on the internet.

We could host 30 and later 100 people to attend (by online registration) the service in our sanctuary from June. But that maximum was only (almost) reached twice: when our Nominating Committee had announced that they would make known the name of the sole nominee during worship, and when the Rev. Graham Austin preached as sole nominee. More about that later.

Locums

Our first Locum from February Rev. Alex Douglas and his wife Jill left Rotterdam in March because of the Covid-19 rules in March. We were blessed



with the help of Rev. Irene Bom (OLM) as temporary locum, Rev. Joost Pot (Auxiliary Minister Rotterdam) and a Worship Team. Since the beginning of October we have the Rev. Kleber Machado (pictured left) from St. Andrew's West Parish Church Glasgow.

Vacancy

Due to Covid-19 the Nominating Committee altered their two weekly meetings in church to online meetings. Even the first interview with a candidate was online. The second interview and inspection of the Manse was done in Rotterdam, but it meant that the candidate had to go in self quarantine when returning to the UK.

In September the Nominating Committee announced that Rev. Graham Austin was the sole nominee. After preaching as such in church the vote (on ballot paper and online) of the congregation was unanimously that he would be our new Minister.

The induction of Graham is on Friday October 30 (broadcast live, see details at the end of this report) and the first worship with him as our Minister is Sunday November 1.



Pictures made by Ruud Witte during the Induction Service.

In memoriam Tita Dierx

The way I remember it, Isaac joined the church and the choir first, and attended services often with Stefan. Only after a while did Tita start to join them more and more often. By the time Stefan was a minister with his own church, she was a regular. She loved being part of the church, but was wary of heavy-handed theology that had labels and boxes and glib answers for everything. Once she understood ours was a community of very diverse people who lived happily together, celebrating their differences as much as their similarities, she thrived. She was always to be found helping someone, talking to someone, making plans, trying to improve something – making contact, creating a pleasant atmosphere. Interested. Curious. Down-to-earth. Funny. Full of youthful age-defying energy, outspoken, with an open mind. As an artist she saw beauty in many things, and to her all good things were connected. That view shaped the world she shared with those around her: her family, her school classes, us.



*This is the way many of you will recognise Tita:
As soprano in the churchchoir.*

We know that music, singing, and our choir were important to Tita (and Isaac too), and that singing with us was an expression of, and a commitment to a faith that was not so easily defined in other ways.

At the cremation service Stefan spoke of how Tita's faith sustained her and developed throughout her illness, Jasper reminded us that a little bit of who she was will remain with us too, and Lieke wished her well on the journey she has started ahead of us.

Rest in peace, Tita...

Anneke Pot.

*Be still my soul the Lord is on thy side
Bear patiently the cross of grief or pain
Leave to thy God to order and provide
In every change He faithful will remain
Be still my soul thy best, thy heavenly friend
Through thorny ways leads to a joyful end*

*Be still my soul when dearest friends depart
And all is darkened in the vale of tears
Then shalt thou better know His love His heart
Who comes to soothe thy sorrow and thy fears
Be still my soul the waves and winds shall know
His voice who ruled them while He dwelt below*

*Be still my soul the hour is hastening on
When we shall be forever with the Lord
When disappointment grief and fear are gone
Sorrow forgot love's purest joys restored
Be still my soul when change and tears are past
All safe and blessed we shall meet at last*

Tita and Isaac selected this beautiful and moving song as one of the musical intermezzos for the service at Hofwijk.

Almost everybody who spoke during this service highlighted the fact that Tita has meant a lot for so many people, not only for Isaac and their children and grandchildren.

And this was made very clear on the card: **“Zij heeft veel voor ons betekend”**.

We, Fred and Erna, met Tita and Isaac around 15 years ago when we became members of the Scots International Church Rotterdam. We became good friends and shared a lot of talks and real pleasant events.

When Tita became ill, more than 2 years ago, she started her fight against the cancer. With her youthful, positive and optimistic spirit she was able to handle the chemo treatments very well for a long period of time. She had set a number of targets for herself; she was grateful to be able to meet most of them.

Tita even enjoyed the last couple of months after she had decided to stop the chemo treatments. Last summer was warm and good for her, enjoying mid-week trips together and visits from family and friends.

The last couple of weeks, the family and friends were there for talks, help and support.

We will remember her because she was a good friend and a strong and inspiring woman.

Fred Booman



Painting made by Tita

Who is who in the church?

<p>Minister: Rev. Graham Austin The Manse SICR, Schiedamsevest 121, 3012 BH Rotterdam Tel: 010 4125709 or 06 30599641 E: Gaustin@churchofscotland.org.uk</p> <p>Church Office: Schiedamsesingel 6, tel. 010-4124779 , E: info@scotsintchurch.com</p> <p>Rentals Co-ordinator: <i>Molly Foster,</i> tel: 06 25538320, E: info@scotsintchurch.com</p> <p>Pastoral Care Team Convener: vacant</p> <p>Worship & Nurture team Convener: vacant</p> <p>Organists: <i>Jan Hendrik van der Kamp,</i> E: J.kamp15@chello.nl <i>Netty Dijkstra</i></p> <p>Choir: <i>Anneke Pot</i></p> <p>Joyful Singers: <i>Emmanuel Asara Awuku.</i> 06 1220 0404 E: dadaawuku@yahoo.com</p> <p>Welcome Team: <i>Steve Russell,</i> Tel: 010 5914959, E: srussell@caiway.nl</p>	<p>Youth group: <i>Saskia Dorsman</i> Sunday School: <i>Peace Acquah</i> Creche: <i>Christa Jacobs</i></p> <p>Secretary to the Consistory: <i>Bob Hensen,</i> E: atobobhensen@hotmail.com</p> <p>Safeguarding and Child Protection Officer: <i>Annemarie Fleming,</i> <i>Nyomi Cairo</i></p> <p>Treasurer and offering envelopes: <i>Jim Taylor,</i> Tel: 071 3625835</p> <p>Property team Convener: <i>Olaf de Zanger.</i></p> <p>Finance & Governance team Convener: <i>Fred Booman.</i> Fellowship & Communication team Convener: <i>Bob Hensen.</i></p> <p>Herald & SICR Weekly Bulletin: <i>Bob Hensen:</i> (editor) 06 016808505 E: atobobhensen@hotmail.com <i>Carol de Groot:</i> E: carolkaedegroot@gmail.com <i>Ranee Damanik:</i> E: ran33d@gmail.com</p> <p>Church beamer: <i>Daniel de Jong</i> E: daniel@dejongweb.nl</p> <p>Childrens's Message: <i>Rev. Irene Bom,</i> E: ibsaalem@xs4all.nl</p> <p>Bookstall: <i>Teun Karreman</i> E: karremanski@hotmail.com</p>
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HAPPY BIRTHDAY AND MAY THE LORD
BLESS YOU IN THE COMING YEAR!

<u>November 2020</u>	<u>December 2020</u>
Bob Hensen Gilberto Fleming Christine Galloway Irene van Ginkel Ranee Damanik Elizabeth Adzra Denis Acquaye Denis Galloway Meriam van der Velden, Ornella Jang	Rebecca Taylor Patience Asabea Jan van Put James Essel Menen Tessema-Betre Richmond Mensah Doreen Asare Awuku-Dankwa Chritabel Okoto Tiyudy Pam Russell-Knott Christa Jacobs Stanley Chege Murithi