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# Connect

BY THE RECTOR

## TUA in motion: 'lively stability'

From time to time, we are urged in the media - or by the Doctor - to exercise more. Well, we don't need that exhortation in Apeldoorn. There is so much in motion there that the advice to slow down threatens to be imminent. Movement in coming and going students, but especially in the upward trend in the total number of students. Movement in the library's rapid growth and ever-improving digital accessibility, but most of the movement in the recent period has been in staffing.

We had to say goodbye to the President of the Executive Board, Mr Hanekamp, and to our Professor of Dogmatics, Prof Huijgen. This was counterbalanced by the arrival of newcomers: Dr Versluis and Drs Van den Os as lecturers in Biblical subjects and Mr Dorst MSc as the new President of the Executive Board. Furthermore, the inauguration of Prof Clement for the chair of Theology and Music took place. And these are just some changes from the past few months.

Furthermore, there are still a few changes to come and the main one is the departure of our Old Testament professor, Prof Peels, at the end of January 2023. Less shocking



is the change in the rectorship, which is scheduled for the end of this year. After six years, I am passing on the reins to my colleague Prof Kater. I have held the rectorship with joy and hand it over with equal joy.

Thus, after all, in Apeldoorn by no means is there 'stagnation is regression'. It is

therefore clear: we are grateful for what I call the 'lively stability' of the TUA. By the way, this is only possible under the blessing of the LORD and with the support in prayer, word and deed from the churches and denominations that have Reformed theology at their heart.

*Prof. Dr. H.J. Selderhuis, Rector*

# 'Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines (...), yet I will rejoice in the LORD; I will take joy in the God of my salvation'

(Habakkuk 3: 17-18)

Habakkuk has intense fear of the doom that threatens when the Babylonians are used by the LORD to punish Judah. When he brings to mind the enormous forces of judgment that have been unleashed in the past, his lips tremble and his legs tremble beneath him (verse 16). But he continues after all that trembling and shuddering: I will quietly wait for the day of trouble. This shows a great trust in Yahweh, the God of the covenant. This quiet waiting reminds us of The Lord's Day, number 10 of the

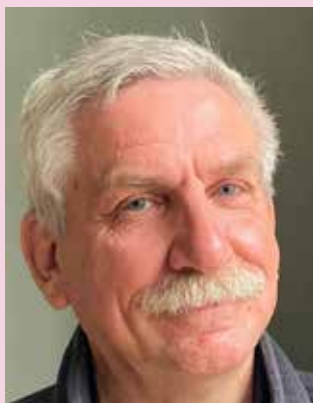
Heidelberg Catechism, which calls for patience in adversity and gratitude in prosperity.

But Habakkuk does not remain settled in this patient and quiet waiting. He continues and even confesses that if the fig trees and vines should be lost and all the livestock gone, he will still rejoice and take joy in the God of his salvation (verse 18). This response is wondrous and paradoxical. The commentators of the Dutch Statenvertaling did have an allusion to it centuries ago, and later exegetes

also pointed it out: the word 'salvation' has the same root and sound in Hebrew as 'Jesus'.

So, in these dark texts laden with impending disasters, an Advent message suddenly appears. We may be secure in the God of our salvation, because the Saviour is coming. In all the crises that have come and that still await us, there is one handhold: the LORD is our strength, and we may rejoice in the God of our salvation, the Father of our Saviour. For that

eternal grip, faith is needed. Faith that the Lord wants to give us. Faith in the new Kingdom where there will be no more tears and no more crises and where the Saviour will drink again with His chosen ones from the fruit of the (imperishable) vine (Matthew 26:29).



## Passport

Name: Frank Visscher  
Date of birth: 6 December 1958  
Marital status: Married to Ina Hage, and blessed with 3 children and 7 grandchildren  
Residence: Goes  
Congregation: CGK Goes  
Study stage: second year of the Master programme Living Reformed Theology (in daily life (paediatric) neurologist)

## Colofon

TUA Connect is the customer magazine of the Theological University of Apeldoorn. The magazine is sent free of charge to all members of the Christian Reformed Churches, other relations and interested parties.

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### Appearance

3 times a year, circulation: 24.650

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### Design, printing and distribution

Drukkerij Holland, Alphen a/d Rijn

### Gifts

IBAN NL64INGB0005463945  
t.n.v. TUA te Apeldoorn  
RSIN-nummer: 820205941.  
Donations to the TUA are tax deductible.



ISSN: 1877-0770

## Events Calendar

### 19 January 2023

7.45 p.m. (CET) – in Dutch

Lecture by Prof Dr H.J. Selderhuis, as part of the lecture series Help! My faith is crashing: 'Tomorrow it will be nothing either.'  
- On sanctification.

### 27 January 2023

3 p.m. – in Dutch

Farewell lecture by Prof H.G.L. Peels on his retirement. See also page 7.

### 15-17 February 2023

International workshop on RESILIENCE's communication strategy.

### 24 March 2023

In Dutch

Congress 'Abuse and misconduct in the church'.

### 15 April 2023

10 a.m. - 1 p.m. – in Dutch

Day of the TUA ambassadors. The TUA ambassadors will receive a personal invitation with the programme.

Activities take place Deo Volente and under the condition of COVID-19 regulations. More information on these and other events is available in the calendar, see [www.tua.nl/en](http://www.tua.nl/en).



# 'Love for God's Word and broad view teachers remains with me'

Mr A. van de Bovekamp MA was a chemist but became a pastor. How did that happen, how did he experience his time as a student at TUA and how does he look at the TUA today? 'In my opinion, the fraternisation at TUA is stronger than in our churches.'

Mr A. van de Bovekamp MA went to the TUA in 1996 at the age of 29. He had already completed a degree in chemistry and was working at an engineering firm, but 'there was an ever-growing desire to serve the Lord with all my life. These were formative years of searching and praying. I found peace and felt the call to become a pastor stronger and stronger. It was a big change to go from being a working chemist to being a student of theology. During my entire studies, I worked during my studies to earn a living for my family. That was a wonderful and intensive time, but in this, we always experienced the Lord's blessing. He paved the way.'

## Church walls

Hlt was a time of major changes as far as the teaching staff was concerned: Professors Velema, De Vuyst, Van Genderen and Van 't Spijker retired and a whole new body of professors took office: Professors Selderhuis, Hofman and Baars and other teachers. 'What has stayed with me from all of them is a love for the Word of God, but also the

broad view. We were given solid exegetical skills and love for the church. The material was explained by lecturers who knew the work in the church themselves from their own experience, which made for fascinating conversations. It was very formative. I often think back to the lectures of Prof

**'I think the unity at the TUA is a witness and example for our churches'**

Maris, who always urged us to seek and accept unity, even over church walls. His passion remains with me. It is my desire that we, in our churches, not forget this call.'

## Under water

'A nice memory is the Israel trip we experienced with teachers and students in 1997. That was educational, interesting, and very relaxing. I still remember a ballgame in the swimming pool of our hotel in Tiberias. It was very competitive. Who among the competitors can say that he pushed both Prof Selderhuis and



Rev. A. van de Bovekamp as a student.

Prof Maris underwater? I did! Of course, we also swam in the Dead Sea, a special experience. I floated next to a fellow student who, like me, had above-average weight. I said, "Should we disagree at a church meeting, I will say to you: We may not agree with each other, but we both stayed afloat in the Dead Sea!" And so, it actually happened later, and we laughed heartily and harmoniously about it.'

## Unity in diversity

After years in the rectory, Van de Bovekamp MA has been visiting the TUA frequently again for the past five years, now as a member of the curatorium. 'There you

get a special insight into the work that takes place at the TUA. The diversity that characterises our churches is also present, but in my opinion the fraternisation at the TUA is stronger than in our churches. There is unity in diversity. I think that is a testimony and example for our churches. It is precisely in diversity that we find together the great love of our God in his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Furthermore, I notice an enormous working and thinking power among our professors and lecturers, who, under the guidance of our Lord, seek a way through the great issues of the church and society. In doing so, I quite often miss appreciation for their efforts and criticism comes mostly in the media.

I find it a privilege to be able to contribute from the curatorium in guiding future pastors. For them, our university is a wonderful place where they learn to dedicate themselves, with an open mind, to the strengthening of our churches and far beyond. I hope and pray that this may remain so, to the honour of the King of the Church'.

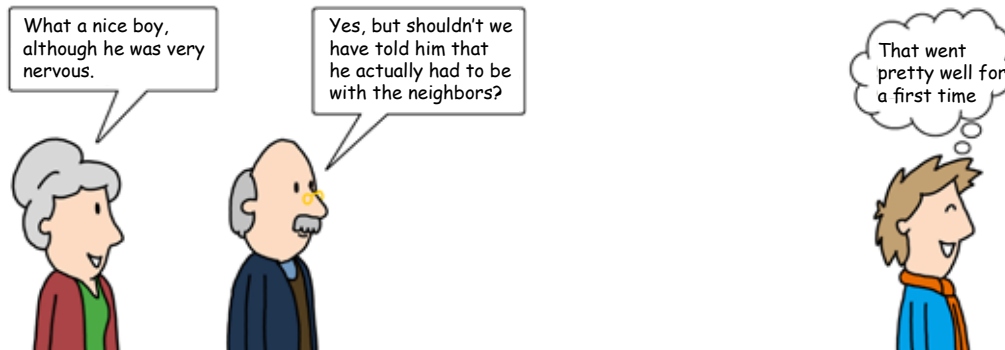


## Passport

Name:	A. (Bert) van de Bovekamp
Date of birth:	21 May 1966
Marital status:	Married to Cynthia van der Klooster
Children:	3 grown-up children
Period of study at TUA:	1995-2001
Posts:	Mussel (2002-2008), Veenendaal-Bethel (2008 -2019) and Scherpenzeel (2019-present)

# The bachelor's internship

## Pastoral mess



Cartoon: Jan Willem Klaassen

## Catechesis internship: challenging, but positive and insightful

Many catechists feel tension in September: how will it go when I meet my catechesis groups again or for the first time? Even people with years of teaching experience have this feeling. I only have to look at myself.

Imagine you started your studies with great motivation for theology itself. You don't see the practice in front of you yet, but you don't need to, because first you want to enjoy a few years of study. And then TUA's department of Practical Theology obliges all second-year bachelor students to do a catechetical internship.

Rightful obligation? Yes. Every theologian knows from experience that the interaction between theory and practice is very fruitful for the value and depth of his or her theological expertise. Besides: what is the point of theology if you don't serve people with it? And that is exactly what you do in such an internship: orientate yourself on youth catechesis, in the back of your mind the question of whether a piece of your future work in God's Kingdom might lie there.

So, no matter how challenging: observing catechesis lessons with your mentor catechist and teaching a few yourself is part of it. Of

course, with preparation and guidance from the lectures. It strikes me that most students in general experience this teaching as positive. Young people turn out to be fun. Quite a few students have already found out that they are good at explaining or leading conversations. Or that, sometimes to their own surprise, they have a real interest in what is going on with young people. Therefore, they are definitely worth our effort.



Drs. L. Snoek, Lecturer in Catechesis

## A year-long practical internship for half a day a week

For two years now, our bachelor students have been taking a concentration of practical-theological modules in their second year of study. Linked to these modules is a practical part, an internship. In the internship, which is usually in a congregation, the student can try out what he has learned in the lectures. On the other hand, the student can bring the experiences gained in practice back to the lectures. In this way, a very fruitful form of learning takes place. We now have two years of experience with this, and the students and teachers are very enthusiastic. The students can understand the theory better and gain deeper insight into it. This format also enhances their skills.

It still remains an exploratory internship, which means that students do not yet have to demonstrate their skills at the level of a beginning pastor or church worker, but it is an important start. Further on in the programme, in the master's phase, there is another internship, and there a higher level is expected.

The bachelor's internship takes place throughout the academic year and lasts a half-day per week. The first three periods (quarters) mainly involve practical exercises for the module Church and Education (catechism) and Spiritual Care (pastoral care), along with some

research exercises for the modules Church Service and also Spirituality. The final period is used for the Missiology modules. In this block, students will often attend a missionary-diaconal institution.

Not only the lecturers, but also the students are enthusiastic now that they can almost 'smell' practice, although it is often quite challenging in the beginning.



A. Heystek MA, Lecturer in Psychology

*'I experienced in the ICF how diverse God's Kingdom is'*

When I was thinking about an internship, I asked myself: why should I seek out a traditional church with which I am already familiar? I wanted to look a bit beyond my own little world. That's how I found the ICF (International Christian Fellowship), a multicultural church in Apeldoorn. Here there is a strong focus on community. Every last Sunday of the month, for instance, there is a meal together. And the service features songs in Dutch, English, Arabic and Farsi. I remember finding the church service I attended really special. The singing was exuberant, full of passion, and the mutual meeting was warm. Very different from the traditional church I am used to, but I experienced unity! In many pastoral conversations I often tasted love and gratitude towards God, especially in people who had been through a lot. For example, because of a refugee experience, or because of sorrow nearby, in the Netherlands. There were also conversations in which a language and cultural barrier was really present. Language is a theologian's instrument', they sometimes say, and in such pastoral situations you notice how true that is.

But fortunately, a loving eye and a moment of praying together often does more than many words. I can encourage everyone to get acquainted with an ICF congregation. Especially if you want to delve into how cultures can come together around serving God. In ICF, I experienced how diverse God's Kingdom is, but also that following the same Lord makes us one.

*Lydia Ippel, Bachelor's student*

### A Response from an internship supervisor: 'Wonderful learning experience for me too'

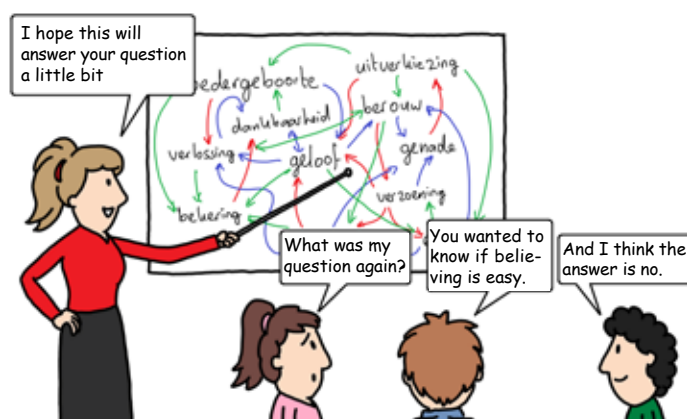
In the previous academic year, Lydia Ippel did her pastoral internship with us at the ICF congregation. We are a multicultural community and since Lydia has a desire to work perhaps with other cultures in the future, ICF was a good learning experience for her. Lydia joined us on several pastoral talks, and she also held some talks on her own with people. We discussed the conversations in detail afterwards and worked on learning objectives. In addition, feedback was always given (if possible) by the church members themselves. After all, the church members are the ones who experience the interaction most closely. The beauty of offering an internship is that you are also thrown back on the basics of pastoral care yourself. Why do I do what I do? What makes me ask my questions this way and not another way? How do I consider the context of my church members? Am I personally doing what I teach my intern?

To convey it to the intern, you are forced to think thoroughly about your own pastoral practice yourself. This is a wonderful learning experience. In this way, I hope I have been able to give Lydia something to think concerning pastoral practice, but I have also found that it has been a period of learning for me as a supervisor.

*Marianne Bronsveld, pastoral & church worker ICF congregation Apeldoorn and internship supervisor for Lydia Ippel*



## Didactic drama



*Cartoon: Jan Willem Klaassen*

*Evangelising and mission  
are empathising*

For the subject Evangelism, together with one of my fellow students, I made several visits to two congregations with an extra focus on missionary ministry. Of the many experiences, I would like to share with you one I had in the congregation of the CGK Utrecht-West. This congregation consists of two district congregations: the 'regular district' and the ICF district.

On a Friday, we went together on our public transport bike across Utrecht to the pastor of the 'regular district' of the congregation to discuss the sermon text of the upcoming Sunday's service with him. Now you may be thinking: 'The sermon text of the regular service will not have much to do with the subject of Evangelism, because it is not a missionary service.' Surprisingly, both of us experienced precisely the opposite, because in this conversation we discovered an important fact: namely that preaching is not just a monologue of the person at the front of the church, but a dialogue of this person with the people in front of him. When preaching, it is very important for the pastor to ask the question: "Who do I have in front of me?"

During the conversation, we learned to empathise with the hearers by reading the text from different points of view. It was an interesting learning experience to discover through a sermon for the 'ordinary congregation' a principle that is of great importance for the ICF

district and all other forms of evangelisation and mission: the great importance of empathising with the one to whom the Gospel is proclaimed, whether in the church or outside it.

*Arend Beens. Bachelor's student*

*"In the spotlight"*  
continues on page 6.







*Jan-Willem during a catechesis lesson.*

## *'Openness in pastoral conversations touched me deeply'*

My internship was carried out in the congregation of which I am a member myself, the CGK of Nunspeet (Dorpskerk and Oenenburgkerk) and Rev P.D.J. Buijs supervised me.

For Homiletics, Liturgics and Spiritualism, the assignments mainly consisted of observations, interviews, reports and reflections. This was certainly fascinating, partly because of the instructive conversations with the pastor, a number of ministers and church members, but it was still largely 'study-room work'. For Catechetics, I was exempt, since I was already active as a catechist. Being engaged with the young people of the congregation around the Word is a wonderful and at the same time a challenging experience.

The module I really experienced a lot of joy in during my internship was Poimenics, pastoral care. First, I accompanied Rev Buijs on a number of pastoral visits, which was very instructive. The situations we encountered were very different and that's what made it so fascinating. All kinds of lines come together in the pastoral visit and are connected, such as work, school, family, personal life, preaching and congregational life. It was very nice to observe how Rev Buijs led the conversations. By observing, and in the conversations with him afterwards, I gained a lot, including practical things.

The next step was to make pastoral visits independently. Even while making the appointments, the wonderful hospitality of the people and their spontaneous willingness to cooperate became apparent. What touched me deeply was the openness in conversation. It is an incredible privilege to be in conversation with people about who Christ is for them and how He is present in their lives. These experiences make me really want to be active in pastoral care. To be allowed into the real world of someone's life, to be able to open the Bible and go into prayer together, that has to be the most beautiful work there is!

*Jan-Willem van Panhuis, candidate for ordination*

## **Internship supervisor: 'Mutually instructive'**

It was nice to first go together in making a number of visits, where I had obviously chosen people with very different life situations. For Jan-Willem, that was generally a first acquaintance. In doing so, he conducted himself modestly, which is a good attitude. Nevertheless, there were moments when he, in an appropriate way, inserted himself into the conversation. Afterwards, we evaluated the conversations: what happened, what came up, how do you respond to that in conversation, Bible reading and prayer? Jan-Willem then went into the congregation himself to have conversations independently. He liked that very much himself, and I heard positive comments from the discussion partners about the way he conducted the conversations.

As far as catechesis was concerned, he could completely go his own way: as a teaching man, he knows how to deal with young people.

Jan-Willem interviewed me some about congregational life, preaching and liturgy. I think it was mutually instructive: he discovered why I do certain things the way I do, and for me it was good to look in the mirror again via good questions that were asked: why do we do it this way? To my surprise, doing an internship this way cuts both ways: you both learn (again) from it. And it's nice to do so!

*Rev P.D.J. Buijs, pastor CGK Nunspeet and internship supervisor of Jan-Willem van Panhuis*

## **Correction**

The previous issue of *Connect* contained an overview of the PhDs supervised by Prof Selderhuis. Missing was the promotion of Jason van Vliet in 2009. His dissertation was entitled *Children of God. The Imago Dei in John Calvin and His Context*.



# Prof Peels retires as a Professor of Old Testament after 30 years

In 1993, he became professor of Old Testament at TUA, before which he had been a lecturer in that same discipline, and prior to that he was a pastor at the CGK in Zoetermeer. Now that his retirement is coming up, Prof Peels is looking back, and ahead.

'When I started my work at TUA, in 1986, I was 30 years old. I had the privilege of serving only one congregation, Zoetermeer, for a short period of just four years. Returning to TUA was not easy for my wife and me. But in the years that followed, I grew into the work more and more, and with great joy I devoted myself to studying the Old Testament and passing on all I found in it, of wisdom, beauty, and truth. Highlights were not only the many wonderful lectures, but also, in particular, the periods of guest lecturing abroad, especially in Africa and in Asia. It is so encouraging to witness up close how the Spirit is building the Kingdom across all borders. There were also negative moments, of course. It started early, in 1987: the sudden death of Prof Versteeg, for me the connection with the older generation of professors I had to operate among as a "youngster". Many years later, I found the great mistake of not wanting to form a single Reformed Theological University along with other institutes a low point. Right through it all, I experienced the transition from a university of applied sciences with a limited sphere of influence to a full-fledged theological university with a wider reach far beyond the borders. It was and is a privilege to have been able to contribute to that.'

## Silent

Over the years, Prof Peels has focused mainly on questions concerning the image of God in the Old Testament and, especially in recent years, on the intriguing book of Jeremiah. In addition, he immersed himself in a variety of topics: eschatology, Bible translation, violence in the Old Testament, the covenant, 'stumbling blocks', hermeneutics, the genesis of the Old Testament, psalm exegesis, and so on. What did he learn most from? 'Those "dark" texts in the Old Testament, the "shadow sides" of the image of God, which constantly shed new light on who the LORD is, He who in His holiness and His love does not allow Himself to be held back. One short study that I perhaps took the most pleasure

in was the examination of the notion of the longsuffering of God. SO beautiful! While praying and researching, this always made me silent myself.'

## Closed systems of thought

As a student, Prof Peels himself was taught by Prof Oosterhoff, from whom he learned above all that in studying the scriptures, one should listen reverently: the scriptures are always richer than you ever thought. From him he also inherited a resistance to closed systems of thought, whether liberal or conservative. 'Scripture can say it, even if it sometimes confuses me. I was taught plenty of wise lessons, but not the least wise lesson was one about the freedom of exegesis. That has been and remains a contested issue.'

From Prof Oosterhoff, he also inherited his task in Jeremiah research, which the former had started but was unable to finish. In the end, Prof Peels concentrated on the last part of the book of Jeremiah, the prophecies to the nations in Jeremiah 46-51. 'Those can be counted among the most difficult texts of the Old Testament. I have now completed the work. In January 2023, KokBoekencentrum will publish the book.'

Looking back on all these past years, Prof Peels is especially grateful. 'By God's grace, as an Old Testament scholar confronted with great hermeneutical and theological questions, I have been able to keep the faith. That faith has even deepened and become even more anchored in who He wants to be for us tiny people according to His promises.'

Just as Prof Peels was Prof Oosterhoff's successor at the time, so Dr Versluis is Prof Peels' successor. What would he like to give his successor above all? 'Pretty much the same as I received from my predecessor. In short: respect for the Scriptures, modesty in forming your own opinions, gentleness in dealing with others, decisiveness in standing up for the priority of the Word. A little later,

then, our traditions will come naturally. And in all this, realise that we are just ordinary tiny people, with a limited view, and that God's Kingdom transcends all our boundaries, over time.'

## Plans

After his retirement, Prof Peels plans to go on vacation with his wife Janine: a journey of several months along the Mediterranean Sea, past sites of classical antiquity. 'Just with our tent in the back of our car, and as we move along, catch something of what God's work has brought about in people's lives and cultures throughout the centuries. In other words, away from the here-and-now. Looking at ourselves, our church and modern life from a distance. After that, I will return, and yes, then I have all kinds of wonderful things to do. Among other things, writing a book on images of God in the Old Testament, not on an academic level, but something more comprehensible. My drive in being theologically engaged has always been not to get lost in details and marginal issues, but to think and write about the core question of who the LORD is, as we learn to know Him in His Word.'

## Farewell lecture

Prof Peels' farewell lecture is scheduled for Friday afternoon 27 January 2023 in the Grote Kerk on the Loolaan in Apeldoorn. This lecture will deal with a subject at the intersection of his two major areas of research: the image of God and the exegesis and theology of the book of Jeremiah. Those interested are welcome to attend this meeting and the subsequent reception. Keep an eye on the agenda at [www.tua.nl](http://www.tua.nl)!

# Dr. A. Versluis: 'Theology is Living Before God'

**After more than 16 years as a church pastor, Dr A. Versluis has been appointed as associate professor of Old Testament at the TUA on 1 November. 'I would like to share with our students the richness and relevance of the Old Testament for today's church and society.'**

*Dr A. (Arie) Versluis; who is he, actually?*

'I am the husband of a wonderful wife, father of four lovely children and the son of very fine parents. I think the latter is also important to mention. My parents instilled in me a love for the Lord and for the church. And above all, I am someone who should and may live by God's grace every day.'

*We will delve into his work below, but what does he do in his free time?*

'I enjoy listening to classical music and I love reading: besides theology, also history and literature. Furthermore, I like walking and cycling. That's a fantastic thing to do to think about something or just clear your head.'

Thinking is in the marrow of our new associate professor of Old Testament. He obtained his PhD in 2012 through his dissertation on the commandment to exterminate the Canaanite peoples (Deuteronomy 7). In addition to lecturing, he will conduct research at the TUA. 'After my dissertation, I continued researching violence in the Old Testament and Deuteronomy. In the coming years, I would like to look more broadly at Old Testament ethics. This ties in with Deuteronomy, which contains many laws, but it also fits in with the rest of the Old Testament: laws, but also ethics in stories,

psalms, the wisdom literature. This also involves the relationship with the New Testament and how to extend lines to today. That field is broad enough to study for a while. And research has to fit the programme of our research group. We are just working on a new programme for the coming years.'

## Fascinating

In his lectures, Dr Versluis really wants to pass some lessons on to students: 'We are going to work hard, as far as I am concerned. Knowledge is important, but the most important aspect is formation. That's why I think the mutual discussion in lectures is important. I want to inspire students with enthusiasm for the Old Testament and hope that they see something of its richness and how to use it responsibly. It is important, on the one hand, to really go into depth and look thoroughly: what does this text say? And on the other hand, to see the theological lines throughout the Old Testament, towards the New Testament, and towards today. I hope that in study, students are given a good, theological formation: that they are rooted in Scripture, connected to the church of the ages and with an open eye to today's society. Study also concerns spiritual formation: at TUA, students do not just learn a profession; theology is also living a life before God. This raises important and fascinating questions, which require good research and faithful listening to the scriptures.'

## Exegetical conscience

*You yourself were taught Old Testament by Prof Peels in the past. What did you learn from him?*

'I learned a lot from him: his professionalism, wisdom, kindness, both during lectures, at my graduation, during my PhD and even now! What I especially remember about him is his attitude of reverent and patient listening to the Scriptures. If the TUA taught me anything, it was an exegetical conscience. You can freely present the Word, but what you claim must be written there! I will certainly do things differently sometimes, but I would like to continue in the same direction.'

*In recent years, you have had the opportunity to serve three congregations as pastor. How do you look back on that and what is the transition to academia like?*

'I learned a lot in these communities. Everywhere the character of the people is different, the people are different, you encounter different issues. I am grateful for their patience and trust. It is beautiful to see when people change and come to repentance, beautiful when the Word opens and when you can really mean something to people at highs and lows in life. You meet the brokenness of life, that really stays with me. The work is going to be different now, my week is going to look very different from the church. But: both involve work in the Kingdom of God. Theology and church need each other! It will take some time to get used to such a change, but I am really looking forward to working at TUA.'







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## TUA ambassadors

Does your congregation already have a TUA ambassador? You can check that at <https://www.tua.nl/nl/ambassadeurs>. Is your congregation not yet on the list? Then register yourself both with your church council and with us! ([jmvierbergen@tua.nl](mailto:jmvierbergen@tua.nl)) We hope to hold our next ambassador day on 15 April 2023.

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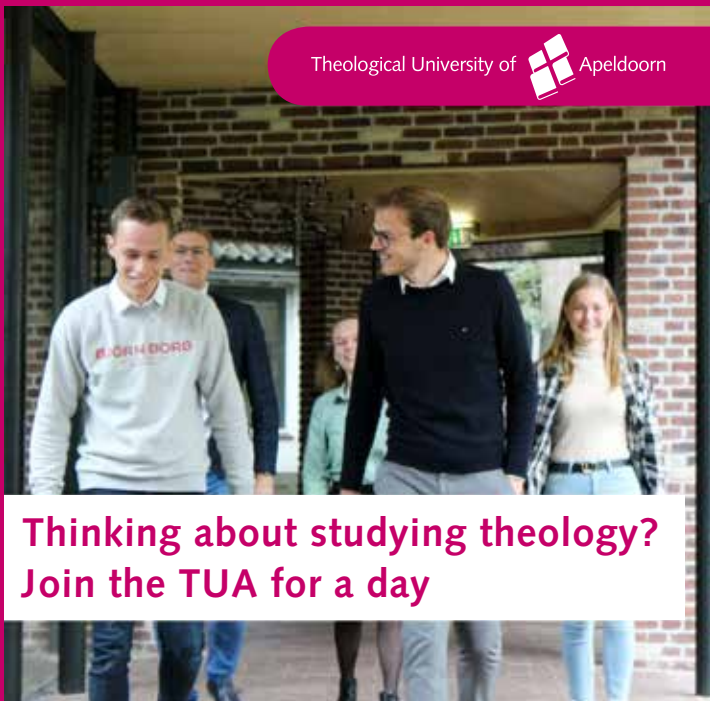
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Herrejan Veenema



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## Join the TUA for a day

Thinking about studying theology? Have you decided to study theology but don't yet know where? Are you curious about what our university is like? Or would you like more information and clarity before applying?

You are welcome to join us for a day of lectures, without any obligation. You can see what education at TUA entails, how it is provided and what the focus is. You can have a taste of the atmosphere and meet students and professors. There is plenty of opportunity and space to ask your questions and/or speak to the study advisor. Furthermore, you will get a guided tour and leave for home with a goodie bag.

You can attend lectures as a guest for a day on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays during the lecture periods (for the Master Living Reformed Theology on Wednesdays).

Register on [www.tua.nl](http://www.tua.nl)!

# The new lecturer of New Testament always remains a student

**From part-time pastor in the CGK of Spijkenisse to New Testament lecturer at TUA: it's quite a change. But a nice change. Rev J. (Arjan) van den Os MA started working full-time at TUA on 1 July. 'There is so much I don't know yet. There is still so much to discover!'**



Van den Os grew up in Harderwijk in the 1990s. Back in primary school, he wanted to become a pastor, but the path of life initially proceeded differently. He lost his calling and after secondary school studied history. He liked this course of study, but miraculously God made it clear to him that He wanted to use him in His service. The history course had to be abandoned, and Arjan applied to Apeldoorn. The curatorium immediately recognized his calling, and in 2018 he was ordained as a half time pastor in Spijkenisse. At the same time, he was appointed as a PhD candidate at TUA, also half time.

## Thesis on the vengeance of God

In the past few years, Van den Os has been writing on his doctoral thesis, which is now in its final stages. The topic of his research is the vengeance of God in the New Testament. 'There is a strong connection between the Old and New Testaments,' the newly appointed lecturer explains. 'I started by studying Greek

and Roman texts, inscriptions and papyri (texts on papyrus, ed.) from ancient times: how does revenge work there? This was followed by moving to the Old Testament and early Jewish literature, and then to hermeneutics: I read revenge in my contemporary, Western context differently from how revenge is understood in the culture of the Bible. How has that grown? Where are the questions and sensitivities of your culture? Where do you stand yourself? What are your presuppositions? I then delved into the New Testament in search of texts that deal directly or indirectly with revenge. What I conclude from this I will keep to myself for now, but you will be able to read my conclusions in my dissertation!'

In spring 2023, he hopes to obtain his PhD, so from then on, he will have the doctoral title. How will he continue his research after that? 'In my dissertation, I bring up things I want to develop further. I want to focus on

the New Testament image of God: attributes of God in the New Testament, the patience of God, how can you know God, and so on. I find that there are bigger theological questions there. Consider also the shadow sides of the God image: vengeance and wrath. There is still so much to explore!'

## Lectures

Van den Os himself was taught New Testament as a student in a transitional phase: first he was taught by Prof Hofman, then by Dr Van Spanje and Dr Mulder. 'I learned from them first of all that it is very important to read the Bible as it wants to be read: in its historical context, in faithfulness, in receptivity, also for the message it communicates. I also learned from them love and joy in dealing with the Bible text, its message and theology. My teachers went through a journey of discovery themselves and took us on a journey to discover a very interesting world of digging into the Word, bringing out messages. That was such a beautiful thing to experience!

Van den Os continues in their footsteps, but also seeks his own way. 'The curriculum shifts, the field of study changes, and each teacher has his own topics that are close to his heart.'

## Transition from rectory to academy

It is quite a major change going from being a pastor to being a teacher. 'I miss the people of the Spijkenisse congregation and dealing with their life situations. And it is also getting used to the different interpretation of my daily life. My days now consist of teaching, college preparation, meetings. You have to find your rhythm in that for a while. But I am very happy to be here at TUA, where I actually never left. I am very surprised by my appointment. It's very special how the Lord led this happen. I am really in the right place here, where I can do what I love. I get to share the knowledge I have gained and continue to gain. Because I will always remain a student.'

# TUA without Prof. Huijgen



*Prof A. Huijgen while delivering his valedictory address (at the opening of the 2022/2023 academic year). Title of this speech was 'Gereformeerde perspectieven voor dogmatiek vandaag' (Reformed perspectives for dogmatics today), which can be in Dutch read at [www.arnoldhuijgen.nl/afscheidscollege/](http://www.arnoldhuijgen.nl/afscheidscollege/)*

At the opening of the academic year, we said goodbye to Prof A. Huijgen. A strange feeling, about which much can be said and much has been said. His decision to leave TUA and accept an appointment as professor of systematic theology at PThU is therefore

a significant one. In itself, especially nowadays, it is not at all strange for someone to change jobs after working at an institution for eighteen years. Eighteen years is a long time. It is true that Prof Huijgen was appointed as a professor five years ago,

but before that he had been employed at TUA for many years. And we knew it!

The path he had already set out on as a student, namely that many things could be done better - and which he subsequently improved - he continued as a lecturer and researcher. Particularly worthy of mention are the ways in which he set up the Master's degree in Living Reformed Theology (LRT), his organisation and leadership of the research group BEST, and his initiatives to promote Reformed theology within and certainly outside his own circle and church.

There was always the desire to be of service to the LORD and His church, and that demanded quite a bit from his wife - Hanneke, thank you! - and children. This will not be very different at the PThU, and it is therefore the wish of the whole TUA that he may work in his new position with fruitfulness and joy.

*Prof. Dr. H.J. Selderhuis, Rector*

*On his website, Prof Huijgen explained his departure for the PThU. See therefore [www.arnoldhuijgen.nl/naar-de-ptu/](http://www.arnoldhuijgen.nl/naar-de-ptu/)*

## Farewell to President of the Executive Board



*The retirement of ir W.J.A. Hanekamp was marked with a symposium.*

After 11 years as president of TUA's Executive Board, W.J.A. (Wim) Hanekamp retired from the university on 27 June due to his reaching retirement age. As an expression of appreciation for his person and his work, TUA offered him a mini symposium on a theme of his concern

under the title 'Vooruit boeren! / vooruit-boeren'. This mini symposium focused on the question of what theologians and especially pastors can learn from farmers and what theologians can do for farmers.

The title of the symposium hinted at the need to look ahead and take longer-term measures, but is also an exhortation to Christians to make themselves heard from their faith and expectation, and from their importance for society. A theme that suits Mr Hanekamp. There were four lectures on such topics as the role of agricultural science in 'forward farming' and on dealing wisely with creation.

Ir Hanekamp has been succeeded by A.J. Dorst MSc. See pages 14 and 15 for an introduction to him.



*Wim Hanekamp during a panel discussion with the symposium speakers.*



# TUA library receives books from an estate again



After the library of the late Prof Peter Walter was donated to the TUA library in January 2022, the TUA has again received books from a bequeathed library from Germany. This time a modest amount of about seven metres from the library of Prof Martin Honecker.

This German Protestant theologian and social ethicist died in June last year. He was professor of systematic theology and social ethics at the Faculty of Protestant Theology

of the Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität in Bonn. He has built up a library in these fields, from which Prof Selderhuis has selected some 300 books. This selection forms a nice addition within the TUA collection in the field of ethics and church law. We therefore hope that students and researchers will make extensive use of it. Our student assistant for the library, Andries de Jong, has already made these books available in the catalogue.

## Elsevier awards TUA with a golden medal

**TUA bachelor performs well in the rankings. Elsevier published the Best Studies 2022 at the end of September. In it, Elsevier assesses the bachelors and masters of Dutch colleges and universities. At the very top in the Theology category was the TUA bachelor, which was therefore awarded a gold medal.**

Our bachelor's degree program was rated with an overall score of 92+. The programme scored high on all surveyed items, but in particular on the items information from the programme (100+), study in general, programme content and atmosphere (all three a score of 100) and a 96 for lecturers. The percentage of students who would choose this study again is also very high at 96%.

A brief overview of TUA bachelor's scores:

Programme in general: 100

Training content: 100

General skills acquired: 85

Labour market preparation: 89+

Teachers in general: 96

Information from the programme: 100+

Study facilities: 85

Testing and assessment: 85

Studyability: 78

Atmosphere: 100

Percentage that would choose study again: 96

Overall ranking score: 92+

We are grateful for this assessment, which encourages us to continuously work on the quality of education. TUA's master's programmes, by the way, did not participate in the survey because proportionally too few students participated for a valid result.

## TUA at the CGK Church Day and the Kerkproeverij Event



On 27 May, TUA attended the CGK Kerkendag, and had an information booth at the event. Visitors could buy books, get information about studying theology, children could grab free things and we talked about the planned remodelling. You can still support our remodelling financially! Please use the authorisation card included in this TUA Connect or transfer your contri-

bution to account NL40 INGB 0000 0090 00 (BIC: INGBNL2A) with the note 'gift verbouwing'.

On Saturday 8 October, we were at the Kerkproeverij Event in Apeldoorn. During this day, all kinds of churches and Christian organisations presented themselves to the public in Apeldoorn's Oranjepark. This was done with music, spoken word, information booths, etc. As TUA we handed out many copies of the City Bible Apeldoorn (and other gifts), provided information about studying at TUA and had many conversations. And all under a bright autumn sun!



# Who will sail with us to England?

That sailing became driving, the boat became a train. After all, TUA travels climate neutral.

On Saturday afternoon, 4 June, fifteen TUA pioneers left for the British capital for a seven-day working week at All Nations Christian College. There, we would learn more about the importance of global missionary work. After braving train and metro, we were kindly welcomed at our destination by the good-humoured couple Richard and Louisa Evans.

The following Sunday morning, the TUA party filled the local village church. The church service was dedicated to Pentecost as well as the official anniversary of the then undeceased Queen Elizabeth. On Sunday afternoon, we attended a church service of the Iranian community in north London. Thanks to a headset and interpreter - who,

by the way, sang along loudly with the Iranian songs - we were able to follow the service. It was impressive to experience our Iranian brothers and sisters expressing their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ under necessary security.

All the lectures attended revolved around evangelism and missionary work. For example, we were taught about building church communities in countries where it is difficult to do so. We also learned about the meaning and importance of missiology. Even a subject like anthropology - which I really never thought would have anything to do with evangelisation - was covered.

Thanks to all the experiences in London - I could write down so much more - I came to understand the need for mission and evangelisation. I know from



*The participants of the study trip to London. Twan Rebel is the fifth person from the left.*

experience that missiology can become secondary to other Christian fields. In the Netherlands, we may have it too good to see the need elsewhere. However, the conversations I had with the All Nations students changed my missiological mindset. Of course, this does not necessarily mean that

we all have to run onto the mission field after our studies. It starts with an awareness that mission and evangelism do matter.

If the church loses sight of missiology, what is its mission?

*Twan Rebel, Bachelor's student*

## Graduates

The **Bachelor of Theology** was obtained in the last period by: *Rogier Boogaard, Pieter Fassò, Ludo Hartog, Ronald de Jong, Jan Willem Klaassen, Willem Mijnheer, Daan Prins, Niels Stouten, Gerralt Vliek and Jaline van Zwol.*

On 5 September 2022, *E.S. (Errit) van der Heide* successfully completed the **Master of Theology**. His thesis was entitled 'Tot wie wij bidden. Een kwalitatief onderzoek naar de godsbeelden die af te leiden uit het vrije gebed in de eredienst in de CGK' (To whom do we pray? A qualitative study of the images of God that can be derived from the 'free prayer' in the services of worship in the CGK).



*These Bachelor's degree students received their degrees on 2 September 2022. From left to right: Willem Mijnheer, Pieter Fassò, Jaline van Zwol, Gerralt Vliek, Rogier Boogaard, Ronald de Jong and Ludo Hartog.*

## Meet and Greet

On 5 October 2022, H.J. (Henkjan) Ymker passed his examination for proponents. With this, he obtained the preaching license in the Christian Reformed Churches. We briefly introduce him to you below:



Name: Henkjan Ymker  
Date of birth: 14 November 1998  
Marital status: unmarried  
Congregation: CGK Nieuw-Balinge  
Major: Practical Theology  
Expected date of graduation: academic year 2023/2024  
A striking statement by a theologian: 'Precious grace is the incarnation of God.' (Bonhoeffer)

## Promotions

On 23 September 2022, *B.A.T. (Arjan) Witzier* received his doctorate. The title of his dissertation is 'Lezen in het licht van de Geest. Hermeneutische implicaties van het nieuwtestamentische spreken over het verlichtende werk van de Heilige Geest.' (Read in the light of the Spirit. Hermeneutical implications of the New Testament speaking on the illuminating work of the Holy Spirit).



# New president of the Executive Board: 'It can't all just be peaches and cream'

**Our new chairman of the Executive Board is A.J. (Arjan) Dorst MSc. Who is this man and what will he actually do at TUA?**

That Dorst applied for this position probably does not entirely surprise those who know him. After all, he has always worked in education: first in primary education and later in higher vocational education, while he also did advisory work in secondary education. 'I just find education enormously beautiful, important and valuable! I was still in secondary school myself when I already had an idea of what makes a good teacher. And I have always held that: it is so important that education is taught by people who themselves wholeheartedly support that education and want to serve it! Make sure you love your pupils or students!' Dorst gradually rolled from a teaching role into more of a managerial role: he was a member of the management board of several primary schools and eventually became a member of the board. At the Christelijke Hogeschool Ede, he held an organisational and managerial position. He then became director of a medium-sized primary school organisation in the west of the country. He also completed a study in Educational Sciences. But this educational side, in which he is well trained, is not the only thing that attracted him to TUA: "Actually, I responded to this vacancy because the position is at the intersection of three things that fascinate me: management and leadership, education, and theology. In my speech at the opening of the academic year, I indicated that I want to fulfil these tasks with pride, ambition and dedication. And in dependence: praying whether God's Face will go with me and with the organisation, as it says in Exodus 33.'

His duties are diverse: together with the current rector (Prof Selderhuis) and the future rector (Prof Kater), he forms the Executive Board. Within this, Dorst is mainly responsible for everything concerning finance, building facilities, and personnel. 'So mainly the management side of things. But I have already said, with a wink to both my rectors, that I am too much of an educationalist not to get involved in educational matters at all. Within the



Executive Board, although education does not fall under my portfolios, I can be a good sparring partner in that area.'

## **Professional culture**

Now that he has been working in his new position for a bit of time, a few things strike him. 'TUA, as in any organisation, has its own culture. Therefore, I think things like staff outings and optimal communication are important: they help build a professional culture of cooperation. Culture is determined by the people who work there and by habits, but this is not immutable. I like the process of focusing on that where possible.'

An example of what he notices is that at TUA, everyone works hard and a lot. That advantage is also a disadvantage: ' "Oh, this also needs to be done, I'll just add that." Everyone is quick to say "yes". In the short term, this is attractive and pleasant. In the longer term, we must think about tension and the capacity of staff to do so much.' In any case, he sees TUA as a warm, committed organisation, with all motivated and dedicated people working there. 'Conversely, there is also the risk in that that means you

don't discuss certain issues with each other, even though they are an issue. Collaboration cannot be all peaches and cream. Every collaborative culture has its positive and negative sides. The challenge is to lead in such a way that things develop towards more professionalism.'

## **Dream**

'My dream for the TUA is that the TUA is and remains a beacon of peace in the turmoil of ecclesiastical developments as they are currently taking place. We manage here, regardless of the background of the students and staff, to shape education and research in unity. There is no hardening of views here. Furthermore, I hope we manage to maintain and even strengthen those things that TUA is good at and appreciated for. Think of student satisfaction, or the name the programme has in the field of Reformed Theology. But also, that we find new ways to be even more meaningful to the church and society. Serving Knowledge!

*On the next page, A.J. Dorst writes his first column 'From the Executive Board'.*



# Thinking, praying and thanking to serve

Recently in my hometown congregation, people prayed and gave thanks for the work done at the TUA. It was special. The intercessions included prayers for the work I have been privileged to do at TUA since 1 August this year. And in addition, there were many other reasons to give thanks and pray.

## Thanking

There was reason to give thanks because of the progress of teaching and research at TUA. With great dedication, care and commitment, the education support staff, lecturers and professors ensure that the distinctive education and research at the TUA continue.

There was reason to give thanks for the good, warm and cordial atmosphere at TUA among students and staff. There was reason to give thanks because of the golden medal that Elsevier awarded our bachelor's programme. And there was reason to give thanks because the Dutch

Department of Education, Culture and Science made a large sum of money available with which the TUA may conduct research.

## Praying

Besides giving thanks, there was also reason for prayer. The turmoil and tensions within the church are not beyond the TUA. There was the prayer that in all this, the TUA may (continue to) function as a beacon of peace. As an institution where meetings take place and openness, and connection are sought and found.

Prayer also for the progress of education and research at TUA. Very practically: from January 2023, internal remodelling will start whereby the number of workplaces for students and teachers will be increased. A rearrangement of the library will also take place and a lift will be installed in the building.

The work of the TUA is hopefully not 'far from your bed'... and certainly not

## An appeal to you!

A construction budget has been made available for this remodelling, but meanwhile prices of services and raw materials have risen significantly. Therefore, we would like to appeal to you as readers of TUA Connect to contribute to this important remodelling. With the enclosed authorisation card, you can support us with a one-off or recurring donation. Or transfer your donation to account number NL40 INGB 0000 0090 00 (BIC: INGBNL2A), with de note 'gift verbouwing'.

'far from your prayer'! For we must not only think, but also pray (and thank!) to serve.

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



Dr. Gert van den Brink and prof. dr. Hanneke Schaap-Jonker, *Anders voelen, anders geloven. Over autisme en geloofservaring* (Feeling differently, believing differently. On autism and faith experience) (Utrecht: KokBoekencentrum, 2022). ISBN 9789043538442, 128 p., € 16,99.

A psychic-pastoral book for people with autism, regarding their faith experience, and their loved ones. Many people with mental health problems struggle with their faith: 'Is it real?' 'Can I believe with my problem?' People with autism can also struggle with these questions. Autism affects relationships, communication, perception and behaviour. And thus, also on believing and a relationship with God. Besides stories of experi-

ence and explanations of the links between autism and religious experience, the authors discuss what Martin Luther wrote about faith and grace. The Reformation proves surprisingly helpful for people with autism and those around them.



Dr. Jaco van der Knijff, *Heft hier voor God uw lofzang aan. Principe en praktijk van de gemeentezang in gereformeerd perspectief* (Lift up your praise here before God. Principle and practice of congregational singing in Reformed perspective) (Hilversum: Willem de Zwijgerstichting, 2022). ISBN 9789072462725, 63 p., € 4,30.

This brochure looks at the significance of congregational singing in

the whole of the Reformed liturgy from a historical perspective. It outlines how the 16th, 18th and 20th centuries, among others, thought about song in the liturgy. It also discusses how congregational singing took shape in these centuries. Finally, it identifies the challenges churches face today when it comes to church singing. The brochure can be ordered via the website of the Willem de Zwijgerstichting.



Prof. dr. H.G.L. Peels, 'From Egypt to Babylon, or from Elam to Moab? Queries Concerning the Order of the Oracles Against the Nations in the Book of Jeremiah', in: Hannes Bezzel, Uwe Becker, and Matthijs de Jong (eds), *Prophecy and Foreign Nations. Aspects of the Role of the "Nations" in the Books of Isaiah,*

*Jeremiah, and Ezekiel* [FAT 2.135], (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2022), 59-75, € 84,-.

Jeremiah, like other Old Testament prophets, has a collection of prophecies concerning the nations. Regarding the place of this collection and the order of the nations in it, there is much difference between the Greek text (the Septuagint) and the Hebrew text (Masoretic text) of the book of Jeremiah. It is usually assumed - correctly - that the Septuagint is closer to the original text of Jeremiah than the Masoretic text, which shows traces of later editing. In this article, however, Prof Peels questions the alleged priority of the Greek text regarding the order of the prophecies of the nations. It is presumably precisely the Septuagint (and its source text) that shows a later rearrangement of the prophecies, while the Masoretic text can lay more claim to originality on this point.

## PUBLICATIONS

# Youth work adviser Marieke Griffioen: 'I had a golden time at TUA'

Marieke Griffioen (40) was an English teacher but felt that teaching was an intermediate stage. While studying English Language and Culture, a desire arose to pass on the riches of God's Word. She is now senior youth work advisor at the Christian Reformed youth organisation LCJ.

'After studying English Language and Culture, I first worked for six months as a volunteer in England for Wycliffe Bible Translators. When I returned to the Netherlands, I became an English teacher, which were in short supply at the time. Although I enjoyed teaching, I felt that teaching was an intermediate stage. At the time, I was volunteering at the LCJ, where there was an unfilled vacancy for a youth work advisor. As I read the job description, I thought more and more as I read: all the experience needed for this position, I have gained over the past few years. Three weeks later, I was hired as a part-time youth work advisor.'

From 2007 to 2010, she combined being a youth work counsellor with teaching at a secondary school. From 2010, Marieke started working entirely for the LCJ, first as a youth work adviser, and later as a senior youth work adviser.

When she had been working in education and at the LCJ for a few years, she noticed that she sorely missed personal formation through study. Out

of personal interest and a desire for further professionalisation in her work, she enrolled as a contract student at TUA. 'There I had a golden time. I experienced TUA as a warm community characterised by love, content, professionalism and humour. I remember the conversations in the canteen with robust discussions and roaring laughter. I experienced the lectures as very valuable. Words that come to mind when I have to give a characterisation of my TUA experience are: professional, intellectual, profound, as well as: reverence, piety, respect. I look back on this with gratitude and warm memories.'

## Formative

Her range of duties at the LCJ is very varied. In recent years, Marieke's responsibilities have included organising conferences and youth days, being involved in various interdenominational projects and equipping schools and other places. Her main

tasks are connecting and maintaining contact with the approximately ninety CGK congregations affiliated with the LCJ, equipping leaders, educators, and young people, and giving substance to the identity of the IKC (Interchurch Knowledge Centre), of which the LCJ is part.

In these tasks, what does she gain from what she learned at TUA?

'Through the lectures and the literature read, I have been given tools for life when it comes to reading the Bible and thinking about the Christian faith. I still make grateful use of the knowledge of the Old and New Testament contents. Lesser-known sections of the Bible were also highlighted. I learned to read the Bible in context. Meditative Bible reading is wonderful, but in my opinion, it cannot be done without first "listening out" how/when/where/in what genre the Bible's words are

written down and come to us. When I read Isaiah or Amos, Ezekiel or Jeremiah, I hear the words of God through these prophets. But to apply them with integrity to my own life, our society, and the world we live in, I find it extremely helpful to know in what context they prophesied and preached and what that then means for life here and now. What I learned at TUA is very helpful in this respect. At least as formative have also been the examples of professors and students in whose lives I saw scholarship and piety (fear of God) lived out.'

## Reading circle

'When I studied at TUA, the importance of reading literature was emphasised, partly because novels help us to get to know (modern) people and the society around us from the inside. However, what I also saw was that most students did not have much space left for that alongside their compulsory theological fare. That is why last year I started a literary reading circle for TUA students with an approach that is as accessible as possible. Once a quarter, we read a literary novel. Think of writers like C.S. Lewis, Fyodor Dostoevsky, Marilynne Robinson and Shusaku Endo, but also contemporary Dutch authors. We discuss together what we read. This turns out to have caught on! This allows me to give back some of what I have received.'



## Passport

Name:	Marieke Griffioen-de Vries
Residence:	Eemdijk
Date of birth:	5 September 1982
Marital status:	married to Sander Griffioen
Period of study at TUA:	2009-2012
Profession:	senior youth work advisor