

Taking care of the future

Beloved person,

2026 is a new year full of possibilities. What will come our way? What do you want to stay connected to, and what do you want to reconnect with? The brochure about our new annual theme, *Verbindingskracht (The Power of Connection)* opens with:

More and more people are seeking support, direction, hope, and meaning. Because we live in a time of uncertainty, polarisation, individualism, and inequality. We believe – especially now – in the power of connecting. We believe that life gains meaning when we are connected with each other and with the greater whole. For us, being connected is a conscious way of living that requires commitment, courage, and compassion. Being connected strengthens people, provides hope and support, and enriches life.¹

Izzy (9 years old) expressed this beautifully during the broadcast of De Ontmoeting (the Meeting) in December.² She said: *“Being with others feels really nice; then you're not facing things alone. The more I get that feeling, the more I dare. At school, we are always allowed to sing something when we have something nice. And when I have gained confidence here, I will do that there as well. And that is really nice.”* Izzy feels what strengthens her. It helps her to be in an environment that gives her confidence, so she can share it in another place.

There will also be people who come calling this year, both in the community and to us personally. And then I want to think of Izzy. Because I hope that people can tell from my expression and my words that they are welcome. Izzy makes it clear to me that it helps if I take responsibility for contributing to the confidence we can have in each other and in ourselves. We have been practicing that for a long time with and among each other in our communities. And even there, it doesn't always succeed. We know the experience of standing in front of a closed door and being disappointed. That can be painful, hurtful, and confronting. We can make or break each other.

But... we have time. We are here and we are together.

Let us find a path that carries us past doomsday scenarios and beyond fragmentation to a grand and breathtaking view.³ In that, we each seek our own path: a path on which we - to the best of our ability - are connected, have confidence, and contribute to wholeness.

And, in doing so, we also want to seek and make connection with the source of all life. The source from which we have the capacity to let confidence flow and where we can show our faith and trust in all simplicity and openness. This is how we enter the new year. This is also what this prayer is about, which we interpret as a personal mission to make it real in our own lives.

*Showing charity:
moved by love, feeding the hungry,
compassionately protecting the stranger,
caring for the sick
and for the world of tomorrow,
where everyone can live.*

*Where love can dwell:
there people will gently quench the thirst of others,
respectfully bury the dead
and clothe the naked,
or show charity
to those who have been imprisoned.*

*To show compassion:
driven by love and full of empathy,
I feel moved from within
to care for the future,
for a world of tomorrow,
where everyone may dwell.⁴*

With a warm-hearted greeting, gladly your sister,

Nanda Ziere



We reaffirm our baptismal promises

¹ From the brochure: jaarthema Verbindingkracht (annual theme The power of connection), www.apgen.nl/jaarthema2026

² The Meeting of December, <https://www.apgen.nl/activiteiten/2025/december/de-ontmoeting-14-december>

³ Freely translated from Marjolijn van Heemstra: *In lichtjaren heeft niemand haast* (In lightyears, no one is in a hurry) De Correspondent.

⁴ Community song number 137 Barmhartigheid toen (Showing Charity). Freely translated.