

IARF Dutch Chapter in 2008: towards a new start

Since Clearwater 2007 we have worked on the idea of a new start, and asked ourselves how to build up our Chapter again and give it a new impetus.

In The Netherlands there is a lot of debate going on concerning freedom of speech and living together in different cultures. In January 2008 we invited our members for a special meeting to discuss the situation. Renewing the website turned out to be the most important.

Beside this we spoke about the idea to set up a special website for reports of violation of the UN Declaration on Human Rights of 1981 against discrimination based on Religion or Belief.

In April we had the spring meeting together with the Friends of Oriëntalis, where we learned about the different Images of Man in Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

In November there was the annual meeting where Ivo de Jong held a beautiful presentation of the Cordoba Society, where Judaism, Christianity and Islam lived together for hundreds of years. Arne Mosselman reported from the Young adult conference in Amman and Jannie du Toit from South Africa brought a short preview of his evening concert.

Not less important for us was to take part in the IARF-EME Conference in Belfast in July 2008. There we learned a lot about the recent history of Europe, especially in the UK and Ireland. New contacts were built and plans made.

The Dutch Chapter was represented at the celebration of the 440th anniversary of the Unitarian Church of Transylvania in Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

We expect that in 2009 the renewed and the new websites will be operational, and we hope and pray that IARF will continue to flourish.

Annelies Trenning

Dutch Chapter, February 2009

