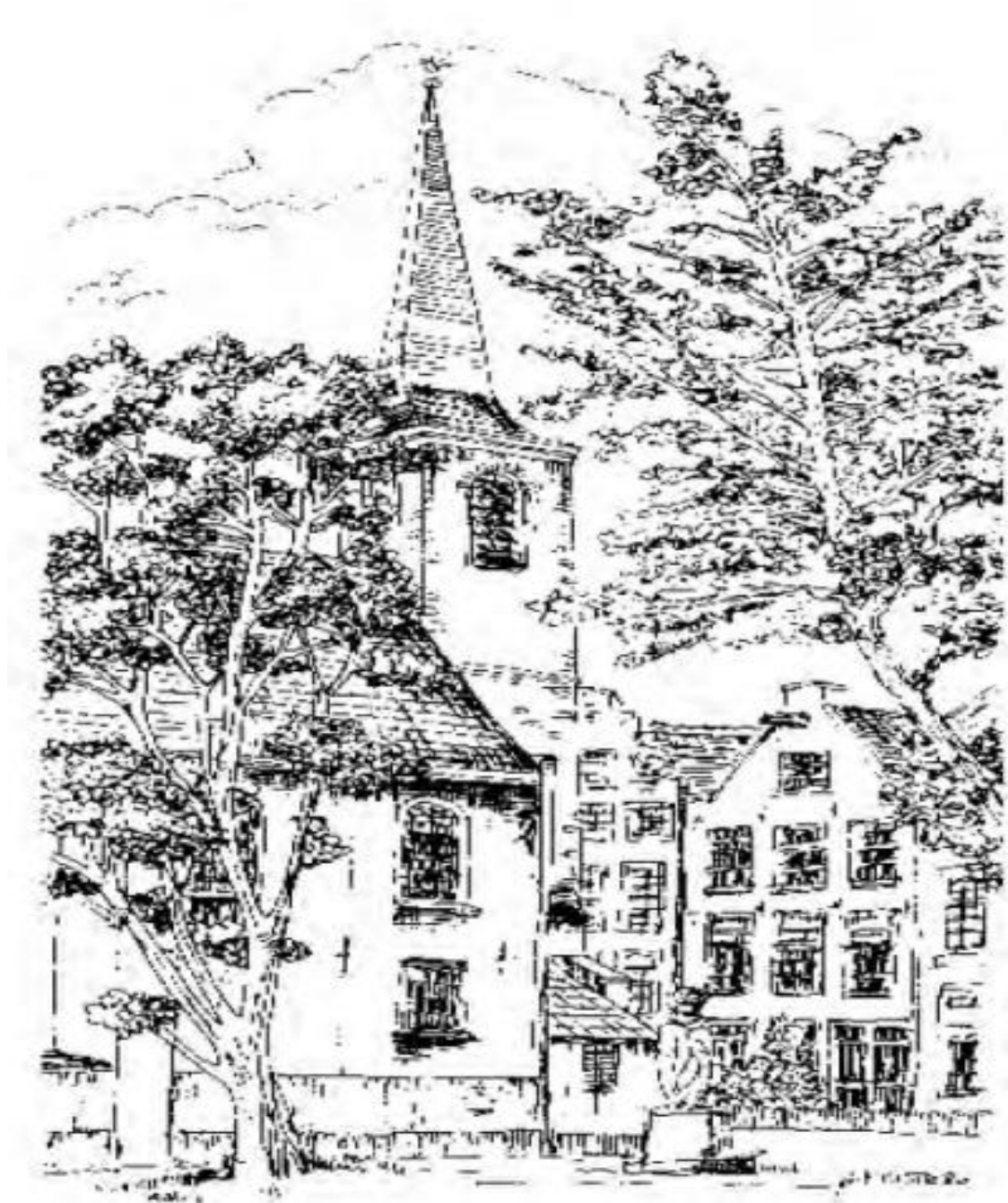


# *The*

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# *R e c o r d*

February-March 2016  
2016 Vol. 1

The English Reformed Church  
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### ***Special Notice:***

For environmental & cost saving reasons, we'd like to go as paperless as possible. So, over the next few months we will be making this transition.

However, we understand that there will be some who may prefer to continue receiving the paper version of The Record.

For those who'd like to continue receiving the paper version of The Record, please contact Veronica Garcia-Robles, ERC Lay Assistant, so she's aware.

For those who are happy to access The Record digitally, it is available on our ERC website and you can sign up for our newsletter online as well at:

<http://www.ercadam.nl>

### ***A Very Special Thank You to Susan Polstra:***

*For 18 years, Susan volunteered her time and talents to assemble, edit and publish The Record for the English Reformed Church! Her important work over the years ensured that the members of the ERC congregation kept up to date about the many activities, news and information that happened within the church. By keeping everyone well informed, Susan assisted greatly in helping others become involved in the life of the church. Thank you very much Susan for all your years of hard work and dedication in publishing The Record and for sharing your time and talents!*

### ***Thank You from the Sunday School:***

*The Sunday School sends a big thank you to Nick Thomas who wrote and led the Nativity Play in December! We also thank all the children who participated and all other volunteers who helped make the Nativity Play successful!*



### ***Thank You from Peggy Krol:***

*A heartfelt thank you to all who have expressed their sympathy and support during the illness and after the death of my beloved husband, Eelke.*

*The many cards, emails and offers of support and help were and are very much appreciated. Many thanks to all.*

*Peggy Krol*

# Minister's Letter

Dear Friends,

With Easter so early this year it seems we have barely recovered from Christmas than the season of Lent is upon us, the six week period leading up to Easter when we remember the period Jesus spent being tempted in the wilderness at the start of his earthly ministry and the events that led to his death at the end of it. Insofar as our contemporary, secular society recognises the season of Lent at all it has become associated with 'giving things up' – a time to detox and to go easy on the booze or the chocolates. For Christians, however, it has a far more serious purpose. At its simplest, observance of Lent involves a recognition that, as with the other key Christian festival of Christmas, the great celebrations of our faith require preparation if they are going to be meaningful and if we are going to participate in them fully. To begin to appreciate and understand the full significance of what we call the Incarnation, God becoming flesh in Jesus Christ, we cannot just turn up on Christmas day and sing some carols. Preparation, build-up is necessary so that we hit Christmas day running. Hence the period we call Advent, when we take time to put the events of Christmas into some wider Biblical context. Similarly with Easter. We need to get ready for the astounding news that Jesus who was crucified rose from the dead. We need to orient ourselves so as to try to make sense of it. Hence the period of Lent.

It is doubtless an over-simplification, but we might distinguish the periods of Advent and Lent this way. Advent is about the world's need for a Saviour; Lent is about *my* need of a saviour. The focus of Advent tends to be the world in all its conflict and pain and the fact that God in Christ has entered into it. The focus of Lent tends to be the life of the individual, our personal struggles with things that rob us of life, our succumbing to temptations and weaknesses that mar our lives. So Lent is a time of self-reflection, a time to look inwards, to ask God to show us things that need changing. And six weeks of that prepares us to enter with Jesus into his journey to the cross where he shouldered the sins of the world, rising victorious and triumphant on Easter day.

Below you will find a summary of several activities that will be taking place in Lent. You are invited to participate as fully as possible. All of these will of course also be publicised in our weekly bulletins and on our website. I invite you to participate as fully as possible in these activities so that Lent may be a full and meaningful journey for you and so that you may arrive at Easter Sunday fully prepared to celebrate the astounding news that Jesus is risen.

With very best wishes to you all,

Lance

## Consistory Meeting Report - Dec. 2015 & Jan. 2016

In the January meeting we looked back at the busy month of December with all our Christmas services and events. The wonderful Advent services, Stir-up Sunday, the Carols by Candlelight, the Nativity Play, Christmas party, Carol singing, Christmas Eve and Christmas day services, all of these in our beautifully decorated church, were organised with the help of many and visited by many. It was a very good way to end the year and was an inspiration for the start of 2016.

### ***Membership Matters:***

Nathali Kuhn, Hilde Neels, Alessandra Luzzani and Laurie Howland-Heckman and Dick van Spijk were admitted into membership of the English Reformed Church in the January meeting.

James Lawrie will be admitted into membership by baptism. In one of the services in the first quarter of 2016 we will welcome the new members.

### ***Music at the ERC:***

In the January meeting both Richard Zook, our music director, and Kenneth Ewen, concert organiser, were invited to the meeting.

After his start in September 2015, Richard focused on the choir, preparations for Christmas and regular services. He also took the lead in the replacement of the Bechstein grand piano for the Yamaha. Richard was applauded for his diligence, his professional approach and his spirit, which can be experienced in the choir and the music he plays each week in the services.

Kenneth presented an overview of concerts in 2015 and other matters. We had a slight increase of concerts in 2015 compared to 2014. It is difficult these days to publicise the concerts on the Uit in Amsterdam website. This means we have to look for other ways. The Publicity committee will be asked for support. Pastor Lance thanked Kenneth for all his work for the church but also for the way he cares for all the musicians and visitors through the year.

### ***Finance Report:***

The income and expenditure until November 2015 was discussed. Thanks to an increase of donations, we are looking towards ending the year with a small surplus. For more information you will find a separate report from the Treasurer in this Record.

### ***Mulanje Mission Benefit Concert November 27<sup>th</sup>:***

Despite the slow start in ticket sales we still had good turnout for the Ricky Ross concert. The result of the Mulanje benefit concert (counted on December 31, 2015) was €10.430, which falls €2.518 short of the target. Contributions are still coming in. If the target is reached, then the total result, adding the

Wilde Ganzen donation (which is a percentage of the income), will be €19.432. A big thank you to all who helped, to Ricky Ross and his crew and to Richard Stokoe who donated two paintings for auctioning.

***Finding a new Elder:***

Consistory decided on opening up the process of finding a new elder. We are welcoming nominations by members of the congregation. On the basis of the nominations, which can be written down on a special paper during the last three Sundays of the January, Consistory will select a candidate who will be presented to the congregation following the rules of the Church of Scotland.

The conveners of the Worship and Christian Education Committee (pastor Lance), the Outreach and Social Committee (Thijs Glasz) and Publicity committee (Laura Elliott) reported back on their activities. The Property Committee will be installed this year.

After many years of hard work as editor of the Record, ***Susan Polstra*** was ready to hand over management of the publication. We all thank Susan for her creativity, all her hours she put into this work and her patience when needing to chase people for their contributions. The Record has proved to be a very important part of the “glue” of our church. Susan will be handing over to Veronica Garcia-Robles and the Publicity committee.

The next Consistory meetings will be held on February 1 and March 7. If you have any questions or would like to bring up a topic at the meeting, please feel free to contact me.

Heleen Koning (scriba@ercadam.nl)



**Christmas at the ERC**

# 7 Finance Report

January – December 2015, Amounts in €

	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2014 vs 2013</u>
Income			
Donations	100,040.26	75,462.91	24,577.35
Collections	46,018.16	47,230.99	- 1,212.83
Church hire	25,029.43	22,370.30	2,659.13
Concerts	13,706.00	14,265.50	- 559.50
Weddings	8,120.00	7,837.00	283.00
Church shop	121.00	206.00	- 85.00
Flowers	331.35	114.26	217.09
Extra Income	9,572.53		
	<b>202,938.73</b>	<b>167,486.96</b>	<b>25,879.24</b>

Writing the treasurer's report in January is always a bit of a challenge. I want to report about the last year, but I also do not want to give away too many details as we will have the AGM – and I want to motivate you to come to this meeting.

I am delighted, however, to let you know that we closed 2015 with a surplus of more than €25.000, thanks to your loyal and gracious giving! This enables us to think about new projects and new endeavours this year!

We were able to pay salaries and all bills, which meant we could keep general maintenance going, such as keeping the lights on, the church warm, the water running, our papers printing, etc. We could keep this and the many other multitude of things that comprise our daily congregational life going!

We also made an impact in the world around us in Amsterdam (e.g. cooking at the Kloof) and in Malawi. We transferred €16.154,88 to the Mulanje Mission hospital, which they really needed this year as they face major drought & daily power cuts.

Please note, there is still a great opportunity to give to the special donation in the context of our Mulanje Mission Concert in November. When you make a special donation and write "MMH concert project" on it, the Dutch organisation Wilde Ganzen will add 50% on top of your contribution! This will be possible until end of March of this year, when we intend to close the project.

This is just one of many little stories I've collected from 2015 which I look forward to telling you more about at the AGM!

As always, if you have any questions or comments please feel free to contact me anytime at treasurer@ercadam.nl or (0294) 77 29 34.

*Thorsten König, Treasurer*

# Upcoming Concerts & Choir / Special Music Notices

## CONCERTS IN FEBRUARY

### Feb. 15 (Mon.) at 13:00

Royal Grammar School Senior Chamber Choir, Newcastle, England;  
led by Zlatan Fazlić

#### **Program:**

K. Jenkins; *L'homme armé* ('The Armed Man') Kyrie elision  
J. S Bach: Jesu, joy of man's desiring  
J. Rutter: The Lord Bless you and keep you , For the beauty of the Earth  
H. Goodal : The Lord is my shepherd  
R. Jones : Farewell, Dear Love  
Simon & Garfunkel: Bridge over troubled water  
Georg Friederich Handel: Pieces from the Messiah  
Spiritual Ev'ry time I feel the spirit  
Sting: Field of Gold  
Lennon & McCartney: All you need is love

\* *All these concerts are free!*

\* *All are welcome to attend!*

#### **Special Music in the Sunday Service:**

1/31: Olja Bucu, organ;  
Margareth Richards,  
mezzo soprano  
2/7: Giles Francis, violin  
2/14: Choir  
2/21: Guest string quartet  
3/6: Choir  
3/20: Choir (Palm Sunday)  
3/25: Choir (Good Friday)

## CONCERTS IN MARCH

### Mar. 19 (Sat.) at 16:00

The King's Voices, King's College Cambridge and Vocal Ensemble Cappella Nova  
Amsterdam; led by Ben Parry and Jurjen Vis

#### **Program:**

English choir music from the Renaissance  
i.e. William Byrd: Ne Irascaris and Justorum Animae  
Orlando Gibbons: Lord, in thy wrath

### Mar. 25 (Fri.) at 13:00

Ranelagh School Choir, Berkshire, England; led by Harriet Starkey

#### **Program:**

i.e. Georg Friederich Handel: Hallelujah Chorus from the Messiah  
Giovanni Battista Martini: Tristis Est  
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: Ave Verum Corpus and Allelujah  
Anton Bruckner: Locus Iste  
John Rutter : For the Beauty of the Earth and God be in My Head  
Howard Goodall: The Lord is My Shepherd  
Singing in the Rain, Fly Me To the Moon and What a Wonderful World



# Worship Services & Studies

## Midweek Fellowship:

**Bible Study:** 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month

Our Bible Study is a course on Prayer (beginning January through March), using DVD materials by American author Philip Yancey. Deliberately timed to run through Lent, this study offers an opportunity to consider our prayer lives during this season.

The sessions are as follows:

Wed Jan 20<sup>th</sup> : the View from Above

Wed Feb 3<sup>rd</sup> : Why Pray?

Wed Feb 17<sup>th</sup> : Keeping Company with God

Wed March 2<sup>nd</sup> : How to Pray

Wed March 16<sup>th</sup> : Prayer Problems

Wed March 30<sup>th</sup> : Does Prayer Change Anything?

**Taizé Service:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month

**Ladies Fellowship:** Last week of the month

The Ladies Fellowship meets once a month, usually the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each month. We meet around 6:30pm for a (potluck) dinner together and later a time of fellowship. This year we will be looking at and discussing the lessons from Elizabeth George's book, "Experiencing God's Peace" from the Series 'A Woman After God's Own Heart'.

All ladies are welcome! If you are interested in joining us please see or contact Peggy Krol at [peggy.krol@planet.nl](mailto:peggy.krol@planet.nl) and let her know if you would like to be added to the invitation mailing list.

**Men's Group:** Last week of the month



***Celebrating Epiphany***

*We had many successful services in December!*

*Among the most attended were the Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Carols by Candlelight Services.*

*Thanks to all who came to the services and participated in them!*



***Christmas Party/Christingle***

## Church / Volunteer Notices

### De Kloof:

*The ERC is committed to cook for the homeless once every first Monday of the month at De Kloof.*

*If you would like to volunteer to cook, please contact Gillian Walker at [dekloof@ercadam.nl](mailto:dekloof@ercadam.nl) for more information.*

*"For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink". (Matthew 25:35a)*

### Coffee Rota:

*We need more volunteers to help serve the coffee! If you'd like to help, contact Johan de Villiers at [jhsdev@iafrica.com](mailto:jhsdev@iafrica.com).*

*"Serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received". (1 Peter 4:10b)*

### Church Library:

*Did you know we have a church library? You can find a full catalogue of our ERC books listed on our church website! Be sure to check it out!*

*"For wisdom will come into your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul". (Proverbs 2:10)*

### Donations:

*In December, thanks to your donations, we collected two full carloads of warm clothes & coats for the refugees & homeless. Thank you to all who made a difference and helped keep people warm! Please note that the collection of warm clothing is now finished.*

\* \* \* \* \*

*During the month of February, we will now be collecting much needed toiletry items for the refugees (shampoo, soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, etc).*

*"Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise".*

*(Luke 3:11)*

### Open Church Greeters:

*Did you know that the church stays open for visitors during the week? Last year we had more than 256,000 visitors!*

*We need volunteers to serve as church greeters! If you have time during the day to help, please contact Els Nooij at: [p.nooij68@chello.nl](mailto:p.nooij68@chello.nl).*

*"I was a stranger and you welcomed me". (Matthew 25:35b)*

# Church / Volunteer Notices

## Creche:

*The Creche is open during Sunday services for children ages 0 - 3 years.*

## Sunday School:

*The Sunday School (for ages 4-11 years) is held during Sunday services at the ABC Treehouse, Voetboogstraat 11. Classes end at 11:45. Parents, please pickup your children at the Treehouse after church. Thank you!*

## Junior Church:

*The Junior Church (for ages 12+ years) is held during Sunday services at the ABC Treehouse, Voetboogstraat 11.*

## Upcoming Junior Church Event:

*All JC teens are welcome to join us for a*

### **MOVIE NIGHT**

*on **Feb. 6** from **16:00-18:30***

*at the Manse: J.W. Brouwersstraat 9, Amsterdam.*

*For more information, please contact Veronica Garcia-Robles,  
ERC Lay Assistant.*

## 20's & 30's Group

*In December, the 20's and 30's group gathered together for a light meal and night out to see the Amsterdam Light Festival. All in all, 10 people met up to see the creative, interactive and artistic light displays together! If you would like to find out more about our young, Christian 20's & 30's group, please contact Consistory Member, Laura Elliott.*



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