

“Within these walls let no-one be a stranger”

English Reformed Church, Amsterdam

12 May 2024

Ascension Sunday

Prelude

Dixit Maria - Hans Leo Hassler

Giles Francis - violin;

Dean McHugh, Valerie Robillard, Ellen Ziff - cello

Welcome and announcements

Candle lighting and Call to Worship

Goodness is stronger than evil,
 love is stronger than hate;
light is stronger than darkness,
 life is stronger than death.

Victory is ours

through him who loved us.

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed! Alleluia!



Hymn 445

Alleluia, sing to Jesus! (omitting verse 4)

- 1 Alleluia, sing to Jesus!
his the sceptre, his the throne;
alleluia, his the triumph,
his the victory alone.
Hark! The songs of peaceful Zion
thunder like a mighty flood:
'Jesus, out of every nation,
hath redeemed us by his blood.'

2 Alleluia, not as orphans
are we left in sorrow now;
alleluia, he is near us,
faith believes, nor questions how.
Though the cloud from sight received him
when the forty days were o'er,
shall our hearts forget his promise,
'I am with you evermore'?

3 Alleluia, bread of angels,
here on earth our food, our stay;
alleluia, here the sinful
flee to you from day to day.
Intercessor, friend of sinners,
earth's redeemer, plead for me,
where the songs of all the sinless
sweep across the crystal sea.

5 Alleluia, sing to Jesus!
his the sceptre, his the throne;
alleluia, his the triumph,
his the victory alone.
Hark! the songs of peaceful Zion
thunder like a mighty flood:
'Jesus, out of every nation,
hath redeemed us by his blood.'

Prayer *ending with the Lord's Prayer (in any language)*

Reflection

Hymn 97 *O God, you search me and you know me*

1 God, you search me, and you know me.
All my thoughts lie open to your gaze.
When I walk or lie down, you are before me:
ever the maker and keeper of my days.

- 2 You know my resting and my rising.
You discern my purpose from afar,
and with love everlasting, you besiege me:
in every moment of life or death, you are.
- 3 Before a word is on my tongue, Lord,
you have known its meaning through and through.
You are with me beyond my understanding:
God of my present, my past and future, too.
- 4 Although your Spirit is upon me,
still I search for shelter from your light.
There is nowhere on Earth I can escape you:
even the darkness is radiant in your sight.
- 5 For you created me and shaped me,
gave me life within my mother's womb.
For the wonder of who I am, I praise you:
safe in your hands, all creation is made new.

First Reading Isaiah 66:7-13, OT Page 707

... where God uses very feminine imagery to speak of his love

Before she was in labour

she gave birth;

before her pain came upon her

she delivered a son.

⁸ Who has heard of such a thing?

Who has seen such things?

Shall a land be born in one day?

Shall a nation be delivered in one moment?

Yet as soon as Zion was in labour

she delivered her children.

⁹ Shall I open the womb and not deliver?

says the LORD;

shall I, the one who delivers, shut the womb?
says your God.

¹⁰ Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad for her,
all you who love her;
rejoice with her in joy,
all you who mourn over her—

¹¹ that you may nurse and be satisfied
from her consoling breast;
that you may drink deeply with delight
from her glorious bosom.

¹² For thus says the LORD:
I will extend prosperity to her like a river,
and the wealth of the nations like an overflowing stream;
and you shall nurse and be carried on her arm,
and dandled on her knees.

¹³ As a mother comforts her child,
so I will comfort you;
you shall be comforted in Jerusalem.

Music in Worship *Sicut Cervus* - Giovanni da Palestrina

Second Reading Luke 24:44-53, NT Page 87

... the account of Jesus's farewell and ascension

Then he said to them, 'These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.' ⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, ⁴⁶ and he said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.'

⁵⁰ Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. ⁵¹ While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. ⁵² And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; ⁵³ and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

Hymn 438 *The Head that once was crowned with thorns*

1 The Head that once was crowned with thorns
is crowned with glory now;
a royal diadem adorns
the mighty Victor's brow.

2 The highest place that heaven affords
is his, is his by right,
the King of kings, and Lord of lords,
and heaven's eternal Light.

3 The joy of all who dwell above,
the joy of all below
to whom he manifests his love,
and grants his name to know:

4 To them the cross, with all its shame,
with all its grace, is given;
their name an everlasting name,
their joy the joy of heaven.

5 They suffer with their Lord below,
they reign with him above,
their profit and their joy to know
the mystery of his love.

6 The cross he bore is life and health,
though shame and death to him,
his people's hope, his people's wealth,
their everlasting theme.

Sermon *...followed by a time of silence for reflection*

Hymn 117 *Mothering God, you gave me birth*

- 1 Mothering God, you gave me birth
in the bright morning of this world.
Creator, source of every breath,
you are my rain, my wind, my sun;
you are my rain, my wind, my sun.
- 2 Mothering Christ, you took my form,
offering me your food of light,
grain of life, and grape of love,
your very body for my peace;
your very body for my peace.
- 3 Mothering Spirit, nurturing one,
in arms of patience hold me close,
so that in faith I root and grow,
until I flower, until I know;
until I flower, until I know.

Prayers of Concern

The Offering and Prayer of Dedication

Pastorale from Concerto Grosso Op. 6 - Arcangelo Corelli

Hymn 459 *Crown Him with many crowns*

- 1 Crown him with many crowns,
the Lamb upon his throne;
Hark! how the heavenly anthem drowns
all music but its own.
Awake, my soul, and sing
of him who died for thee,
and hail him as thy matchless King
through all eternity.

2 Crown him the Lord of life,
who triumphed o'er the grave,
and rose victorious in the strife
for those he came to save.
His glories now we sing
who died and rose on high,
who died eternal life to bring,
and lives that death may die.

3 Crown him the Lord of love;
behold his hands and side,
rich wounds yet visible above,
in beauty glorified.
All hail, Redeemer, hail!
for thou hast died for me:
thy praise shall never, never fail
throughout eternity.

Benediction *followed by sung Amen*

Postlude *Sortie Festivo - Ludwig Boslet*

This morning's service is conducted by the locum,

Rev Dr. John Bell

The reader is Heleen Koning

The elders on duty are Jaap Maas and Sies Plokker

Today

- **Crèche for infants and toddlers (0-4 years old) is available this morning and every Sunday worship service.** The crèche is located in a room on the left side of the building. If you need directions, please ask one of the elders on duty.

- **Junior Church (12-16 years old)** meets today during the latter half of the service. Visitors are welcome to join!

Upcoming events

- **Women's Fellowship (with potluck dinner) on Monday, 13 May**, from 18:30-21:00. If you would like to join in, please contact the hostess, Je Hart (jecorro@hotmail.com).
- **Bible Study on Wednesday, 15 May, 19:30** at the Manse or via Zoom, led by Rev John Bell. All are welcome to join us at the Jan Willem Brouwersstraat 9-2 (Amsterdam) or via this link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87189899249>
- **Minister Nominee**
The Nominating Committee has determined a minister nominee who will lead worship on **Sunday, 26 May**. Following the service, a congregational vote will take place regarding the minister nominee. Having devoted much prayerful consideration to discerning a minister nominee whom it thinks best suited to lead the congregation, the Nominating Committee hopes that it has served the congregation well.
- **Night of The Refugee on 15-16 June.**
This year a group will again be walking 40/20/10 km through the night, raising money to support refugees all over the world. If you'd like to join our group and help refugees please get in touch with Gillian on gillian.walker.ams@icloud.com
Here are some links if you'd like to know more:
<https://www.nachtvande vluchteling.nl/>
<https://www.nachtvande vluchteling.nl/project/haarlem-amsterdam>
And if you don't feel like walking you could volunteer to help set up and/or support those with blisters and bags under their eyes.
<https://www.nachtvande vluchteling.nl/updates/7601-vrijwilligers-gezocht-en-handige-toolkits>
All are welcome to join in!

Other Notices

- **Prayer:** Those who feel especially **in need of prayer** either for themselves or for someone else or have a particular prayer request, please contact Peggy Krol, peggy.krol@planet.nl. She and the prayer team will pray accordingly.
- **Finance:** Please note that besides the weekly collection in church, you can also donate to the ERC's General Fund, Mulanje Mission Hospital and Maintenance Fund via bank transfer:

Maintenance Fund: *Stichting Friends of the English Reformed Church* NL90 ABNA 0624 1800 69

General Fund or Mulanje Mission Hospital: *English Reformed Church* NL44 ABNA 0547 6235 50

Alternatively, please feel free to use these QR codes for a Tikkie or to use PayPal:

Coming up

19 May: Pentecost Service
26 May: Minister Nominee
27 May: Women's Fellowship
29 May: Bible Study



Church contacts

Interim Moderator, Rev Jimmy Brown jbrown@churchofscotland.org.uk

Locum Minister, Rev Dr. John Bell jlb31@tiscali.co.uk

Scriba Team,

Mattia Falcone, Sies Plokker scriba@erc.amsterdam

Treasurer, Charles Vanderpuye treasurer@erc.amsterdam

Director of Music, Richard Zook organist@erc.amsterdam

Church Officer, Susan Polstra churchofficer@erc.amsterdam

Webteam,

Laura Elliott, Annemiek Sinnige webteam@erc.amsterdam

Visit us at
www.erc.amsterdam