

Some historical facts

- 1397-1403 The monastery and the Dominican church (aisle and choir) are built, under the auspices of Margaret of Cleves, wife of Albrecht of Bavaria, Duchess of Holland, who lives in the Binnenhof. Both are buried in the Kloosterkerk
- 1540 A south aisle is added and side chapels on the Lange Voorhout side of the church. The church is dedicated to Saint Vincent.
- 1566 Church and monastery are damaged during the destruction of the monasteries.
- 1574 The increasing influence of the Reformation causes the monks to leave the monastery for good. The buildings are temporarily in use as a hospital.
- 1583 The monastery is pulled down and the church is acquired by the States of Holland (until 1625). The choir is walled off from the aisle. The aisle, which is in a bad state of repair, is used temporarily as a stable (1588) and the choir as a cannon foundry (1589-1665).
- 1617 The church is appropriated by the Contra-Remonstrants. Prince Maurits goes to church there with a large following, thus demonstrating his opposition to (the political ideas of) the remonstrant Grand Pensionary Johan van Oldenbarneveltdt.
- 1625 Marriage of Prince Frederik Hendrik and Amalia van Solms. In the following centuries the church is used for Protestant services. The chancel stands against the north wall.
- 1660 The poet and statesman Jacob Cats is buried in the Kloosterkerk (see plaque on pillar).
- 1813 A regiment of the Cossack army is temporarily quartered in the church.
- 1911 The first so-called 'liturgical' service to take place in the Dutch Reformed Church is conducted in the Kloosterkerk.
- 1912 Threatened demolition is avoided. In the next two years the dilapidated building is restored.
- 1942 The Kloosterkerk is put at the disposal of the congregation of the Duinoordkerk (Scheveningen), which has been demolished on the orders of the occupying German authority.
- 1952-1957 During extensive restorations, attributes from the former Duinoordkerk are placed in the Kloosterkerk. The wall between church and choir is removed, the pews are turned to face the choir, graves are cleared and tombstones are laid in the floor or built into the walls.
- 1966 A new organ is built by the Danish organ builder Marcussen.

Interior of the church

Choir: 17 m long; 9.5 m wide. **Aisle:** 26 m long; 12 m wide.

South aisle: 11.5 m wide. **Barrelvault:** 20 m high.

Rosettes on roof, Gerhard Jansen (1878-1956).

Painted symbols representing the four evangelists (a man, a lion, a bull and an eagle) and Christ: IHS (Greek abbreviated form of the name Jesus), Alpha and Omega (Revelation 22:13); fish and anchor; ICHTHUS (Greek acronym: 'Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour'); the Lamb with the book with seven seals (Revelation 5); a pelican that, according to legend, feeds her young with her own blood (eucharistic symbol); a bunch of grapes above a chalice (idem).

Choir (the raised area at the front containing the 'liturgical centre'):

Pulpit: oak, Flemish carving, ca. 1700. Panels with the evangelists and their symbols: from right to left: Matthew (a man); Mark (a lion); Luke (a bull); John (an eagle). On the stairs a worshipping angel.

Communion table: front of an old choir stall. From left to right: Lamb with book-roll with seven seals (Revelation 5); angel with Cross (Faith); chalice with wafer (Love); angel with anchor (Hope); table with bread and wine (Eucharist).

Gothic chairs: from a Spanish monastery.

Apostle chapel:

Stained-glass windows, Lou Asperslagh (1893-1949).

Apostles with attributes, from left to right:

upper row: Matthew (book-roll, text: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit'), Thaddaeus (spear), Paul (sword), Philip (inverted cross), Simon Zelotes (saw), James the Less (club);

lower row: Andrew (X-cross), Peter (church on a rock), John (book, text: 'In the beginning was the Word'), James (sword), Thomas (book), Nathanael (=Bartholomew, knife).

Arms of the families Mees and Van Stolk.

Mosaic: The Last Supper (1925), J. Thorn Prikker (1868-1932).

See the text: St. John 13:21 ('When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.')

The mosaic comes from the Duinoordkerk. When this church was demolished in 1942, the work of art (weighing 12,000 kg) was transported complete to the Peace Palace garden. When the Kloosterkerk was restored it was placed here. Chandelier (with vine-leaf pattern), communion table and candlesticks (of medieval design) in this chapel also come from the Duinoordkerk.

Interesting gravestones: built into the floor and walls.

Crypt (not open to visitors): under the choir, formerly used as burial vault, now in use for various church activities.

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THE KLOOSTERKERK...

- is a house where people seek contact with God in Bible study, prayer and sacrament,
- a place where solidarity is practised in thought and care for each other and for the world.

THE KLOOSTERKERK PARISH...

- stands in the protestant tradition,
- has a distinctly ecumenical and open character,
- welcomes everyone who is looking for inspiration in his or her belief and life.

SERVICES:

Sunday: 10:00

Last Sunday in the month (except in July): 10:30, Cantate service

Wednesday: 19:30, Vesper.

From 1 April to 1 October the church is open on weekdays from 12:00 to 14:00.
(During the sculpture exhibition on the Lange Voorhout in 2003: open until 17:00,
and on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 19:00 to 21:00.)
The Apostle Chapel is a quiet area for prayer and meditation.

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Kloosterkerk Den Haag

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