



Cube and Triptych

In an attempt to increase donations to the ERC from the tens of thousands of visitors who pass through the church each year, we have added some new features during the Open Church times.

Designed by an ERC attendee, a set of three information panels are set up in the sanctuary when the church is open for visitors, profiling the ERC's history, its present life, and our commitments to Mulanje Mission Hospital. To facilitate cashless donations, a new 'cube tower' provides a way for members and visitors to donate with cash or card.

Property

500-year-old buildings require maintenance work! The most recent: a small group of volunteers spent several Saturdays insulating the heating elements behind the wooden panels lining the sanctuary. We hope for a drop in heating bills! Also, more than 10 of our Consistory members have now completed a course on in-house emergency procedures.

Music

In November our choir joined the local Purcell Chamber Orchestra in a sold-out concert in our church, which helped put the totally full church into the spirit of the season. Half of the proceeds from the concert went to our choir, with €1430 going towards new choir robes.

The many Christmas services in our church included a full church for the Carols by Candlelight evening, and the annual joint afternoon advent service with our Lutheran, Catholic and Mennonite neighbours.

Angel Yarnbombing

Throughout 2019 a group met one afternoon every week to knit mini-angels, supplemented by various people around the Netherlands and the UK. A total of almost 700 such angels were produced, and after our morning service the Sunday before Christmas many of the congregation joined together in the Spui, the square outside the Begijnhof where our church is located, which had been 'yarnbombed' (decorated) with the angels. Carols were sung and many angels given out to passers-by each bearing a Christmas message from the church.

Pub Quiz

Our second Pub Quiz evening drew about 60 people to the church on a chilly Saturday evening, an increase from the previous, very first, ERC pub quiz. ERC members and friends attended, as well as neighbours from the Begijnhof courtyard. The evening included snacks and drinks and prizes, and much jolliness... and some very cunning questions. Eight rounds of ten questions later, we were all winners and had raised €700 for Mulanje Mission Hospital.

Christian Education

As part of our Christian education programme Lance runs a regular 'Walk through the Bible' course. The last one resulted in 3 adult baptisms, including two Iranians, one a political refugee.

New Elders

In the past half year, we have lost two Elders who have left the Netherlands, and a third is unable to attend services because of her work schedule. While it is sad to say good-bye, this has given us a chance to change the face of the Consistory—yet again.

A couple of months ago we welcomed four new Elders, recommended by members of the church community: Andreas Decker, from Germany; Elisabeth Ijmker who is Dutch; Sies Plokke, also Dutch; and Charles Vanderpuy, originally from Ghana. These new faces on Consistory represent our diverse congregation: together their ages span 40 years, between them they have lived in more than 7 countries, and they have been attending the ERC between 3 and 20+ years.

Goodbye to Ans

We recently bid farewell to someone who has been attending our church for over 60 years. Ans van Saagsvelt has moved to Vlissingen, to be near family.

Ans and her husband Charles were married in our church and attended for the next 5 decades. They prepared communion every month for 40 years, and attended Presbytery meetings for decades.

After Charles passed away a few years ago, Ans continued to attend, always helping when she could, hosting coffee mornings, and taking part in services. We will miss her in many ways, but she has promised to come to our services when we least expect it!