

SKIN MAGAZINE



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In this edition

60 years Geredja Indjili Maluku
Mission Congress CLADE V
New Member Churches in 2012
Interview: *The Sound of Worship*



SKIN

SAMEN KERK IN NEDERLAND

Colophon

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Performance during the Jubilee Celebration of the Geredja Indjili Maluku. Read the inspiring sermon by rev. O. Matulesy (page 8-10).

From the Editorial Staff

One of the three migrant churches that were involved in founding SKIN is the Moluccan Evangelical Church – the *Geredja Indjili Maluku (GIM)*. Last November the GIM celebrated its 60th anniversary. The word *kasih* means ‘love’, as well as ‘giving’. It is about connecting with God and people. This becomes clear, when we read the message from Rev. Matulesy.

The theme of the most recent meeting of pastors of established and migrant churches in Utrecht, was ‘prayer’. Sharing each others prayers and songs connects Christians from various cultural backgrounds. On the one hand we have to take seriously cultural differences; on the other hand we belong to the one Body of Christ. In the review of *The Sound of Worship* this area of tension has its turn.

In the summer of 2012 one of the previous board members of SKIN, dr. Moses Alagbe, took part in a mission congress in Costa Rica. In his article Alagbe shares with us different aspects of the impact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Because He is alive, it is possible for us to follow Jesus in our the way of Life.

With the words of an Anglican prayer, we say thanks for the marvellous gift of diversity:

*O God, Who created all peoples in Your image,
we thank You for the wonderful diversity
of races and cultures in this world.
Enrich our lives by ever-widening circles of fellowship,
and show us Your presence in those who differ most from us,
until our knowledge of Your love is made perfect
in our love for all Your children;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

The editors

From the coordinator

Anmar Hayali

Once again I'm grateful for the opportunity to share some personal impressions from the previous period with you.

More than a month after SKIN celebrated its fifteenth anniversary, one of its founding member churches, the Geredja Indjili Maluku (GIM, the Moluccan Evangelical Church), celebrated its 60th anniversary on the 24th of November 2012 in Drachten. On arrival I was glad and astonished to see a crowd of people who had come from various parts of The Netherlands who travelled to the north of our country to thank God for His blessing and leadership.



With the pastor of Yi Jun Memorial Church, Rev. Young Mug Choi

Words do not suffice to describe this day. The inspiring sermon during the thanksgiving service (see page 8-10) gives a broad perspective, which in my opinion, is encouraging for the newer churches also. This sermon and more about this day are available on the website of the 60th jubilee celebration of the GIM: www.gimhut60.nl. Congratulations on this milestone and may God bless you!

At the invitation of Rev. Klaas van der Kamp, the general secretary of the Dutch Council of Churches, I had the opportunity to present, briefly, the position of the international and migrant churches in The Netherlands during a very interesting conversation with a delegation of the World Council of Churches in Utrecht on the 17th of January 2013. The report of the visit of the delegation to our country is available at www.raadvankerken.nl/pagina/2246/pelgrimage_met_wereldraad.

On the 27th of January I attended holy mass in the Coptic Orthodox Church of Saint Marc in The Hague. In this rich and centuries-old tradition, all senses are involved in the collective experience and expression of the faith, as is the case in all Oriental Orthodox Churches. For those interested in the history and theology of the Coptic Orthodox Church, the library of the church offers a rich source of Arabic and Dutch literature. An overview of the Coptic Orthodox churches in The Netherlands is available at: <http://koptischekerk.nl/columns/kerken-in-nl/>.

For the third time, and this time together with the chairperson of SKIN Rev. Rhoïnde Mijns-Doth, I attended the 13th annual International Celebration of the holy Eucharist in the Marthakerk in The Hague on the 3rd of February. Several Roman Catholic migrant parishes in The Hague participated in this celebration with Bible readings, prayers, songs and dances in their own languages and cultures. The diversity in the city is impressive; from Sri Lanka and diverse African countries to Surinam and the Fiji Islands. My favourite moment was when the representatives of each community brought the offerings from their own countries forward. It reminded me of Revelation 7: an innumerable multitude from all nations, peoples, tribes and languages standing before the throne of Jesus Christ worshipping Him.

My visit to the Yi Jun Memorial Church in Leidschendam on the 24th of February was heart-warming, encouraging and surpassed my expectations. The hospitality of this church is overwhelming and the joy that this community radiates is contagious! It is admirable to see how this church offers space for all generations and involves them lovingly in mutual fellowship. This Korean church belongs to the Methodist tradition and has an interesting history of establishment, for which there is insufficient room here to express.

On the 3rd of March I visited our member church Deutsche Evangelische Gemeinde in The Hague. This German church has been a committed member church of SKIN for years, is involved in the Council of Churches in The Hague and maintains good ecumenical relationships with diverse

churches, among which is the German Roman Catholic parish in Scheveningen.

I can not emphasize enough what an enriching experience it is to meet with brothers and sisters from various parts of the world and to share the blessings and the challenges with each other. Especially in this time of unprecedented political and social extremes in The Netherlands, we Christians need each other to permit our mutual voice be heard and to plead the cause of the weak and those without a voice. Then, I think mainly about our many undocumented brothers and sisters and the refugees in our country. Searching for and reaching out to one another plays an indispensable role in this. To be there, counts! You begin to rediscover what it really is about. You realize what it means to be together Church of the Chief Shepherd, Jesus Christ, who carries us all and in whom we are all secure and protected.

To God be all the glory!



Visiting the Deutsche Evangelische Gemeinde

Sixtieth anniversary Geredja Indjili Maluku

On the 24th of November, 2012, the Geredja Indjili Maluku (GIM, Moluccan Evangelical Church) celebrated its sixtieth anniversary in Drachten. Almost two thousand people were present in the Bethelkerk, where the celebration took place, to give thanks to God and meet one another.

Several Moluccan gospel choirs were present along with diverse music groups. Rev. Otto Matulesy, President of the national church council of the GIM, delivered a sermon which we now present you with his kind permission.

“On the 24th of November, 1952, all ministers and local church councils of the Geredja Indjili Maluku di Belanda gathered in The Hague, to celebrate the Lord’s Supper together. The central Scripture reading was taken from 1 Corinthians 3,10-11: ‘By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should build with care. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.’



Today's theme will be: 'Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus' (1 Thessalonians 5,18). We need to consider that the Lord is the one who provides. It is He who grants us all things – our food, health and everything we need in order to live.

Especially on this happy occasion, we owe our thanks to the Lord of the Church. When our Moluccan church was founded, many non-Moluccan people held the belief that it would not last long. How likely would it be, that a small group of temporary relocated KNIL-soldiers and a handful of army chaplains, burdened with cultural and clerical traditions from the former Dutch East Indies, could build a lasting independent church organization, far from the Moluccan territory? Could a soldiers hand, trained for years to use weapons, become a hand that ordains church ministers?

Sixty years later, we can affirm that church and *adat* have endured, here in The Netherlands. We can be ourselves, express our faith our way, with our own traditions and *adat*: the ancient Moluccan institutions, traditions, morals and folklore. We can be ourselves, with 63 churches, 30 ministers, ten thousand confirmed members, our own church organizations and a theological seminary, which has an official (HBO) accreditation by the Dutch government.

Our children are being baptized, young people prepare for confirmation, ministers are being ordained. We have been richly blessed. The Greek word *eucharisteoo*, meaning 'thanksgiving', can be heard in the word *Eucharist* – the Lord's Supper. When our church leaders celebrated the Lord's Supper in 1952, they knew that a sense of harmony was not the primary reason they were together. They were laying a foundation, like wise builders. They gratefully remembered the redemptive work of Jesus Christ.

It is our duty to cherish this valuable legacy. We have been raised in this country, we were formed and educated in this country. We are employed here. We have learned to walk as a community, and have become independent and mature. As a community of faith, as a church and as a people we have endured a difficult start in this country. Now we will take on the challenge to survive as a church in this country. Our future lies here. We live from the hand of God. There is nothing that can restrain God from guiding us in our lives. There is nothing that can stop Him from manifesting Himself in our lives. Be thankful to God!

Our church leaders have laid the foundation, on which we can build. Faith and persistence have kept them afloat. They built the church with minimal



resources. That is why we should actively be listening and doing, instead of passively waiting for the things to come.

The certain belief in the liberating and invisible God has led us all to grow and blossom. Who believes in Him shall not stay dry and withered, but will bloom like a lily. Amen.”

New Member Churches in 2012

At the General Members Meeting, on the first of December 2012, three new members of SKIN introduced themselves.

Fathers House Movement

The Fathers House Movement is a house church movement of Iranian and Afghan Christians that meet in small and big groups throughout the country. We stress the importance of Discipleship, solid training, encounter-weekends, and Simple Church where everyone feels at home. The places where we meet include Haarlem, Alkmaar, Rotterdam, Utrecht, Amsterdam, Zwolle, Nijmegen, Den Helder, Amstelveen, Leeuwarden, Roermond.

For more places and further information: www.sama-centrum.nl



Christengemeente Alpha & Omega, Rotterdam

This fellowship originated in 2007. The passage from Revelation 1,8 (“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End”) played a crucial role when the church was founded. Pastor Regillio Smulders: “We are a church searching for more intimacy with Jesus Christ, in order to know Him better. Our faith community puts prayer, worship, education and fellowship at the centre.” For further information: www.alphaomega-rotterdam.nl



Oromo Christian Church, Utrecht

The Oromo people are the biggest ethnic group in Ethiopia. The Oromo Christian Church in Utrecht was founded in 2011, and is part of the Union of Oromo Evangelical Churches in Europe. Evangelisation is one of the pillars of this church. In addition the Oromo Church aims to unite Oromo Christians, in order to spiritually strengthen each other.



Topics and Information

Dutch Christian Forum

On February 5 and 6 We Choose Unity (in Dutch: Wij Kiezen Voor Eenheid) organised its final retreat. This Christian movement has merged into the Dutch Christian Forum (in Dutch: Nederlands Christelijk Forum, NCF), which officially started at the same moment. Inspired by the model of the Global Christian Forum (GCF, www.globalchristianforum.org) the idea for a Dutch Christian Forum was developed. One of the goals of the NCF is for Christians from a very broad range of churches and interchurch organisations to share their faith, learn to respect each other and together explore and address common challenges.

The NCF welcomes every Christian tradition in the Netherlands. In accordance with the intentions of the GCF, the NCF strives for a steady representation of participants from the traditional churches on the one hand and Pentecostal and evangelical churches, among which are international and migrant churches, on the other hand.

The Dutch Christian Forum is rooted in the totality of ecumenical organisations and Christian movements in The Netherlands: the Council of Churches (Raad van Kerken), the Evangelical Alliance (Evangelische Alliantie), SKIN, We Choose Unity, and the National Synod, and aims to create a place for people to talk about their faith in their own environment.

On the website www.nationalesynode.nl/geloofsgesprekken, (in Dutch) you can find a handy tool to help you organise an interchurch talk about faith ('geloofsgesprek') yourself: simply in livingrooms in the Netherlands. We hope that through these interchurch talks there will be a growing unity among Christians in the Netherlands.

The first NCF-retreat for church leaders will take place on June, 25 and 26. For further information: see www.ncf.nu.



Keti Koti ('broken chains')

On July 1, 1863, slavery was officially abolished in the Dutch colonies Surinam and the Netherlands Antilles. The Moravian Church (in Dutch: Evangelische Broedergemeente, EBG) commemorates this event by publishing the book 'Zoektocht in vrijheid' (Search in Freedom), containing interviews about the history of slavery and the position of the church then

and now. The twelve people who were interviewed for the book are all members of the Moravian Church from Surinamese descent.



As in earlier years, in 2013 there was again an intercultural celebration during the Pentecostal Conference of Stichting Opwekking (Awakening Foundation) in Biddinghuizen. On Saturday 18 May the theme of the event was 'Keti Koti'. Part of the programme was a musical about the continuing influence of the legacy of slavery on the traditions of the Moravian Church. See also www.ketikoti.ebg.nl.

Night of Churches 21-23 June 2013

The Night of Churches is a biannual oecumenical event in which a large number of churches cooperate locally to literally open their doors and offer a programme to visitors. In this way the visibility and impact of the participating churches will be enlarged in their neighbourhood. It is expected that in 2013 some fifty Dutch towns and cities will take part. More information on: www.kerkennacht.nl.



Prison Chaplaincy

On January the 26th, the latest meeting of the migrant platform for prison chaplaincy (in Dutch: migrantenplatform justitiepastoraat) took place at the Victory Outreach church in The Hague. Various pastors of migrant churches shared their stories on the role of Christian Faith in social life.

Special attention was paid to rev. Entelina Butarbutar: in 2012 she was employed as a prison chaplain.

Rev. Jan Eerbeek addressed the members of the platform for the last time in his function of head of chaplaincy; his farewell reception took place on June 3rd.

Farewell Paul The Gwan Tjaij

After the sudden death of Rev. Rudy F. Polanen, in January 2008, drs. Paul The Gwan Tjaij accepted the chairmanship of SKIN. Previously already from 1995, he had been actively involved in the ins and outs of SKIN – first as a board member, from 2000 as treasurer and later, since 2003, as chairman of internal affairs. On 31 December 2012 Paul The officially retired as chairman. The board is particularly grateful for all the knowledge and experience which Paul has applied, among other things in medical and political fields, in order to give further shape to SKIN. Whole-heartedly the board wishes Paul and Sien the blessing of God, together with their children and grandchildren.



From left to right: Mrs. Sien The-Oei, drs. Paul The Gwan Tjaij, rev. Zeth Mustamu, Mrs. Vera Mustamu-Tentua

Encounter between established and migrant Christians in Utrecht

Francisca Folkertsma and Hans Visser, on the basis of a report of Albert Luiks

The Huis van Gebed (House of Prayer) Domino has as its focus aware of all churches and faith communities in the city of Utrecht. It is particularly relevant that the latest meeting of pastors of migrant churches and protestant churches in Utrecht and Zeist took place in this pretty town house on Willem Barentszstraat.

It was no accident that during this meeting on February 12th we discussed the theme 'prayer'. We are happy to share some experiences.

Diana van Maurik-Purba, member of Persekutuan Kristen Indonesia (PERKI, association of Indonesian Christians): "Prayer is like breathing with God. A Christian is not able to live without prayer; it is the foundation of our relationship with God."

"In our Coptic Orthodox Church, a book of prayers is being used," brother A. Rubens continues. "Every day, each family prays seven prayers from this book. In addition, during the periods of fasting prior to Easter and Christmas, we do not eat meat or dairy produce."

From the international church Life Word Christian Center (LWCC), pastor Kelvin Onyema takes part in the meeting. On Sundays, before the church service starts, the people pray in small groups. In times of special need, a 'chain of prayer' is used, Onyema tells. "After you have prayed for the particular situation, you call the next person on the list, who takes over praying." Because the members of this church have different ethnical backgrounds, they are familiar with various kinds of prayer. Prayer may happen in silence. It is also possible that prayer is accompanied by joyful worship or with speaking in tongues.

Pastor Birassa Ayana recalls the Oromo who back in Ethiopia, usually gathered to worship and pray under a big tree. Since 2011 Christian Oromo's in Utrecht have fellowship together. "Prayer is begging for healing, and believing the miracles that God is able to do."

The visitors of the Armenian evangelical community 'House of God' pray



every day at home at the same time, from 22.00 to 22.30 PM. Furthermore, the Sunday services and Bible studies are being framed with prayer, worship leader Rafaël Arustamyan tells.

During dinner we further explore these things. While prayer may take various shapes, we recognize each other in trusting that God hears our prayers. He who created heaven and earth is also involved in our personal lives.

On the Following of Jesus Christ

Dr. Moses Alagbe

The Latin American Congress of Evangelism CLADE V was held in San José, Costa Rica, from July 9-13 2012. The theme was 'Following Jesus in God's Kingdom of Life. Guide us, Holy Spirit'. I was privileged to represent SKIN.

The congress brought Latin America churches together to confront the kingdom of death. The central Scripture passage was the story of resurrection, taken from the Gospel of John. Every morning, a key speaker gave an exposition. Here are some of the subthemes that were discussed during the congress:

1. Jesus is alive; there is hope, because the tomb is empty (John 20:2-10)

The power that raised Jesus from the dead is still available to all followers of Jesus Christ. It is through this power that we can in hope, confront every form of death in our communities.

2. Encounter with grace (John 20:11-20)

The real message of the gospel of John is Transformation through the grace of God. It is an encounter with the grace of God that enables a person to turn from their own way unto God.

3. The power of the kingdom (John 20:21-25)

Jesus commissioned his disciples to serve him in the world of fear, doubt, and mysteries. He breathed upon them the Holy Spirit - the Spirit of Life. It is impossible without the Holy Spirit to serve the Lord in the world of fear, doubt and mystery.

4. The Spirit gives Life (John 20:26-29)

Jesus came to a community of fearful men. He brought peace; their fears turned into joy.

5. Celebration (John 21)

Celebration and friendship is key to our call to God's mission in the world. We should not be passionate for personal projects, but passionate for God's mission.

Following Jesus means:

- 1) Thinking about others, their situations and needs
- 2) Opposing everything that brings death
- 3) Encouraging everything that brings life
- 4) Setting people and the community free from every form of oppression
- 5) Being ready to sacrifice our lives for the fulfillment of Gods' mission to the world

Church as an agent of transformation

It is about life style and not doctrine: reproducing the life style of Jesus. It is about loving God more than all. It is about loving our neighbor. Without the above, Christian life is just words and mission will be tiresome and frustrating.

What does it mean for us as Together Church in the Netherlands to follow Jesus in our own context?



“In the church I may be who I am”

A conversation with Mirella Klomp concerning two churches in the South-East district of Amsterdam

Gerard van 't Spijker

“The churches that I have studied are places where people know one another: Here I may stand out well. Here I can meet God. Here I may be who I am and feel myself at home within the community with its own standards and values.” Mirella Klomp says this in a conversation which I had with her in the Muiderkerk (PKN) in Amsterdam, where she is the Pastor. In addition to this ministry she also works as a researcher at the Protestant Theological University.

We converse about her research on the celebrations of two churches in Amsterdam-Southeast, the Evangelical Lutheran Church with a mainly Surinamese membership and the Ghanaian Wesley Methodist Church. On the basis of this research in 2009 she was awarded her Doctoral degree at the Protestant Theological University. In 2011 ‘The Sound of Worship. Liturgical Performance by Surinamese Lutherans and Ghanaian Methodists in Amsterdam’ was published.

Sound of Worship

The particular subject of her research was, what Mirella called, the *Sound of Worship*. At least as much as the sermon, also the manner of singing and praying, of reading and dancing are essential elements for this Sound of worship, and give expression to the encounter with the Living One.



Wesley Methodist Church

“In search of this Sound of Worship, I learned to look with new eyes to what happens in a church service. The style of music is important; the songs used, and the instruments that are played, with which the players produce a softer or more

voluminous noise. But in the same way a quiet speech or spontaneous exclamations, and the invitation to praise the Lord, all form part of this *Sound*.”

The Surinamese Lutheran Church

The chapter in which the author describes the Surinamese church, has as title: *I am Rich*. With these words a member of the congregation explained what for her is the most valuable aspect of the Surinamese Church: that all kinds of different cultural influences play a role. In that manner this Church is a reflection of the Surinamese society, which is called a *patchwork culture*: from elements of very different cultures a new culture has been created. In the Surinamese church service, music, songs and words from several traditions are, without any problem, used altogether.

The Ghanaian Methodist Church

The Methodist church with its origin in Ghana is very different. Just as people in Ghana in their daily life communicate: embracing each other when they meet, dancing when they are in a good mood, they communicate with each other and with God in the church service: a solemn and at the same time lively procession in the beginning, and also dancing and the specific song spontaneously started by women halfway the sermon form part of it.

Cross-cultural Churches?

After reading this book I was eager to talk with the author about one of her conclusions. She states that the establishment of cross-cultural churches would in the long term probably lead to serious problems concerning the opportunities for worship: ‘too many shapes that do not embody people’s faith, will impede the possible encounter with Christ of several performers’ (p. 262). How did she come to this conclusion?

Mirella answers: “Through this study I have become very much aware of my own cultural context and theological roots. As a result, I am also much less normative when looking at other churches. I adhere to my Lutheran view on the church and also on people, that before God you may be just as you are, and that in this way you also can celebrate: just as you are. Along with your history and your cultural background. God has accepted me such as I am: I am sinner and justified at the same time.”

“I have come to realize more deeply in which way God desires to be with his people. God wants to meet everyone such as he or she is. And everyone may look for God and find Him in the in in which he or she has been brought up. That God has become man in Jesus Christ, implies that He wants to meet us, human beings, there where we are and where we live, in our own

culture. That is exactly the value of a church of people who have happened to begin living in a society that is new for them. The church is the place where you can adore God in your own mother tongue, live in community with God, in all freedom being yourself. For some people the church service is the only place where they can dance with each other in their own way. This is what I call 'resurrection'. Therefore we must take cultural differences seriously, and not blur them."

"Whereas I became myself aware of my own culture, I also learned to participate in a community of people of another culture. We may know that the differences between people and cultures has been bridged by Christ. He accepts those differences deeply in himself. From time to time we, and I think that we are also called to do so, may look for ways to celebrate together."



Evangelical Lutheran Church in Amsterdam-Southeast

"However, at the same time here remains a tension. Young people in the churches realize that they form part of two cultures: that of their parents and of their forefathers, but also the Dutch culture. It will be exciting to see how things develop in future generations."

Mirella Klomp, *The Sound of Worship. Liturgical Performance by Surinamese Lutherans and Ghanaian Methodists in Amsterdam*. Serie: Liturgica Condenda 26. Leuven, Peeters, 2011. 276 pages, € 59,00. ISBN 9789042925717.

United but Different

The next Generation and the Future of the Church

From a shared desire for more unity within Christian Holland, sixteen persons in their twenties and thirties, from all kinds of Christian religious traditions, have contributed to the collection of essays 'United but Different. The next Generation and the Future of the Church' (in Dutch: *Een maar anders. De volgende generatie en de toekomst van de kerk*) that was published in December 2012.

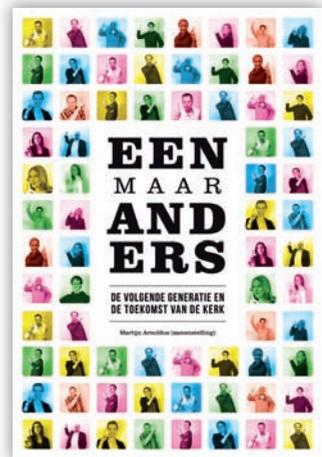
Whereas the Church is shrinking numerically and is no longer situated at the centre of politics and society, there appears to be ample space for experiment and innovation. Contact beyond church walls has become more and more the norm. With the help of seven themes (subjects), among which are 'Cultures', 'New Expressions' and 'Traditions', the reader is summoned to move forward. Practical examples provide ample focus.

In addition, the collection also includes back-ground articles, such as the contribution of Martijn Vellekoop in which he explains the stalemate between unity and truthfulness. Among the authors is SKIN-coordinator Anmar Hayali. In his article he describes how cultural differences between Christians can be approached from the background of the Culture of the Kingdom of God. Celebrating the God-given Unity of the Church does not imply that the diversity in church traditions, cultures and languages fades away.

United but Different is encouraging and hopeful - the articles give insight into possible ways for the Church in Holland to proceed, with the help of God. In particular recommended to pastors and youthworkers!

Een maar anders. De volgende generatie en de toekomst van de kerk (samenstelling: Martijn Arnoldus). Amsterdam: Ark Media, 2012. 174 pages, paperback, €17.50. ISBN 9789033800108.

Review: Francisca Folkertsma



When the Kingdom of God comes...

Lives Change from Within

The author of this book (Dutch title: *Als het Koninkrijk van God komt*), Piet van Walsem, obviously has been impressed by meeting people from the former Soviet Union, Iran, and Afghanistan. These people have become his friends.

Wherever they come from, they always have a story to share. A story about life in oppression, about the long journey they made. Above all their story is about their search for God. They met people who told them about God, who taught them to understand the words of the Bible. Through trial and error they came to understand the Good News.

In one of the chapters we read the story of Maryam, a woman from Iran. The title of this chapter is significant: 'Now I know who I am: loved and wanted by God'. Discovering this truth leads to untapped strength and hope. This applies to all persons who have their say in the book.

Each chapter ends with suggestions for further Bible study and discussion. When reading the book I thought, how wonderful it would be when these stories were read and discussed in mixed groups of 'old' and 'new' Dutch Christians.

Walsem, Piet van. *Als het koninkrijk van God komt. Levens veranderen van binnenuit*. Uitgegeven door Sama-centrum, 2012. € 12,50. ISBN 9789081941402.

Review: Nel van der Harst

