



Being There for the City

Expert Meeting 'City Chaplaincy', Brussels
Tuesday 1 March 2022, 11-16 h

Nieuwe Graanmarkt 8 / Place du Nouveau Marché aux Grains 8,
1000 Brussels

The Faculty of Protestant Theology and Religion (FPTR Brussels) is pleased to invite you to our expert meeting¹ on 1 March on the theme 'Being there for the city'. We are interested in exchanging views on the topic of 'city chaplaincy'.

By 'city chaplaincy' we mean: established as well as more recently developed ways of being present in city life. It could also be called 'the ministry of presence', as performed by churches, church professionals or volunteers. Well-known forms are hospital chaplaincy, prison chaplaincy and more recently airport chaplaincy. In addition, there is a growing number of churches who make an effort to reach out to people other than their congregation members. 'Being there for the city' may include pastoral presence for the citizens at large, or for a specific target group. Or it may indicate support for persons in need, in various kinds of diaconal service. Or the opportunity to study and discuss life themes in the context of Christian wisdom and the wisdom of other traditions. Or reaching out by offering cultural events with a spiritual link.

¹ For those who are not familiar with the phrase 'expert meeting': it does not refer to a meeting of specialised academics, but to a *working meeting* with all those who are either theoretically or practically engaged in the field of the subject of the meeting. In this case: everyone who is (or wants to be) involved in 'being there for the city' as a task and challenge for the church. Professionally or otherwise.

In this expert meeting, we hope to bring together chaplains, ministers, theologians, church council members, pioneers, to meet each other, and also to discuss the fundamentals of your work. What is the **vision** (yours and/or that of your organization) behind your ministry of presence? What do you experience as the main **dilemma's** in this type of ministry? Participants have the opportunity to present their work, including a reflection on these two questions.

For the participants from Brussels (and maybe as an example for other cities as well), we present the idea of a city chaplaincy **local network**, including a learning community. This is a recently started FPTR project devised in consultation with members and minister of the Dutch language Protestant Church Brussels (PKB).

The meeting will be held at the Protestant church 'Graanmarktkerk', Nieuwe Graanmarkt 8 / Place du Nouveau Marché aux Grains 8, 1000 Brussels.

Program:

- 10.30-11.00 arrival and coffee
- 11.00-11.15 opening speech by prof.dr. Leendert-Jan Parlevliet, practical theology, FPTR, academic responsibility 'city chaplaincy'
- 11.15-12.45 presentations
- 12.45-13.45 lunch
- 13.45-15.00 discussion in groups on 'vision' and 'dilemma's' (as brought forward in the presentations)
- 15.00-15.30 introduction project 'City chaplaincy Brussels', dr. Bert Dicou, project leader, and discussion
- 15.30-16.00 refreshments

The schedule is a first draft. Definitive time periods – and also the time available for each presentation - will depend on the number of participants. If participants would prefer it that way, group discussions can be arranged in language groups (French, English, Dutch).

Please register before February 16 at bert.dicou@gmail.com and inform us whether you can contribute a presentation. Please mention, for the group discussions in the afternoon, whether English is OK for you or which language you would prefer.

Looking forward to meeting you.

Leendert-Jan Parlevliet & Bert Dicou
FPTR, project 'City Chaplaincy'
Faculty of Protestant Theology and Religion (FPTR), Brussels