

Christ Church Amsterdam Report to the AGM in May 2022

Though 2021 began and ended in lockdown we experienced life together in a different way. Connecting with our sister congregations at South and Zuid Oost became a more urgent priority. Beginning early in the year with Joint Chaplaincy services every month, I observed a hunger to join with our CCA family. Morning and Evening Prayer sessions online week by week which carried over from 2020 were sustained by a faithful core from across the chaplaincy.

Roughly six months of our services were in-person and six months online. This meant that one of the primary tasks of both Leadership and Pastoral Teams was to ensure that those in need of support, encouragement or practical help would not be overlooked. We tried our best. We didn't always succeed but through God's kindness, much good work was done.

Open Church Wednesdays became a visitor magnet during lockdown. More than one visitor remarked on how refreshing it was to see our house of worship open. We met neighbors who had never paid us a visit. I feel that many seeds were sown during this year. The ground which seemed so fallow, most certainly has life below the surface waiting to punch through the soil. May it be soon, Lord!

Once we came out of lockdown and conducted services both in-person and on Zoom, we really had to scramble week by week to regain our footing as a worshipping community. It hasn't been easy but we have been blessed with some very faithful folks to carry us forward even when it meant that they were serving in the same roles week upon week. I get to see some of the ways that people in this congregation work in obscure, quiet and unseen ways. Little do they know sometimes what a massive difference it makes. Thank you for your labor of love! God sees you.

The 250th Anniversary of our residence at Groenburgwal was an occasion which required hundreds of hours of preparation. This effort was not just from Centre folks. It was another chance to collaborate for South and CoHS too. It meant that the Bishop and his wife were able to join us for the first weekend of November. There were confirmations and the unveiling of a commemorative plaque along with some wonderful concerts by some of our own very talented members and other professionals. Talented actors from CCA portrayed historic figures connected to our building and we welcomed many neighbors too.

We ended the year with lots of joy, even as our final service rang out with Advent and Christmas carols for our final 'in-person' joint chaplaincy carols service of 2021. By now we have been graced with tools to navigate lockdowns and the many "changes and chances" of this life through the help of our Triune God whose presence is ever with us.

Pastor Kerry