

First Missions – Netherlands

First Missions – Pioneering Workers – Netherlands

Netherlands – 1923

Revised Feb.19, 2024

The first two brother workers arrived in the Netherlands in 1923. They were **Frank van der Merwe and Willie Smeenck**. Frank van der Merwe, a South African, had been in the work in South Africa for about ten years when he was asked by Wilson Reid, the overseer of South Africa, to go and labor in the Netherlands. When Frank van der Merwe was on his way to the Netherlands, he met a younger brother worker, Willie Smeenck in England, who was from Iowa, USA, but originally from Holland.

Frank van der Merwe and Willie Smeenck started preaching the gospel in the IJsselstreek area [a region/part of a province], in the towns Brummen, Zutphen, Vorden and Apeldoorn

Around 1924, G. Gerritsen and his daughter from South Africa came to Apeldoorn to have an open home for the workers. Around that time also, the sister workers, **May Lund, Bernice and Eunice Jelliman** arrived in the Netherlands, as well as **Matilda Smeenck**, sister of Willie Smeenck. The sisters started laboring in the regions of Zwolle and Kampen.

The first convention in the Netherlands was held in Apeldoorn in 1926 at the home place of some friends. There were about 40 people at this first convention. Afterwards, there were conventions at other locations, such as in the Tempeliers House in Maria Street, and also quite a few in Mabo in Second Johanna Street. Because the group of friends in other parts of the country grew as well, they had to prepare places for people to stay at convention time. In those days many houses were not being used, so they rented some houses for some weeks so that people could stay there when the convention was held.

Anonymous Author

TTT Editor Note: The Netherlands usually sends a pair of workers to Suriname each year, since it is the only other country in the world that speaks that language.

When did the workers first arrive? 1923

Who were the first brother workers? Frank van der Merwe (South Africa) and Willie Smeenck (USA)

Who were the first sister workers? May Lund, Bernice and Eunice Jelliman, Matilda Smeenck

Who was the first to profess?———??

When & Where was the first meeting?———??

When & Where was the first convention? 1926 in Apeldoorn

Current Convention: Putten 1 and Putten 2

Who have the Overseers been?

First Overseer of the Netherlands: Frank van der Merwe. He is buried in South Africa. His tombstone reads: "Een dienskneg van God," which means "A Servant of God" in the Afrikaans language, which is derived from Dutch.

Succeeded by: Piet Douma

Succeeded by: Piet Blokker

Succeeded by: Graham Snow

Succeeded by: Henrik Ferreira, assisted by Wieks Opperman

Currently: Bart Hartemink (March 2023)

View photographs of the Netherlands

Dutch Publication:

Two by Two Movement with Sectarian Characteristics By Jildert de Boer

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ABOUT THE NETHERLANDS

The Netherlands is part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, which consists of the Netherlands, the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba in the Caribbean. The Netherlands is located in Western Europe. It is bordered by the North Sea to the north and west, Belgium on the south, and Germany on the east.

The Netherlands is often called Holland, which is incorrect, as North and South Holland are merely two of its twelve provinces. The word “Dutch” is used to refer to the people, the language, and anything indigenous to the Netherlands.

In English the country is called ‘the Netherlands’ (or frequently ‘Holland’), while the people and the language are called ‘Dutch’.

In Dutch the official (and predominant) terms for these are ‘Nederland’ for the country, ‘Nederlanders’ for the people and ‘Nederlands’ for the language, although they are occasionally (colloquially) called ‘Holland’, ‘Hollanders’ and ‘Hollands’ respectively.

The Dutch language is not only spoken in the Netherlands, but also in Belgium by the Flemish Community (in the Flemish Region and the Brussels-Capital Region) parts of northern France (around Dunkirk), Suriname, Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles (formerly known as Dutch Antilles/West Indies)

The current monarch is Queen Beatrix Wilhelmina Armgard, born January 31, 1938. She became Queen of the Netherlands on April 30, 1980 when her mother abdicated. She married German aristocrat Claus von Amsberg on March 10, 1966. She is a widow. The Queen and her late husband, Prince Claus, have 3 sons and 8 grandchildren:

- Prince Willem-Alexander, The Prince of Orange and his mother’s heir apparent (born 1967)
- Prince Friso (born 1968)
- Prince Constantijn (born 1969)

The **capital of the Netherlands** is Amsterdam even though the States-General and the government have been both situated in The Hague since 1588.

Queen Beatrix Netherlands

TTT Editor’s Note: In the absence of a written account, the above information has been compiled by the Editor of Telling The Truth website from various sources. Corrections or additions are most welcome; as well as other historical accounts for this country.