

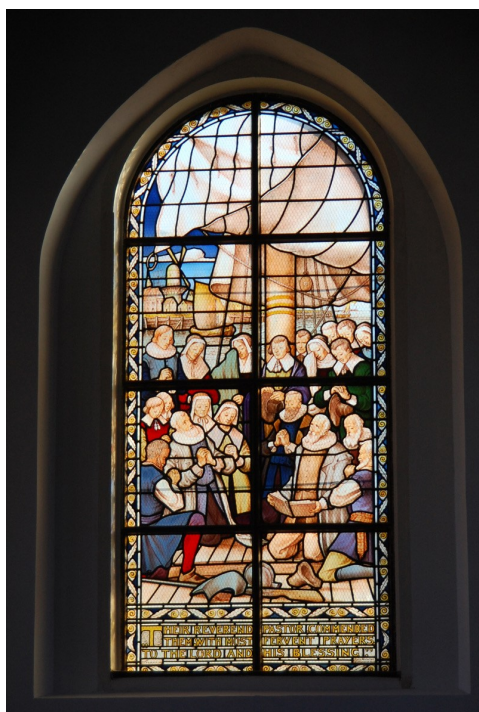


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The Record

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The English Reformed Church
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www.ercadam.nl

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Minister's Letter

Dear Friends,

Many of you will be aware that this year, 2020, marks an important anniversary that is of some relevance to our church. On the 6th of September 1620, 400 years ago, the ship *The Mayflower* set sail from the town of Plymouth in England with 102 passengers and about 30 crew aboard, landing two months later, on November 11th, in what is now called Cape Cod in Massachusetts. Many of the passengers on that ship had come from Leyden on a ship called *The Speedwell*, docking in Plymouth and transferring to *The Mayflower* because it had sprung a leak. Before that, many of them had spent time in Amsterdam. These people were exiles, mostly from England, and had come to Amsterdam in search of religious liberty. They did not stay very long here as it was not deemed conducive to their strong religious views, and hence the move to Leyden and eventually to the New World.

The relationship of these pilgrims (or puritans as they were known, as they were in search of a purer form of faith) to our church is unclear. However, in 1920, on the 300th year anniversary of the sailing of *The Speedwell* and *Mayflower*, some Americans from Chicago funded a brass plaque on the north wall of the church commemorating the pilgrims, and in the same year another American funded the stained glass window that overlooks the east end of the church.

The pilgrims who came to Amsterdam and ended up in America were very concerned with the relationship of the church to the state, and believed that in England they were far too closely intertwined. This is one reason why I would suspect that the pilgrims would have had little to do with our church. In those days the civil authorities paid the wages of the minister, and our sanctuary contains significant (albeit slightly later) indicators of the relationship between church and state that pertained then: a brass lectern in the pulpit that was given to the church in 1689 by King William III and his wife Mary, and the Burgomaster's pew on the south side of the church where important civic figures sat. All this, I am sure, would have been anathema to the pilgrims and no wonder they left! But fascinating questions are raised about the relationship between the church and the state, Christians and the world - questions which are as urgent and relevant today as ever, especially in the light of what we call secularisation, church decline and the erosion of Christianity. I hope in this year to address these issues from time to time in sermons.

Meanwhile, below you will find details of an important event we are hosting to commemorate this important anniversary: a book launch and public talk. Please come along.

All good wishes,

Lance

Consistory Report

Before Christmas, Consistory welcomed four new elders.

Membership issues

On December 8, three participants of the recent Walk through the Bible course were baptised: Emad Adbi, Ibrahim Afrabimissal and Susan Davies.

On December 23, Mrs Janny Schouten passed away. Mrs Schouten (and her late husband Henny) were very active members of the congregation in past years.

Rev Eric Foggitt was inducted in St Andrews Church of Scotland in Brussels on February 7.

Elisabeth IJmker, Andreas Decker, Sies Plokker and Charles Vanderpuye were welcomed by Pastor Lance for their first Consistory meetings. The four of them were ordained on the 22nd of December. Charles Vanderpuye will be taking over the role of treasurer from Thorsten König. This was formally and unanimously endorsed by Consistory in the January meeting. Thorsten and Charles will work closely together towards an official handover during the upcoming Annual General Meeting on 19 April 2020.

Victoria Lavelle agreed to replace Sies Plokker as auditor for the 2019 accounts. Consistory thanked Victoria for her offer and endorsed Victoria performing the audit together with Eduard van Starrenburg.

Finance

Thorsten proposed a conservative budget for 2020, based on the numbers of October 2019, projected towards the end of the year.

A “place holder” contribution of € 20,000 for maintenance in case required was asked from the Stichting Friends of the English Reformed Church.

The Salvesen Fund decided not to grant us any funding in 2020. Consistory formally approved the proposed budget for 2020, thanking the treasurer for all his diligent work

The E-donation system was set up. Consistory approved the treasurer’s proposal to continue allocating the cash donations to the Friends foundation and the electronic donations towards the running expenses of the church. This will be reviewed in 12 months after having a better idea of the results of the e-donation system.

Consistory looked back at a wonderful Christmas period, with well-visited services and beautiful music. The Yarn Bomb on December 22nd went really well. Richard Zook and the singers did a wonderful job. Hundreds of knitted angels were handed out to the people on the Spui. Most people felt very welcome. People wanted to buy angels and about € 1,000 was raised. Part of this money will go towards choir robes and another large part will go to Mulanje. A small amount will be kept for future knitting activities. The general feeling was to continue knitting and explore new ideas. The first Easter egg prayer mats and pocket

crosses are already made. A big thank you to Gillian who initiated and co-ordinated together with Sally, Jessica Bell and many others.

The Mulanje Mission Hospital Charity event will take place on March 20, with Velvet Joe and the Blue Grass Diamonds performing.

Victoria Lavelle agreed to organise the ticket sales in place of Ingrid who informed Consistory she wished to step down from this responsibility after ten years.

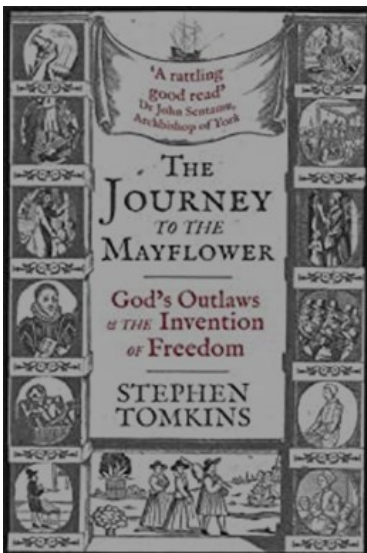
Consistory meetings are held each first Monday of the month (dates are subject to change in case of a national holiday) and the meetings are open to all members. If you have a topic you would like to discuss with Consistory, please contact the minister or the scribe.



Heleen Koning

April 19th: Annual General Meeting ERC

Every year Consistory gives the congregation an overview of the developments in the past year. The minister and scribe give their reports, the treasurer presents the financial state of the church and there is time to highlight a few special topics. The Annual report will be available as of April 4 (both printed and in PDF format). All are welcome to join the meeting after the service on April 19.



400th Anniversary Celebration of the Pilgrims

Friday May 29th at the English Reformed Church

19.00 hrs Book launch of

The Journey to the Mayflower
God's Outlaws and the Invention of freedom
by Stephen Tomkins

19.30 hrs: Public talk by Stephen Tomkins

Stephen Tomkins is the author of eight books on Christian history, a journalist who has written for The Guardian and the BBC, and a broadcaster whose work has included BBC TV and radio and the World Service.

The Pilgrim Window

Daniel Campbell-Benson lives in the USA and visits Amsterdam every summer. During his stays he worships at our church. And was intrigued by the Pilgrim Window

You can't fail to notice it. The pilgrim stained glass window is centered at the back of the chancel directly behind the Communion table. The colors, the somber faces set against a composition of sails and sky emand attention. Who were these people and why is this stained glass window placed here, the only stained glass in the church?

The people depicted in the window called themselves Separatists. They had separated from the Church of England, refused to acknowledge its hierarchy, rejected its use of vestments, and refused to use the Anglican Prayer Book. Unsurprisingly they were persecuted and criminalized. They fled England for Holland where they hoped to practice their religion openly.

Holland was tolerant of protestant dissenters allowing religious refugees to openly practice their religion. However, the Separatists were too extreme for the Dutch Reformed Church; they refused them the use of their churches and withheld financial support.

The first wave of Separatists came in the late 1500's. Henry Ainsworth formed the first congregation in Amsterdam by 1596.¹ His congregation was joined in 1608 by another wave of separatists, this was the group depicted in the window and now known as the Pilgrims.



An image of a copy of the "Embarkation of the Pilgrims" painted by Robert Walter Weir in 1843 and housed in the Capital Rotunda in Washington, D.C. The copy was painted in 1875 by Edgar Parker, and housed in the Pilgrim Hall Museum, Plymouth, Massachusetts. The scan is provided by the museum.

The Pilgrims were in Amsterdam for about eight months before moving on to Leiden in 1609. Although our church was an English speaking church established in 1607, the Pilgrims, when in Amsterdam, worshipped in Ainsworth's church near the Stopera.^{2,3} While in Amsterdam, the Pilgrims and their fellow Separatists were not on good relations with the English speaking congregation of our church. The pastor, John Paget, was a puritan and highly critical of them.⁴

So, we know who the people were that are depicted, why the poses and the mood? The Pilgrims were leaving Leiden where they had lived for over a decade, working in Leiden's flourishing textile industry. They lived in cramped conditions in an area of Leiden with foul smelling canals. And, their children had learned Dutch and were beginning to drift away under the growing influence of the worldly ways of the Dutch. The elders determined it was time to strike out on their own and risk all in a new world. So, on the first day of August, 1620, they boarded the Speedwell and bid a tearful farewell to their friends and the loved ones remaining behind. The stained glass window depicts the moment in Delfshaven when the Pilgrims, kneeling in prayer, seek God's guidance and protection.

As the 300th anniversary was approaching in 1920, various civic and social groups formed for the purpose of commemorating the date. The Holland Pilgrim Fathers Commission of Leiden coordinated the activities and cast about for a suitable commemorative project. A stained glass window with a design featuring the departure at Delfshaven was chosen. A member of the Commission, Edward Bok, financed the gift.

The English Reform Church in the Begijnhof seemed to be an appropriate site for the commemorative window. It was the only contiguous English language church contemporary from the time when the Pilgrims had been in Amsterdam. A precedent had been set by a gift of a wall tablet inscribed with the names of the Pilgrims' leaders presented by the Chicago Congregational Club in 1909 to commemorate the departure from Amsterdam to Leiden in 1609.⁵

The rest of the story is told by the window. The pilgrim window bares the names of its maker and artist. The maker's name is in the lower right-hand of the window: Jan Schouten 't Prinsenhof Delft. Jan Schouten designed and installed his own work as well as executing work by other designers.⁶ In the lower left-hand corner of the window is the signature of the man who designed our window, H. Veldhuis.

Herman Veldhuis was a designer of stained glass who worked in Leiden and Delft.⁷ His design for our pilgrim window was based upon a painting housed in the Capital Rotunda in Washington, D.C. The painting is titled, "Embarkation of the Pilgrims" and was painted in 1843 by one Robert Walter Weir. Weir's popular painting was done on a grand scale of twelve feet by 18 feet.⁸ Herman Veldhuis managed to distill the essence of the painting into a much smaller format without losing any of the original painting's sober and contemplative mood.

Next year, on the 400th anniversary of the Pilgrims sailing on the Mayflower to the new world, our pilgrim window will be 100 years old. In the Stadsarchief the following was discovered:

Wednesday, Sept.[1920] 1st: 2:30 p.m. Visit to the Bagijnkerk [sic].

Unveiling of memorial window.⁹

Not all the questions about our pilgrim window have been answered, perhaps in time they will. However, what is clear is the message the pilgrim window contains. It speaks of hope, faith and with new beginnings comes a renewal of life. It speaks of "a grateful remembrance of the Hospitality shown to the Pilgrims by the City of Amsterdam".¹⁰

And it speaks to the importance of providing shelter and freedom of religion to refugees in need.

Daniel Campbell-Benson

¹ Wikipedia contributors, “Henry Ainsworth”, *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_Ainsworth (accessed 22 August 2019).

² Keith L. Sprunger, *Dutch Puritanism: A History of English and Scottish Churches in the Netherlands in the 16th and 17th Centuries*, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1982), p. 51

³ Ron Gragg, “Armed with Faith and Patience”, *The Pilgrim Chronicles: An Eyewitness History of the Pilgrims and the Founding of Plymouth Colony*, (Washington, D.C.:Regnery Pub., 2014, pp. 125-128.

⁴ Sprunger, op. cit., pp. 50-51.

⁵ The Leyden Pilgrim Fathers Society and Trustees of the William the Silent Fund, editors, *The Leyden Pilgrim Messenger, An International Journal*, (Leyden: E. J. Brill Ltd., May 1922), No. 1, p. 9. Available through Statsarchief, Amsterdam, NL

⁶ Wikipedia contributors, “Jan Schouten (glazenier)”, *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, [https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jan_Schouten_\(glazenier\)](https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jan_Schouten_(glazenier)) (accessed 12 August 2019).

⁷ Wikimedia contributors, “Category:Herman Veldhuis - Wikimedia Commons”, *Wikimedia Commons*, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Herman_Veldhuis (accessed 12 August 2019).

⁸ Architect of the Capital, anon. contributor, “Embarkation of the Pilgrims”, *AOC Facts*, <https://www.aoc.gov/art/historic-rotunda-paintings/embarkation-pilgrims> (accessed 28 August 2019).

⁹ Rev. J. Irwin Brown, *The Pilgrim Fathers in Holland (1608-1620)*, (Leyden: E. J. Brill, Ltd., Publishers and Printers, 1920), p. 20. Available through Stadsarchief, Amsterdam, NL

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

20s & 30s Monthly Fellowship Lunch:

The 20s & 30s group continues to meet every first Sunday of each month for their monthly fellowship lunch together. These are always well attended and great fun as we all are able to enjoy a meal together and catch up with one another!

20s & 30s Monthly Bible Podcast Study:

Generally, every third Sunday of each month, the 20s & 30s group meets for their Monthly Bible Podcast Study. The group is notified via Whatsapp and Facebook with any necessary links for the study as it approaches so that everyone can prepare for the study beforehand if necessary.

20s & 30s Potluck Food & Film Night:

On Friday, March 13th, the 20s & 30s will be gathering for a Potluck Food & Film night at the Manse at 18:30. If you are in your 20s or 30s and would like to join, please contact Pastor Lance or Veronica Garcia-Robles (the ERC Lay Assistant) to be added to our Whatsapp or Facebook group where we post all upcoming activities!

Concerts in the church

Please consult our website or the church newsletter for up to date information on all scheduled concerts: <http://www.ercadam.nl/activities/concerts/upcoming-concerts>. Or visit us on Facebook www.facebook.com/ERCamsterdam/

Finance Report

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019 vs 2018</u>
Income			
Donations	84,255.49	93,692.75	-9,437.26
Collections	55,500.98	54,297.72	1,203.26
Church hire	19,352.80	19,502.80	-150.00
Concerts	13,547.00	17,778.00	-4,231.00
Weddings	2,845.00	3,325.00	-480.00
Church shop	440.00	830.00	-390.00
Flowers	85.00	-100.97	185.97
	176,026.27	189,325.30	-13,299.03

2019 was an interesting year - like almost all previous years anyhow. Right from the beginning of the year we were carrying forward a significant deficit of sometimes more than EUR 20,000 month after month. This was not really a pleasant situation and you may have read about my concerns in our church magazine, the Record. Fortunately we could close the year with a smaller deficit of “only” EUR 5,370.69 thanks to some extraordinary donations in December, but especially because of a bequest of EUR 8,000 we received and the contribution of EUR 15,000 from the Stichting “Friends of the English Reformed Church” towards maintenance works. We compensated this deficit from our reserves.

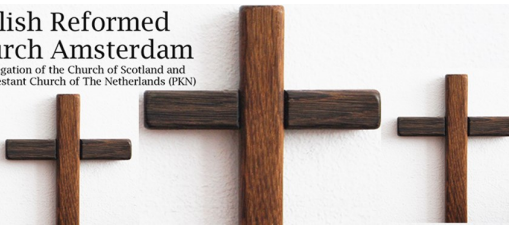
If you want to know more about our financial “journey” of 2019, I want to encourage you to attend our AGM in April, when I will present more details.

May GOD bless you for all your contributions of time, gifts and money in 2019 and your ongoing support and commitment to live HIS good plan in 2020.

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

A personal note from the Treasurer:

As some of you already know, my wife Astrid started to work at the Royal Children’s Hospital in Glasgow and we will move to Scotland later this year. God works in mysterious ways: Scotland was never on our radar screen as our next destination in life (more the idea of north of Italy or south of France, where the sun shines), but the more it was HIS appropriate guidance that we became members of a Church of Scotland congregation in 2002, when we arrived in the Netherlands.



A good friend (Ruth Shakespeare, former medical director Mulanje Mission Hospital) once said to me that what she is doing in Malawi is

“serious fun - with equal emphasis on both words”. In the same way, the seven years serving as your treasurer were “serious fun”. “Serious” because I considered myself to be a small part of the legacy of more than 400 years of treasurers of this congregation having been stewards of the financial health of the congregation - not as a means in itself, but to ensure and support worship and fellowship among the ERC family. “Fun” because it was an honour and really a pleasure to collaborate with a lot of you, counting money, maintaining the accounts, the renovation projects, fundraising for Mulanje Mission Hospital, or simply the relief within consistory when, at the end of a year, the deficit was smaller than anticipated - or we even made a little surplus.

Being ERC’s treasurer, I considered this always as an office beyond just taking care of the finances. I did my best (and hopefully with some success) to ensure that the money you gave was bringing glory to God and serving HIS people. I am grateful to you all for your trust, your gracious giving and to our God that he provided what we needed.

BUT Astrid and I have not gone yet; there will be time, later in the year, to say goodbye.

I am very grateful that Charles Vanderpuye has agreed to become the new ERC Treasurer - the formal hand-over will be at the AGM in April. Please keep Charles in your prayers, that he will experience the same “serious fun” in serving our congregation.

Thorsten König

Introduction: New treasurer

My name is Charles Vanderpuye, a Ghanaian by birth living in the Netherlands for 31 years now. I am a Business Economist by profession and work as a financial controller in Haarlem. I am very good with figures and have good experience in financial administration and preparation of financial statements.

I have been worshipping at the English Reformed Church for about 30 years and have served in the past as an audit committee member. I feel honoured to have been nominated and confirmed by the consistory to be treasurer of this historic Church. I am also honoured to have the chance to continue the good works that my predecessors have done. My thanks to Thorsten for finding time to take me through all processes, activities and list of things I need to know as treasurer of the church.

I trust I will have the support of Lance, the consistory members, the administration team and the entire church in doing the job.

Charles

“Praise him with the sound of the trumpet...”

Easter is fast approaching, but leading up to that will be a month full of music in the five Sunday services in March. Mezzo-soprano Margaret Richards will join the choir on the first of the month for a rare treat in the church: Rossini! Violinist Giles Francis will play on the 8th. The choir will again sing on the 15th. Soprano Judi Haynes-Smart will provide the music on the 22nd and Giles Francis will be bringing along a guest for violin duets on the 29th. For music, March is a must!

That brings us up to Holy week. Palm Sunday, April 5th, will have the children of the Sunday school singing in procession to mark the historical entrance into Jerusalem, and soprano Persephone Abbott will join the choir again in Gounod's stirring anthem *Jerusalem*. The choir will sing some of its most emotional and dramatic music to compliment the story of the passion on Good Friday. This very moving evening service will be preceded by 30 minutes of meditative organ music. All of this leads us, of course, to Easter morning, when the most glorious music of the year will be provided by the choir, a brass quintet, and *you*. Yes, it's once again your chance to sing Handel's famous *Hallelujah!* with the full choir and brass. This service is a highlight of the year and full to the rafters. Come early - and in good voice!

But, of course, the calendar doesn't stop at Easter. The choir will sing on May 10th and again, with very special music for Pentecost, on May 31st.

* For those of you who remember Riet van Hoek, the lyrics of her favourite hymn are, "How can I keep from singing?" Amen.

Richard

2020 ERC Benefit Concert for Mulanje Mission Hospital

Friday 20 March 2020 at
19:30 hrs

Starring: Velvet Joe and
the Bluegrass Diamonds

Donation: € 25

**Aim: renovate the existing
paediatric emergency
room; provide medical
equipment; a cubicle for
staff with solar-lighting;
training for Infection Pre-
vention.**



Midweek Fellowship

In recent months in our fortnightly Bible Studies (first and third Wednesdays) we have begun a series on key biblical texts, supplementing our discussion with video material from a leading New Testament scholar, Prof N.T. Wright. In March and early April we will be doing studies in Mark's Gospel before returning, after Easter, to the key texts.

We continue to hold a service after the style of the Taizé community in France on the second Wednesday with our Roman Catholic neighbours in the Begijnhofkapel. And in the last week of the month, the **Women's Fellowship** and (every alternate month) the **Men's Group** meet.

Holy week and Easter Services

Thursday 9 April 20.00 hrs

Maundy Thursday Communion service

Friday 10 April 20.00 hrs

Good Friday service with the choir

Organ music from 19.30 hrs

Saturday 11 April 21.00 hrs

**Easter Saturday service of light
with renewal of baptismal vows**



Sunday 12 April 10.30 hrs

**Easter Sunday morning service.
Holy Communion, choir and
brass quintet**

The York Mystery Plays

by Hannie van Kerkhof, October 1988

Every four years, the Mystery Plays are performed in the city of York; a 20th century adaptation of a mediaeval cycle of biblical stories, acted in the open air not far from the Minster. In a beautiful park setting with the ruins of St. Mary's Abbey as background (*pictured above*) The author of the plays is unknown.



In the Middle Ages the performances took place on the day of the feast of Corpus Cristi, on pageant wagons which trundled through the city from early in the morning until midnight. The local Guilds were the actors. The Guild of the Shipwrights was responsible for the play of The Flood. The Guild of the Bakers for the Act of the Last Supper, etc. The plays started around 1400 and ended in 1569 during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. Their revival in 1951 was a risky undertaking but it proved to be a great success.

Well, there we were on a rather cold evening, sitting in warm sweaters and covered with plaids and coats, watching a marvelous play. We saw The Creation, The Flood, Abraham and Isaac, and many stories from the New Testament.

There was one professional actor; Victor Banerjee from India, in the role of Jesus. All the other actors were local York residents, more than 300 people in total. It was very impressive when Victor Banerjee suddenly appeared among the people, who stood there listening to John the Baptist and requested to be baptized. Other impressive scenes were the slaughter of the children in Bethlehem, the raising of Lazarus, the clearing of the temple, and of course the Crucifixion. And at last the glorious end: Judgment Day, Jesus standing on top of the ruined wall of St. Mary's Abbey, and the faithful climbing along that wall on ladders, up to heaven, where they were received with great gladness.

We thought it was remarkable that in these days when many churches are becoming more and more empty, so many people came to York and watched the Mystery Plays in dead silence, and with the highest attention.

It was an unforgettable evening.

Hannie van Kerkhof has been a member of ERC since 1979. She served as a deacon from 1987 onwards and as an elder from 1993 to 1995. She wrote 'From the Archives' for the Record in the 80s and 90s. With some help from Thys Glasz, who lives near her, she is looking up interesting articles for current readers!

Sunday School

The Sunday School continues to meet every Sunday except for the first Sunday of each month when the children stay with their parents to enjoy the Family Communion Sunday service. For more information about Sunday School, please contact Veronica Garcia-Robles (the ERC Lay Assistant and Sunday School Coordinator).

With regard to recent activities, the children did a wonderful job this past December acting out the Nativity Play for the congregation. They enjoyed participating in the church service and the next time they will have the chance to be involved in the service will be when they process and sing for Palm Sunday on April 12th.

Junior Church

The Junior Church continues to meet every Sunday except for the first Sunday of each month when the teens stay with their parents to enjoy the Family Communion Sunday service. The Junior Church recently added a new volunteer teacher to its rota. We welcome Emma Pedley as a Junior Church teacher!

Coffee Mornings

The coffee mornings take place on the first Tuesday of each month, a wonderful opportunity for fellowship with members of our congregation who carry the history of our church. Please join if you are interested, you are most welcome to come. You can contact Sies Plokker or Joke de Bruin for more information.

In the coming months:

March 3rd at Joke de Bruin

April 7th at Elly Kalf

Coffee after the service

Meet your fellow members of the congregation over a cup of coffee after the service each week. And if you enjoy these gatherings, please consider volunteering once in a while or regularly.

We always need help in this vital ministry. Please contact Anniek van Engelenburg or Sally Stone (info@ercadam.nl) or put your name on the list on the notice board.



Morning Prayers

During the summer we experimented with holding a brief act of worship in the church during the week while it is open for tourists and visitors which included the recital of psalms and prayers for our city. We have decided to continue with this - early in the morning, before tourists flock to the Begijnhof.

On **Tuesday mornings** at **8.45 hrs** there will be a short (30 minutes max) service of psalms and prayers in the church.

This may not be convenient for many of course, but some might like to join us on their way to work.

Baptisms

Susan Margaret Davies

Emad Abdi

Ebrahim Afrabimissal

December 8th 2019

In memoriam

Mrs. Hanny Schouten

December 23rd 2019



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Deadline for the next edition of the Record is May 27th 2020

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