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Connect

BY THE RECTOR

Sound and resonance, that's what theology is all about

This *Connect* is published in the Advent season. During this time, we listen especially to the voice of prophecy and its fulfilment in the coming of God to this world in our Immanuel. The sounds of the Advent season want to resonate in our hearts. God's appeal and our response. Sound and resonance. That is what theology is all about. The speaking from God and the speaking to God and about Him. Not abstract speaking about God, but God in His relationship to man. Nor speaking about 'man', but 'man before God'. Theology is all about this relationship, this wisdom, this merging of God-knowledge and self-knowledge.

This edition gives attention to the research and teaching at TUA, and new appointments made with this in mind. First and foremost, it is about theology. That is what the TUA stands for: practicing

theology in connection with the churches. Practicing theology as 'serving knowledge'.

TUA stands for theology. However, TUA does not stand on an island, but at the beautiful Wilhelmina Park. Connected to its neighborhood. In a similar way, TUA has several other chairs: Theology and Pedagogy, and Theology and Music. These are the adjacent fields of theology. Thinking through pedagogy theologically is rare. That is why we welcome this chair at TUA. The connection between theology and music is an almost natural one. One could even speak of theology as music. In any case, we like to make space for theological thinking through words in tune, words of church and music. At TUA, we also like to speak the language of the heart. There is still such an adjacent field free. Theology and psychology also have a connection

with sound and resonance; the work of the Spirit and the human spirit. Thus, in Advent time, the song of praise is born: 'My soul magnifies the Lord'.



Prof. Dr. M.J. Kater, Rector

Advent: Longing for justice | (Luke 1:46-55)

In winter, you can look forward to it so much: light and warmth. With Christmas lights and candles, we try to keep the darkness and the winter dip away, but it often only works moderately. They cannot replace the long summer evenings. They are not as lovely as the warm, summer sunbeams on your face. And the dark, short winter days make you crave them all the more: the days of light.

The people of Israel also looked forward to the light, to redemption. And this can be seen in Mary's hymn of praise. In this hymn, there is one thing that touches me deeply: God is the

same in the Old and New Testaments. Mary makes many references to the Old Testament in her song of praise. In every sentence, indeed almost every word, some part of the Old Testament resonates.

He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty.

Compare this verse with Psalm 98:1; Psalm 68:2; Psalm 9:4;

Psalm 113:7; Psalm 107:9; Psalm 10:15.

Mary sings about themes of importance in the Old Testament. Mercy, justice and the promise God made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. It all comes together in Mary's song of praise. Mary's song of praise shows that there is no 'cut' between the Old and New Testaments. No, it continues in one line. God in the Old Testament too is already the God who cares for people, Who is out for salvation and Who is faithful to His promises. In Jesus we do not get to know a different kind of God. No, God is exactly the same.

The Old Testament brings much more depth to your view of the salvation brought by the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus did not 'just' die for sins. Jesus is also the One who brings justice to this world. And that is the second dimension of Advent: we don't just look back; we also look forward. The Lord Jesus is coming to judge everyone, the living and the dead. When He brings judgement, injustice will end forever. Then the days of Light will dawn. Now we sometimes walk through the night of

life, the valley of the shadow of death, but it is moving towards the light. When Jesus comes, the days of Light are truly upon us. Then darkness can no longer threaten us. Until then, we look forward, we long, we expect. Will you sing along with Mary?



Charlotte Glasbergen-Molenaar, second-year Master of Theology student.

Colophon

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Events Calendar

13 December 2023

4 p.m. (CET), in Dutch
Graduation ceremony

5 February 2024

8-9 p.m. (CET), in Dutch
Online info event for part-time master's in Herbronning Gereformeerde Theologie.

6 February 2024

7 p.m. (CET), in English
Online info session on doing a PhD at TUA.

14 February 2024

4 p.m. (CET), in Dutch
Graduation ceremony

28 February 2024

In Dutch
Open day of the part-time master's in Herbronning Gereformeerde Theologie.

27-29 February 2024

In English
International conference: Between the Old and the New World: William Ames and the Shaping of Reformed Theology and Spirituality.

2 April 2024

In Dutch
Pastors' Day of the CGK.

23 April 2024

8-9 p.m. (CEST)
Online info event for part-time master's in Herbronning Gereformeerde Theologie.

Activities take place Deo volente. More information on these and other events is available in the calendar, see www.tua.nl/en.

Rev Jan Bosch: 'I learned a lot from the professors, their example, their commitment, their faith'

As early as his second year at high school, Jan Bosch (now 64) felt the desire to become a pastor. When the end of his high school years came near and he wanted to enroll in Apeldoorn, he was advised by Prof Oosterhoff not to take the admission exam yet, but to study at TUA for a year first. Then he could see whether the study really fitted him and whether God would confirm this path.

So, this is how Jan Bosch ended up in Apeldoorn as an eighteen-year-old. He not only used this first year of study to study, but also did missionary work at a campsite and in a coffee bar in Kijkduin and Scheveningen. 'This work touched me, and deep in my heart I knew: God is calling me to make the gospel known.' But there was something else: to earn money for his studies, Jan Bosch worked in factories, where he came into frequent contact with people who did not know Christ. And in some other ways he came into contact with unbelieving people, namely by hitchhiking to and from his parents' home. After all, there was no student public transport card yet. This gave him ample opportunity to talk to others about faith. 'It was almost like an internship! I learned a lot from the practical work and the conversations during those car journeys.'

Happy exchange

The first year of study went well. The conviction grew: he had to take the admission exam. The exam went well, and he was able to continue his studies with even more motivation. The years that followed were full of discoveries. The richness of the Bible and life with God emerged strongly. 'The lectures back then impressed me a lot. I still try to study the Scriptures in that track and in that way, I am able to make new discoveries!' The study had a strong focus on content. It even happened that students had to study more than 6,000 pages for an examination. Rev Bosch: 'In addition, the personal contact was invaluable. I learned a lot from the professors, their example, their commitment, their faith. Examinations were often held at their homes. Prof Velema organized meeting evenings at his home, where



Rev. Jan Bosch with his wife Titia, also a former TUA student.

in-depth discussions took place. Prof Van Genderen knew how to convey a strong sense of justice and advocated a balanced theology. Prof Oosterhoff taught what piety and reverence meant. From Prof Versteeg, I learned a lot about the work of the Holy Spirit and how that affects your life and the church of Christ. Prof Van 't Spijker taught us mildness and seeking connection with other Christians. Because the personal connections were so good, it sometimes brought other benefits. When I managed to obtain the Latin Acta of the Synod of Dordrecht at an auction, it immediately caught Prof Van 't Spijker's attention. Was I willing to trade the book? Yes, I was. It became a "happy exchange". I got the Acta in Dutch in return, and it was Prof Hovius' copy!

Reaping the fruit

'And then you get to work in the church after your studies. How often have I picked up my lecture notes! And in the

work I now do in the south of Limburg (Rev Bosch is pastor in a missionary congregation in Zuid-Limburg, ed.), I am still reaping the fruit of my studies in Apeldoorn. How wonderful it is to bring people to Christ. People from very diverse backgrounds. In the South, there is little Bible knowledge and little familiarity with who Jesus is. How important a theme like "grace" is here, and what a discovery it can be when you see that it is not about good works, about what you do, but an eye for what God does and what you may receive in Christ. In an area of much superstition, angel worship and occultism, God's Word offers guidance. It is beautiful to be able to point this out and explain God's Word. I sincerely hope that the good news about Jesus and the salvation that lies in His sacrifice may conquer many hearts here and elsewhere. I hope that TUA may train many more students for beautiful work in God's Kingdom!'

'How wonderful it is to bring people to Christ'

Passport

Name:	J. (Jan) Bosch
Date of birth:	28 April 1959
Marital status:	Married to Titia de Ruyter (also a former TUA-student)
Children:	4 children and 2 grandchildren
Period of study at the TUA:	1977-1985
Posts:	Surhuisterveen, Deventer, Hoofddorp, Groningen and now Bunde/Meerssen (near Maastricht)

Policies around education and research

Spring 2023 TUA welcomed two new colleagues. Together, they are shaping the policy at the TUA. Dr J.A. (Jolein) Iestra is in charge of education policy, while J.A. (Jacob) Karels MA, is responsible for policy on research. But what does a policy officer actually do? Below, they explain it themselves. We conclude the rubric with the Executive Board's views on teaching and research.



The two TUA policy officers in their office. On the left, Dr J.A. Iestra (education policy) and on the right, J.A. Karels MA (research policy).

What does an education policy officer do?

As an education policy officer, I support **polymaking** and **policy implementation** at various levels in the organization. **Polymaking** is making plans: imagining together with stakeholders what is needed to achieve certain goals as well as possible and balancing that with the available resources. Supporting **policy implementation** is checking whether plans are sufficiently translated for everyone in the organization. Is it clear who is responsible? Are there clear rules and working instructions? Are consultation structures appropriate?

The work of a policy officer is a bit like that of a building manager: there is always a leaky tap somewhere that needs fixing. Or: changing circumstances call for renovation. Shared use of the building requires rules. Here, you want to avoid two extremes: setting too many rules, so that the residents no longer feel free to do things their own way. You can also set too few rules and create chaos that no one feels comfortable with either.

Within the TUA, we want to achieve good theological education together. We make policies to ensure that:

- there is an appropriate study programme for each course: matching the requirements of the professional field and the student's initial situation;
- lecturers can deliver their teaching in an expert and committed manner;

- students are sufficiently informed and facilitated to study efficiently;
- learning outcomes are assessed in a valid manner;
- education is systematically evaluated and further developed.

An important moment to evaluate the policy is an educational visit commissioned by the Dutch-Flemish Accreditation Organization (NVAO). Once every six years, each programme writes a self-evaluation report for this purpose, based on 11 quality standards. A visitation panel then comes to assess the quality of education by talking to students, lecturers, committees, Executive Board, etc. At the end of September, we completed another such accreditation process for the Master of Herbronning Gereformeerde Theologie. You can compare it to your mother-in-law coming to visit: you make sure everything shines and shimmers. Everyone understands that your commitment to housekeeping does not depend on the arrival of your mother-in-law, but it does help to create a moment when you connect all the dots.

The visitation in September went well. Our 'mother-in-law' rated the quality positively and at the same time gave us a list of suggestions on how to improve even more. We are happy with that!

Dr. J.A. Iestra, education policy officer

What does a research policy officer do?

Actually, my function is an 'umbrella function'. All kinds of things to do with the scientific research that happens at TUA come on my plate. Some of my duties are:

- I am currently busy preparing for the six-yearly research assessment in 2024. An external committee will assess TUA's academic research in the period 2018-2023, and will come up with a report on it. The three research groups at TUA are currently writing a self-assessment and developing their plans for the next six-year period. As policy officer, I supervise the process: does the self-evaluation meet the criteria drawn up for it? Also important: what about the mutual coherence of the research on which the various researchers are working, and how can we strengthen it? And what are the plans for the coming years?
- I also coordinate TUA's Graduate Programme ('PhD programme'), where my responsibilities include communicating with new PhD students and assessing whether they meet the entry requirements for PhD students. I also keep my finger on the pulse during their progress, up to the moment of promotion.
- For a number of years now, TUA has organized an annual

Graduate Week: all TUA PhD students from all over the world come together for a week to network with each other, give feedback on each other's research, receive training in areas such as academic writing, and be inspired by lectures. Of course, organizing the Graduate Week involves a lot of work, which I coordinate. Moreover, we as TUA want to think through how we can further professionalize the Graduate Week in the future and firmly embed it in the PhD trajectory of our PhD students.

- Another, somewhat smaller role: I am secretary of the Ethical Committee, the committee that has to assess empirical research at TUA whether it meets ethical standards, such as privacy and data storage.
- And further: all kinds of smaller tasks, which together pretty much fill my agenda: themes such as Open Science, keeping informed of all kinds of laws and regulations concerning scientific research, involvement in international research networks and thinking about how we can strengthen them.
- A versatile job!

J.A. Karels MA, research policy officer

The Executive Board's vision: education and research serving each other

It is always dangerous to label everything with one word. Nevertheless, we venture it. For us as the Executive Board, education and research policy is about coherence. This involves at least three aspects that matter: coherence in education between all parts of the curriculum (the study programme), coherence in research between the various research domains and coherence between academic research and education.

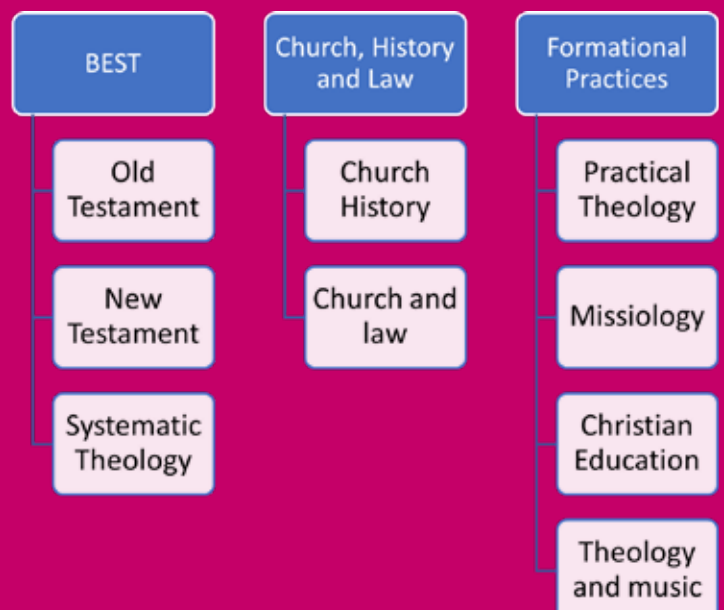
Education

As far as education is concerned, the 'Smarter College Year' project (a project for which the government provides money to improve courses, ed.) in which we are participating encourages this development. Indeed, in addition to rearranging the college year, this also

involves rearranging the various parts of the study. This is an excellent time to ask ourselves whether we are doing the right things in the light of the programmes' attainment targets and whether we are doing them well. With regard to the latter, a substantive discussion within the departments can lead to better knowledge of the content of each other's courses, but also to more coordination between the various components, and lecturers, for example, teaching a module together more often than before.

Research

A research assessment, an official inspection of research, waits for the coming year. That assessment will cover the past six years. Next year, we will



The white squares represent the ten research domains that TUA has, linked to a chair/programme leader. The blue squares form the three research programmes, where the abbreviation BEST stands for Biblical Exegesis and Systematic Theology.

continue with new research plans for 2024-2030. A clearer structure for research was chosen in early 2023. Research at TUA as a whole can be represented in two layers. The first layer is that of the research domains, each linked to a chair/programme leader. There are currently ten of these. The appointments at the most recently held extra synod (see page 12) are in this regard: for each domain, a final responsible professor or senior lecturer. There is

also the layer of overarching research programmes (in blue in the diagram). All three of these programmes will be gone through at the next research assessment.

Coherence education and research

To achieve more coherence in what we research in various fields, the Executive Board has not chosen to impose one overarching theme for all domains. However, a two-day meeting is planned

for the researchers in January 2024 to hear from each other where the focus of everyone's research lies and above all to strengthen the coherence between the research domains. We are also working on an arrangement for a six-month 'sabbatical' for each person with final responsibility for a research domain for the benefit of research.

The connection between research and education is self-evident on the one hand,

but on the other hand it is something to be constantly alert to. Our teaching can lead to further research and especially vice versa: research can be deployed for the benefit of teaching. In short: we dedicate our policy to inspiring education and valuable research.

*A.J. Dorst MSc, President of the Executive Board
Prof. Dr M.J. Kater, Rector*

Prof Dr H. van den Belt: 'The word "church denominations" is not in my dictionary'

Prof Dr H. van den Belt could be called the man of change. Born in Leeuwarden in 1971, he has subsequently lived in the United States, Katwijk, Kinderdijk, Oud-Alblas, Delft, Nijkerk and, in recent years, Woudenberg. All these moves are not unrelated to his work, which he experiences as a vocation.

Initially a reformed church pastor (later PKN), his academic career later took a scientific turn. This led him, after his studies and PhD in Leiden, to the University of Utrecht, the University of Groningen and the Free University in Amsterdam. He held the endowed chair in the History of Reformed Protestantism in Groningen, but then made the switch from historical theology to systematic theology when he became regular professor of Systematic Theology in Amsterdam in 2019. A chair funded half by the Gereformeerde Bond. And now his path additionally leads 50 percent to TUA, where he started as professor of systematic theology on 1 November.

Prof Van den Belt thus brings a lot of academic experience to Apeldoorn. Experience that started back in Leiden, when he obtained his PhD on a study of the authority of the Bible in Reformed theology. 'My interest lies in subjects like hermeneutics, scripture, the authority of the Bible and especially the work of the Holy Spirit. That has always concerned me. How does the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer's heart relate to modern culture?

'I enjoy immensely teaching and passing on what I have learned myself'

What about God's providence? What is the Holy Spirit's role in that? What about God and evil? This is related to the ongoing relationship between God as Creator and the history of His creation. How does God guide our lives? About God's providence, I just lectured on it at the TUA module on Pastoral Dogmatics, with topics such as the mystery of God's guidance in suffering and

sorrow, the question of why we suffer. In those topics, I combine teaching with my research. I work from the viewpoint of pneumatology, i.e. the work of the Holy Spirit. Because otherwise a subject like 'providence' becomes an abstraction. It is about the relationship between God

and His world, between Him and us. That is the work of the Holy Spirit. The doctrine of providence is often placed with the Father, but it is also the work of the Holy Spirit. That is crucial.'

Van den Belt enjoys teaching and passing on what he has learned himself. 'Forming generally young people for a place in God's kingdom, that is ultimately the reason you do this. It is wonderful to equip students. That is why I will not easily say no if I am



asked to speak for a student union. I find working together with them incredibly fascinating.

What I find difficult is working in a secular context. Theology is struggling, especially at the universities where I was. The discipline finds itself in a corner where it is being tolerated. With the PThU (Protestant Theological University) moving to Utrecht, another seminary is actually coming in; and ties with the VU and the RUG (University of Groningen) are loosening. Theology must not become isolated. For that matter, you can also isolate yourself at a broad university, while in Apeldoorn you can also be at the center of the world. It seems important to me that TUA continues to deal with the big questions facing society. What is knowledge, truth, good, evil? Yes, that is of a different order than a topic like creation and evolution. We actually need to put the internal questions of the Reformed denomination into perspective a bit. We worry, but how does that relate to the whole? Context matters a lot for your own theology.'

A Protestant professor at a Christian Reformed university. What is that like for you?

'Many TUA students are from denominations other than the CGK. I am not into church walls or denominations. When I teach ecclesiology (church doctrine) I think it's good to bring that into the conversation: how do you view the church? Why are you Protestant or Christian Reformed? How does that relate to the Separation and all kinds of denominations? I think more in terms of the one Church than in denominations. That word does not appear in my theological dictionary. Theologically, I do think: it is good to keep talking to each other. We desperately need each other. In fact, there is little difference between the CGK and denominational and protestant-reformed churches in the PKN (Protestant Church in the Netherlands). They actually overlap. The difference is mainly the much broader church context in the PKN. Ultimately, it is about the one church of Christ. Churches and denominations are our plural. The Church is His singular. The Church is the body of Christ, fragmented and torn and yet one in Him. It is a privilege to be called into His service, a service of love.'

You have lectured as a guest lecturer at TUA before, providing lectures on hermeneutics and pastoral dogmatics, among other subjects. Is the difference with the VU great?

'Teaching is basically similar everywhere, but the universities are different. What is really different in Apeldoorn is that you are not in the context of a broader university. That gives TUA something genial. Lecturing is pleasant, the atmosphere is personal and cozy, also in dealing with the students, for example when having coffee together. At the other universities, by the way, the students don't address me as "professor" either, except maybe the Korean PhD students.'

You will remain 50 percent employed at VU. How will you fit that in?

'Yes, and I also still enjoy preaching on Sundays. I don't know yet how I'm going to combine all that, I'm laconic about that myself. I can't get any busier than I am now. I do have to be careful not to double up on meetings, so I only take part in what is essential. I am 100 percent committed to TUA, but I have to be realistic.'

If you may dream out loud about the future of theology in the Netherlands, what is your desire?

'Recent history is more like a nightmare. Theology has become so small at all universities. In the international field, Dutch theology has been decimated. My dream is that we seek cooperation where possible, but that each institution has its own strengths. At the VU, you have a broad embeddedness and interreligious conversation. That is also a vulnerability at the same time: it does become very broad. TUA's strength is its orientation to its own Reformed tradition. That also has international appeal. We should not become copies of each other. Each institution is allowed to stand in its own strength. Together, we have care and responsibility for the future of the churches when it comes to forming ministers and others who want to occupy a place in God's kingdom. It is very nice that I may contribute to this in my way. We may have our dreams or nightmares, but above all we may know that the kingdom is coming, which is not a dream but a vision. That future fortunately does not depend on scientific theology, but that lies in the almighty and pierced hands of Jesus.'

A pastor in the lecture hall: 'I should have done this much earlier'

Rev Ton van der Wekken (61) is a pastor in the CGK of Dokkum as well as a student at TUA. Immediately at the very beginning of the part-time master's programme Herbronning Gereformeerde Theologie (HGT), he enrolled. How does he combine being a pastor with this study, and what does it bring him?

If you ask Rev Van der Wekken why he started doing the HGT master's and how he likes it, you have to do a lot of typing to keep up with him, that's how enthusiastically he talks about it. But first the question: why did he start doing this master's? After all, he already studied theology, right? 'Well, when I saw this opportunity, I thought: what a wonderfully beautiful programme, this is quite interesting! This must be a very instructive master's, in a broad field, with all kinds of subjects. And deepening for myself is also never a bad thing. In the CGK we have very little post-graduate education for pastors. This is the time to deepen my knowledge. In the past, I also did the old course, where you could stop after your candidate examination and then become a candidate for ordination. Now I enjoy doing this master's.'

Enthusiastically, Rev. Van der Wekken started in September 2021, but there was a setback: he fell ill and ended up in hospital. Fortunately, it all ended well, but he also had a lot of synod work on his hands, so he had to adjust his schedule. But: it worked out! The modules of 15 credits each can be followed at one's own pace and by now he has done all the exams and only has to write some papers and, of course, his thesis. In June 2024, he hopes to graduate.

'This course will definitely give you more than it will cost you'

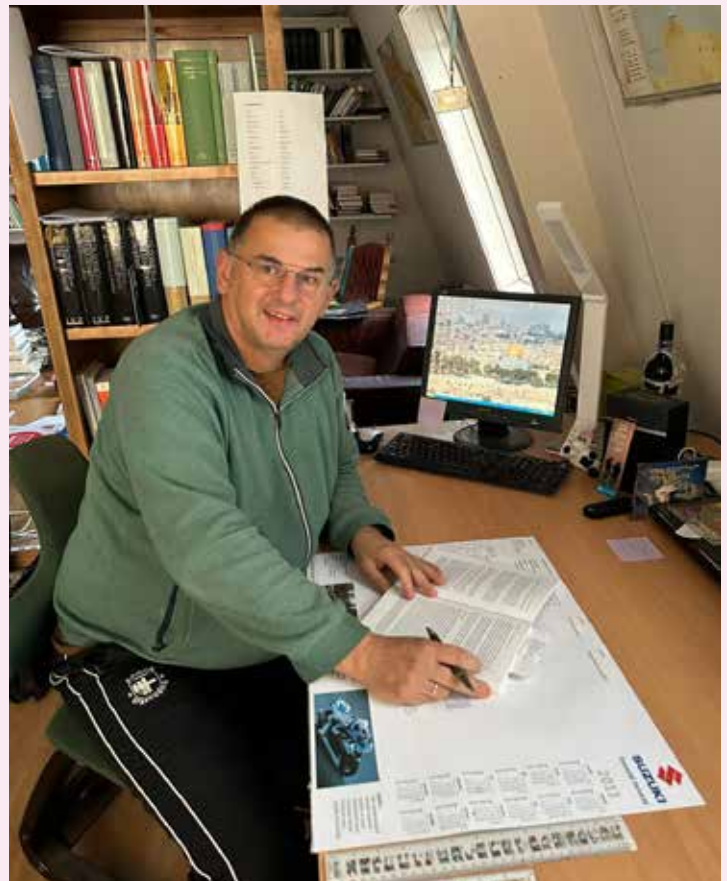
Combining work and study, how do you do it? Rev Van der Wekken: 'It has to do with a certain amount of discipline. You also just have to use parts of Saturdays for it. You make that choice, so then you go for it. And then it's doable, assuming you don't have too many setbacks. Especially because it's so interesting, it's quite maintainable.'

How does he feel about his studies so far? 'Content-wise, it is very interesting. For example, we talk about texts in the Old Testament that can chafe, such as the commandment to exterminate the Canaanites. What does that mean? Should our image be adjusted? How should this be read in the 21st century? I found these lectures to be priceless! Not everything is though, by the way. Methodology, for instance, I find less interesting, although Prof De Mynck does a great job. Yes, I am very happy with this study. It brings a lot of depth to myself, but also to my work. It benefits the congregation; I can draw from this again. You look at things a little more freshly and differently. I should have done this much earlier!

What would you say to pastors who are still in doubt?

'The choice has to come from yourself. For example, if you are

about to retire, I would recommend doing it afterwards. Otherwise make arrangements with the church council. After all, studying benefits both the congregation and yourself, doesn't it? It definitely gives you more than it costs you. You can do it in your own time and at your own pace; you can also do it by module. The nice thing about Apeldoorn is that it is small-scale and that you can get all the help you need. That is very convenient. And the teachers are fine, too.'



Those who would like more information about studying in the part-time master's programme Herbronning Gereformeerde Theologie may contact Rev Van der Wekken (dstonvanderwekken@gmail.com). The study advisor and study coordinator are also always willing to answer questions. Please see <https://www.tua.nl/en/education/o/masterIrt/study-advice>

Supervising a remodeling: from flooding to waterproofing

Those who walked through TUA during the first six months of 2023 discovered new changes each time. The TUA was being remodeled, not making it bigger, but more efficient and user-friendly.

Such a renovation needs firm leadership if everything is to run smoothly. Together with Hanno Niemeijer (voluntary construction supervisor) and Melle Rozema (facilities manager), we look back on a lively renovation period. And that is something to be proud of!

What was your role in the remodeling?

Niemeijer: 'I was construction supervisor. That is a role assigned by the Executive Board. Normally, Melle and I sit together in the technical committee that manages the building. As construction supervisor, I had to ensure that all technical questions were answered, and I also had to step in in case of emergencies.'

Rozema: 'Normally, I am TUA's facilities manager. During the construction process it was my job to ensure that all regular activities at the TUA could continue, such as meetings, lectures, conferences and exams. You can't take exams while a wall is being breached nearby. That all has to be streamlined, which takes quite a bit of planning. For instance, we used the nearby Barnabas church for our lectures for a while.'

By the way, we were not the only ones leading the building process. There was a construction committee that included besides us (the construction team) the architect, contractor, installer, librarian, university secretary, a student, a financial advisor and the Executive Board.'

Why was this remodeling necessary in the first place?

Niemeijer: 'We had been struggling for years with a shortage of space in the library and lack of study places. Those are actually the two main reasons. Unfortunately, the Municipality of Apeldoorn did not allow us to expand in square meters, so it became an internal remodeling in which we wanted to use the existing space more efficiently. It was quite a process to come up with good plans, it took us quite a while.'

What all has been addressed?

Niemeijer: 'The part of the TUA where the study hall, the senate room and the garden room were located has been completely demolished and rebuilt. This



Melle Rozema (left) and Hanno Niemeijer (right).

created new workplaces and a beautiful study landscape. The senate room has been moved to the old villa. Furthermore, the main entrance has been made more spacious, including a new office for the facilities manager. The basement has also been tackled. Here, for instance, large rolling cupboards have been installed, providing space for 1,200 meters of books. Work and study areas have also been created here. And a lift was installed, leading from the basement to the ground and first floors of the university. Finally, a nice space has been created where book club De KreNT can store its books.

Everything has been adapted to modern requirements in this remodeling, for example things like insulation, air ventilation systems and color scheme.'

Rozema: 'And don't forget the garden. It has been beautifully redesigned. The appearance of the whole building has been renewed.'

How do you look back on the whole process?

Rozema: 'It was quite a hectic period. The lectures had to go on as usual, of course, and keeping everything on track was quite a challenge. It was often difficult to coordinate the construction schedule with the schedule



The remodelled part of the TUA was officially opened on Friday 17 November by Apeldoorn municipality's alderman of education, Mr Henk van den Berge. After speeches by Mr A.J. Dorst MSc (president of the Executive Board) and by the alderman of education, the entrance to the new study centre was opened by walking straight through a large photograph.



Demolition work in the area where workrooms will be located.



The new senate room, where many of the meetings take place.



A view inside the new study centre.

of activities at TUA. But fortunately, everything went well.'

Niemeijer: 'I look back on a great period of cooperation with the contractor, installer and architect. And I would also like to mention our house painter Ferry Amptmeijer. He painted the entire building on his own. There were several hurdles to overcome and during the process, several changes were made to the original building plans. And we're happy that the result can now be seen.'

Have things happened that might be considered low points?

Rozema: 'The flood of 2023, haha! We had bad luck with rain at the wrong moment, which caused leakage, which of course was not so nice. Water came into the basement, which was literally a low point. We then had to pump and mop. But that too worked out well.'

And highs?

Together: 'That the roof was on, and everything was wind and waterproofed. That was a real relief after the leak we had had.'

Rozema: 'And the first handover, when everything was ready. Another highlight was the completion of the basement with the rolling cupboards. That was very nice!'

Niemeijer: 'For me, it was also a highlight when agreement was reached on the layout of the new reading room. That was quite a puzzle. Another nice thing was the discovery of the old ceiling with original ornaments from the nineteenth century. That has been beautifully restored in the new senate room.'

What do you think of the final result?

Rozema: 'Quite extraordinary that with the existing space we now have this new result. We can really use the space much better than before, more efficiently and user-friendly. And it also looks nice; the appearance is a lot more modern. We are really happy with that. And all that in just over six months. Also, thanks to generous donations from, among others, the readers of TUA Connect. Thank you!'

International training of lecturers by TUA



Nairobi (Kenya) hosted the kick-off meeting of VEREAD, a new network of European and African universities in which TUA participates, on 26 and 27 September. VEREAD stands for *Virtual Exchanges in Religious Euro-African Dialogue*. On behalf of TUA, J.A. (Jacob) Karels MA (research policy officer) attended. The aim of this new network, set up with a grant from the European Commission (Erasmus+), is to create an



exchange programme in which students from participating universities can follow online modules in the field of theology and religious studies. TUA's contribution will be the (online) training of lecturers from the various universities in the field of online didactics. A wonderful opportunity to make the knowledge and experience in this field from the Chair of Christian Pedagogy (Prof A. de Muynck) fruitful worldwide!

TUA library receives collection of books on pietism

This spring, the TUA library received a collection of books on pietism. This from the estate of Prof Dr Johannes Wallmann, a Protestant theologian and professor emeritus of church history at the Evangelical Theological Faculty of the Ruhr-Universität in Bochum. He specialized in seventeenth-century church history, especially in the fields of Lutheran orthodoxy and pietism. Wallmann died in 2021 and left behind a collection in the aforementioned field.



Because of TUA's cooperation in the Research Centre Puritanism and Piety (ReCePP), this donation is valuable for its research. Of the collection, over 360 books on pietism are included in the TUA catalogue. These include works by Philipp Jacob Spener, volumes from the Hallesche Forschungen series. They are a good addition to the books on the subject already present in our library.

The duplicates of the books received have been donated to the library of the Evangelical Theological Faculty in Leuven.



Bequeathing to the TUA

Even after your death, you can be of significance to theological education and research at TUA. You can do so by including the TUA in your will. No inheritance tax has to be paid over a bequest to the TUA. However, a bequest (predetermined amount) or testamentary disposition (determination of who receives what percentage of your inheritance) must be included in the will. You can arrange this with a notary.

Do you want to make sure that your legacy is well managed? Then contact (without obligation!) our president of the executive board, Mr. A.J. Dorst MSc. (ajdorst@tua.nl, tel. +31 (0) 6 51 34 90 76.

TUA day 2023

'Who am I really? Being human before God's face'. That was the theme of the TUA day held on Friday 3 November. We look back on a day when we were able to welcome a large group of people for a programme with substantive lectures, workshops, singing by the TUA choir, and of course the inner man was also thought of. The mutual encounters were cordial and the atmosphere friendly. The next TUA day is planned for Friday afternoon and evening, 1 November 2024. You are very welcome then too!



The main lectures took place in TUA's auditorium.



Meals were consumed in groups spread across TUA.



During the lecture by Prof Dr A.A. Clement on 'What would Johann Sebastian Bach answer to the question "Who am I really?"', the TUA choir provided some fine contributions.



Crowds at the sales table during the break.

Appointments by the General Synod

The General Synod of the Christian Reformed Churches in the Netherlands approved, on 13 September 2023, a number of appointments to fill vacancies at Apeldoorn Theological University. These concern the appointment of:

- Prof H. van den Belt as professor of Systematic Theology (0.5 fte) per 1 November 2023
- Prof Dr A.A. Clement as professor of Theology and Music (0.5 fte) as of 1 November 2023
- Dr A. Versluis as professor of Old Testament per 1 March 2024;
- Dr J. van den Os as associate professor New Testament per 1 March 2024;

- Dr C.C. den Hertog as associate professor of Public Theology/Ethics as of 1 March 2024;
- Dr J. van 't Spijker as associate professor of Missiology as of 1 March 2024.

The appointment of Doctors Versluis, Van den Os, Den Hertog and Van 't Spijker was subject to the condition of completing a tenure track (the path to achieve tenure; at academic institutions the path to becoming an associate professor or subsequently appointed from associate professor to full professor).

Graduates

In the previous period, the **Bachelor of Theology** was obtained by *Danny van Baarle, Tjeerd Brand, Gerben Glasbergen, Lydia Ippel en Wietse Lamberink, Michael Madern and Jan Willem van Panhuis*.

On 28 August 2023, the part-time **Master's in Herbronning Gereformeerde Theologie** was successfully completed by:

- *A.D. (Andries) de Jong*. His thesis was entitled "All of

one being". An examination of the meaning of Oliver O'Donovan's resurrection ethics for young adults.

- *S.D. (Steeff) Post*. His thesis was entitled "Pastor, polarisatie en preventie. Een op theological action research gebaseerd onderzoek naar de mogelijkheden die een pastor heeft om conflicten te voorkomen bij groeiende polarisatie in een christelijke gemeente" (Pastor, polarization and prevention.



These students received their degree or certificate of vocation on 4 September 2023. From left to right: *Wietse Lamberink (Bachelor of Theology), Lydia Ippel (Bachelor of Theology), Dominik de Bruijne (professionally certified), Gerben Glasbergen (Bachelor of Theology), Andries de Jong (Master Herbronning Gereformeerde Theologie), Steeff Post (Master Herbronning Gereformeerde Theologie), Willem Rijdsdijk (Master Herbronning Gereformeerde Theologie), Danny van Baarle (Bachelor Theology), Arjan Smit (Master Theology) and Toon Rijdsdijk (Master Herbronning Gereformeerde Theologie).*

A theological action research-based study of the potential of a pastor to prevent conflict when polarization is growing in a Christian congregation). Steeff received the designation 'cum laude'.

- *A. (Toon) Rijdsdijk*. His thesis was entitled 'Uw schoonheid hoog te loven. Jonathan Edwards' theologische visie op schoonheid en godsdienstvorming in een postmoderne samenleving' (High praise for thy beauty. Jonathan Edwards' theological vision of beauty and the religious formation of students within reformatory secondary education in a postmodern society'.

- *W. (Willem) Rijdsdijk*. His thesis was entitled 'Gedetermineerd tot afhankelijke vrijheid. Soevereine Vader en vrije kinderen in het licht van Gods voorzienigheid' (Determined to dependent freedom. Sovereign Father and free children in the light of God's providence).

These four students form the first batch of graduates in our part-time master's in Herbronning Gereformeerde Theologie launched two years ago.

The **Master of Theology** was successfully completed on 28 August 2023 by *A.J. (Arjan)*

Smit. His thesis was entitled "'Reverse mission": een lege belofte? Omgekeerde zending vanuit westers en Afrikaans perspectief vergeleken met een missionaire praktijk in Dordrecht' ("Reverse mission": an empty promise? Reverse mission from western and African perspectives compared with a missionary practice in Dordrecht).

On 6 October 2023 *T.N. (Anja) de With-Hoekman* graduated. Her thesis was entitled 'Wie "niet" vraagt, wordt overgeslagen! Een praktisch theologisch kwalitatief onderzoek naar de vraaggestuurdheid van geestelijke verzorging in de intramurale gezondheidszorg' (Those who "don't" ask are passed over! A practical theological qualitative study of the demand-driven nature of spiritual care in inpatient health care).

On 4 September, the **Certificate of Vocation** was issued to *D. (Dominik) de Bruijne MA*.

Promotions

On 10 July 2023, *M. Hamm MA* received his doctorate. Title of his thesis is *Bund und Erwählung bei Johannes Coccejus und Caspar Olevian im historischen Kontext*.

Allow me to introduce

In June, L. (Leonard) van 't Wout passed the **proponent exam**. With this, he obtained preaching license in the Christian Reformed Churches. We briefly introduce him to you below:

Name:	Leonard van 't Wout
Date of birth:	2 March 1987
Marital status:	married to Paulina van Heteren
Church home congregation:	CGK Sliedrecht Beth-El
Specialization:	Old and New Testament
Expected graduation date:	January/February 2025



Appealing statement by a theologian: 'There need not be the slightest doubt that the call and commandment to believe go out to everyone; otherwise, unbelief would not be one's sin. Now, the promise must extend in its address as far as the commandment.' (Ebenezer Erskine).

Touched and overwhelmed

This *TUA Connect* is dedicated to education and research as provided at TUA. Education and research of which we are proud, and which is of high quality, as confirmed to us by others. Not without reason did Elsevier award us a gold medal this autumn, placing both the Bachelor's and Master's programmes at the top of the theology and religious studies rankings.

To provide quality teaching and research, you need not only qualified staff but also a qualified building. And the latter has been achieved with the remodeling as carried out since January 2023 and completed in September 2023.

The remodeling has added many and good study, work and meeting spaces. Not to mention the huge expansion in the options for proper storage of library books. It must be a pleasure (and it is!) to teach and study here.

This remodeling would not have been possible without the financial contributions of many. Ranging from the contribution of the Horizon Foundation and a large donation from Jakarta to the contribution also made by readers of *TUA Connect*. It was touching and overwhelming to notice how strong the bond with TUA is and the willingness to contribute to it financially. We would therefore like to

thank all sponsors and donors who contributed. Some with a large amount. We would like to thank everyone personally, but that is not possible because the bank does not provide (address) data. Therefore: many thanks for your financial contribution to the renovation of the TUA! The renovated TUA was officially opened on 17 November, but also during the CGK Church Day on D.V. 24 May 2024 you will have the opportunity to view the renovated TUA extensively.

We can do no other than invite you: come and see! Because the result is truly beautiful, and we would love to show you that results!



*A.J. (Arjan) Dorst MSc,
President of the Executive Board*

STUDENT LIFE

Hooked on the TUA chocolate milk



"You are glowing!", I have heard several times now from a friend, family member or member of the congregation, after I answered the question of how I like it at TUA. And that could just be right, because it is very good to be here. Together with eighteen other first-year students, I have the privilege of immersing myself in the Bible and Reformed foundations all week long; currently through courses such as Greek, Bible in context of the Old and New Testament, Dogmatics and Philosophy. Piece by piece, they are taught by passionate and committed lecturers.

Although studying at a university is not strange to me - I already have a bachelor's degree in Dutch Language & Culture - studying at the TUA is really different: you are part of a close-knit community. We do not complete our

lecture timetable as individuals, but take a walk in the beautiful park in between classes, we get hooked on chocolate milk from the machine, we sing Greek letters to familiar tunes to master the alphabet, we study together in the basement, we treat ourselves to apple pie on our birthdays and we have the most beautiful conversations about God and faith. And all under the Biblical words we were asked to dwell on the very first day: 'Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God' (Romans 11:33). It is humbling and at the same time joyous to know that we will never, ever touch the bottom of those depths. Even if we hope to receive a diploma in a few years, there is no such thing as having run out of learning.

*Maryrose van Ginkel,
first-year bachelor's student*



C.C. den Hertog, "'Cum maxima reverentia, sed non sine aliqua differentia". De Barth-receptie van J. Koopmans', in: George Harinck en Dirk van Keulen, *De receptie van Karl Barth in Nederland*, Amersfoort 2022, 61-83.

Karl Barth left a great mark on theology in the last century, certainly in the Netherlands. This article highlights Dr J. Koopmans' agreement with, but also criticism of, Barth.



C.C. den Hertog, 'K.H. Miskotte and the Dutch Reformed Churches during the Occupation of The Netherlands' in: *Journal of Reformed Theology* 16 (2022), 295-310.

A conference was held on the publication of K.H. Miskotte's English translation of *Biblical ABC* in 2022. This article outlines the historical background against which Miskotte wrote his book in 1941. At first glance, the book appears to be a handout for Bible study, and the German censors will have thought so too. But careful reading makes it clear that this is resistance literature that calls for resistance to Nazism emerging from Scripture.



C.C. den Hertog, "'Has the Lord instructed you to bring such a message to the Dutch?" Karl Barth's visit to the Netherlands in the spring of 1939' in *Zeitschrift für Dialektische Theologie* 75/76 (38/2022), 107-132.

In spring 1939, Karl Barth visited the Netherlands to tour various theological faculties. Apeldoorn students were there in Kampen at the time. The Dutch government, which was very attached to neutrality, was apprehensive about the possible fuss his visit might cause. After all, Barth was a declared opponent of Nazism. Commotion certainly arose during his visit, but not primarily of a political nature.



A. van der Knijff, 'De bevindelijke preek: hoe wordt daarin omgegaan met de Schrift?' and 'Profilering door tekstkeuze? Een onderzoek naar de tekstkeuze in preken series uit de Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken en de Gereformeerde Gemeenten', in Maarten Wisse (red.), *Bevindelijke prediking. Hoe, door wie en waartoe* (Apeldoorn: De Banier, 2023), 130-172. 9789087189792, 208 p., € 17,95.

Chapter 5 shows how the findings from Van der Knijff's doctoral research can be used to analyse a (randomly chosen) sermon. The analysis brings into focus what the sermon is about.

Chapter 6 examines whether, based on text choices for sermons, something can be said about where in a church context the emphasis is placed in preaching. The author explores the possibilities for answering based on text choices found in sermon series.



A. van den Os, 'Defining Boundaries with a Vengeance: Identity Formation and the Motif of Divine Vengeance as Boundary Control in the Epistle to the Hebrews', *Religions* 14/8 (2023), 1050. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14081050>.

This article looks at how identity and the motif of God's wrath in Hebrews are related. The author of Hebrews warns the addressees that, as children of God's household, they must not deny God's gift in Christ and reject Him. God will respond to this dishonour and rejection by exercising vengeance. Thus, the addressees are exhorted not to get out of fellowship, but to continue to live close to salvation and their God-given identity.



Petra de Jong-Heins, Bert Roor, Jan van 't Spijker & Willem van 't Spijker (red.), *Betrokken in Gods missie. Basisboek missiologie* (Utrecht: KokBoekencentrum Uitgevers, 2023), 9789043537704, 276 p., € 24,99.

A broad editorial team working together from the CHE, the TUA, and the deputations for evangelization and for missions of the Christian Reformed Churches, saw to the publication of this new basic book of missiology. Around the world, traditional approaches are under discussion in missionary work. All kinds of new visions are emerging. In this book, authors from a wide circle reflect on various questions and developments occurring in the missionary field. In doing so, they start from a Reformed perspective without turning a blind eye to the richness found in other traditions. It not only reflects on theological concepts and developments in (the history of) mission, but also zooms in on the various challenges facing the cultural context of today. From the reflections offered, it looks at the practice of mission at home and abroad. Through it all, the line to God's action in working out his mission is always maintained: He has begun to work out his all-embracing plan of salvation. He engages people in it. He Himself will complete it.



H. de Waard, 'Jeremiah 32: A Hinge between Restoration and Disaster', *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 23 (2023), article 1.

Jeremiah 32 has a positive focus: there is a future for Judah after God's judgement. However, it is precisely divine judgement that receives remarkable attention in the chapter. This article examines the function of this combination of salvation and doom in Jeremiah 32. It argues that in this way the chapter functioned as a hinge between Jeremiah's Book of Consolation (Jer. 30-31) and the accounts of Judah's downfall (Jer. 34-45).



Christiaan Clement e.g. (ed.), *Sing to the Lord a new song. Psalms across five centuries* (Apeldoorn: Theological University, 2023). 9789075847581, 234 p., € 23,50.

This book is the first volume in the international book series *Contextual Studies in Theology* published by TUA. The etymology of the word 'psalm', which reveals the intrinsic musical essence of this book of the Bible, comes from the Greek *psalmós* (ψαλμός), which can be defined as making music with a harp. It is therefore no surprise that the Book of Psalms plays a fundamental role in musical-religious practices of the past and present. This volume, with articles by international specialists from various disciplines, explores the rich variety of relationships between psalms and music.

Church history lecturer Christa Boerke: 'History is a tutor'

That she wanted to study theology was clear to Drs C.T. (Christa) Boerke (60) early on in her high school days. Her father in particular was quite concerned about this because of the limited professional opportunities. But: 'It worked out well'. Now she lectures on church history at TUA.

'After my studies, I always stayed connected to TUA in addition to my work in elderly care, and on 1 November 1999, I joined on a part-time basis. At the time, this was as an employee for the library and for some other tasks. Since 2013, I have been teaching General and Dutch Church History within Professor Selderhuis' department,' drs Boerke says.

The nice thing is that Boerke can not only talk about her own time at TUA, but because she also knows the TUA of today as a teacher from the inside, she can compare it to previous years. 'Looking back at my time as a student, I see similarities and differences with the present day, and that is inevitable. Nowadays, everything is calculated: from the hours you spend on something as a lecturer to the literature you may prescribe for an exam. There used to be no looking at a book more or less, you simply studied what was prescribed and did not question its value as a student. I was just an average student and at times it was a

struggle. You were happy with every exam passed, but sometimes happier with one than the other. Some professors were more detail-oriented, others more concerned with the big picture. You could therefore be just as happy with a six from one professor as with an eight from another. For instance, I remember an exam for which we year-mates needed three rounds to pass. I was successful at round two. Was that really just because of us? Nowadays, there is an examination board that would immediately look into something like that.'

Religious experience

'In terms of content, there is a direct line between what I learned as a student at TUA and what I want to impart to students through church history,' drs Boerke continues. 'I was Professor Van 't Spijker's

(student) assistant for many years, so I learned a lot about the Reformation, but also about other periods and persons in church history. During my study years, reading sources really came into vogue. Van 't Spijker then instructed me to look for

'Those who know how to combine the craft of historical research with empathy and understanding discover that many questions asked in our time are not as new as we often think'

textual material to go with the lecture material. From Augustine, Luther, Calvin, Voetius and many others. Sometimes

a text had to be translated into Dutch first. This taught me a lot. Not only that working with texts and translation suited me well, but that you only really get to know a historical person when you let him speak for himself. What theological questions occupied him? What historical context plays a role in this? What characterizes his religious experience? And then you must place the answers to those questions in the broader context of a movement or period.'

Mistakes

'It is typical of TUA to always want to see scientific, objectifying questions in connection with questions of faith. Piety and science are not competitors; on the contrary, they can strengthen each other. Those who know how to combine the craft of historical research with empathy and understanding discover that many questions asked in our time are not as new as we often think. In this sense, I often experience history itself as a tutor, not only showing us the way in a positive sense, but also warning us not to make the same mistakes.

The church belongs to Christ, but is formed by people. This is a mystery that cannot, at its deepest level, be examined by historical methods. It is and remains a miracle: the way that God in Christ communes with people throughout the centuries. I hope that something of that resonates in the way I give substance to my lectureship.'



Passport

Name:	C.T. (Christa) Boerke
Residence:	Apeldoorn
Date of birth:	16 March 1963
Period of study at TUA:	1981-1983 (preliminary studies in Latin and Greek) 1983-1989 (candidate phase) 1990-1994 (doctoral phase, part-time)
Graduation thesis:	'Notes on the Letter to the Romans. Translation and analysis of a work by Johannes Oecolampadius (1482-1531), reformer of Basel'.
Profession:	Lecturer in church history