

hello church,

it is time to say goodbye!

tomorrow exactly eight years ago we landed here on this island that - apart from a single visit with the navy in 1991 - was fairly unknown to us.

we did know, of course, that the residents are generally religious and mostly belong to the three larger denominations: roman catholic, seventh-day adventists and the methodists.

we wanted to behave like good guests, so with the guiding principle "when in rome, do like the romans", we wanted to visit the church weekly. we chose to visit this bethel methodist church: since, for us it was the most cheerful community.

and so we have been doing all these eight years now, almost every sunday (unless we were 'off island', of course), we were here, in this church and on this corner in the back.

anyway, all good things come to an end.

i have contributed to the teaching of mathematics at the gwendoline van putterschool: first to the upper grades of havo and later to the csec. and now we are moving back to the european netherlands (where, by the way, i will again be teaching mathematics to the upper grades of havo and vwo at a school in almere).

apart from my work as a teacher, we also made our contribution to the well-being and democracy of the island. mia was involved in the beginning of 'taste of the culture' with her own dutch booth.

after the intervention she was a member of the social advisory board and then in 2021 she started as a columnist on [dossierkoninkrijksrelaties.nl](https://dossierkoninkrijksrelaties.nl) while i wrote letters to parliament and the ombudsman. all these letters can be found on the website [statia.nu](https://statia.nu).

we have experienced a wonderful period of eight years here and for that we also want to thank you, participants of this community of the bethel methodist church.

however, this is our last sunday on the island and in church, but we take sint eustatius and its residents into our hearts. some of them became real friends for life.

we will come back one day, not to live or work, but to see how you are doing.

so, we do not say 'farewell', but just 'goodbye' (in a few years).

all the best to you!