

30 km per hour. Nice, huh?

Beloved person,

On Sunday mornings I always try, if the alarm clock co-operates, to get into the car in plenty of time. Not that I want to arrive at my destination as early as possible, but so that I can take a detour on the way and use some back roads on the drive to the community building. As soon as I swap the freeway for smaller roads and the landscape slowly opens before me, I notice how my thoughts also become more tranquil and I slowly look forward to the Sunday service.

This also occurred last Sunday, on the way to Zutphen, where we were together with the communities De Berkel, Winterswijk and Deventer. Once again, I was able to drive a roundabout way for the last part of the journey and wound up in a small place called De Hoven, just before Zutphen. Driving into the town centre I was welcomed by a traffic sign with the words: *Enjoy more at 30 km per hour!* I smiled and slowed down.

And it worked. It was as if I suddenly observed things differently. The fresh greenery along the roadside took on a deeper colour, front gardens were in full bloom, small flags were being put up and, in some places, people were busy preparing for a competition. The village exuded peace *and* expectation at the same time. At the end of the street a sign awaited me again. This time with the words: *30 km per hour. Nice, huh?*

And I thought: don't we actually do something similar on Sunday mornings during the service? In the rat race that life can sometimes seem, with our heads full of thoughts, we consciously search for a moment to drive at '30 km per hour' for a while. Leaving the freeway to slow down for a while. As though we drive in a lower gear altogether so that we can experience what would otherwise remain hidden in the hurly burly of everyday life. And then, what can happen is that we suddenly see the extraordinary in the seemingly ordinary.

Perhaps that is why the Sunday service is so rich in rituals. Some small and barely noticed, others trusted and clearly recognisable. They help us to make space for attention, for wonder, for comfort and perhaps also in order to enjoy it more. Not superficially or fleetingly, but more deeply within. A pleasure that arises when experiencing connection. The connection with life and with that which transcends us.

Such moments are necessary because life can sometimes ask a lot of us. There are worries that cannot be resolved, questions for which there is no conclusive answer and times in which it is difficult to remain hopeful. Precisely then it can help to know you are connected. Not to escape from life, but in order to see what is there, to be able to stand in life more consciously, courageously and lovingly.

In our meetings, filled with rituals, we search for words, sing together and share silence. Everything that helps us to experience connectedness with something that is greater than ourselves. With that which carries us, touches us, or lifts us and which can never be fully named. Yet we continue to try to express it: God, love, source, light, or...

However, not everything needs to be explained for it to be able to be felt deeply within. Perhaps that is the power of rituals. You step into it, as it were. In the silence, in the music, in the meeting. It is not until you no longer keep standing on the sidelines as a spectator but dare to trust in it, that something can happen that is difficult to explain, but which gives life more depth and inspiration. In De Hoven, they understand that very well. It wasn't stated or explained how you should feel, you were simply invited to experience it. To drive more slowly, to see what there is and to feel the connection deep within.

Nice, huh?

With a warm-hearted greeting, gladly your brother,
Marten van der Wal



Attention for the Baptism promise

On Sunday 7 June the 19th national second youth group day will be held in and around SnowWorld Zoetermeer. A nice opportunity to send them a card and to wish them a lovely day.