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## EDITORIAL

*David M. Morris*

*Editor*

Once again, it is with great pleasure that we publish another issue of the *International Journal of Mormon Studies (IJMS)*. This issue brings together a combination of scholars from different parts of the world and academic disciplines. Drawn from Mormon and non-Mormon perspectives, the articles found herein provide interesting insights to Mormonism globally, encouraging further attention and examination. Following on from the successful *European Mormon Studies Association (EMSA)* conference in Tilburg, The Netherlands (2010), we publish a number of the papers that were presented during that conference, as well as publishing direct submissions. These include papers from Walter E. A. van Beek, Eric R. Dursteler, Terryl L. Givens, Bryan R. Monte, Matthew L. Rasmussen and Peter Vousden. Accompanying these articles is a number of reviewed books, including those of non-English publication, which supports the expanding international dimension of Mormon Studies.

We, as always, extend our appreciation to those who took time to blind peer-review articles that have been submitted for publication. We hope as an editorial board that you will enjoy the contents of this issue.

SEAL, CROSS AND NAUTILUS:  
RLDS/COMMUNITY OF CHRIST ART AND ARCHITECTURE

*Bryan R. Monte*

This article explores three, primary sacred symbols – the church seal, the cross, and the nautilus – and how they were developed and used by artists and architects for the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (known after 2001 as Community of Christ).<sup>1</sup> Special emphasis is paid to buildings around the Temple Complex in Independence, Missouri and how these symbols and designs can be found in two, purpose-built RLDS/CofC Church buildings in the Netherlands. In addition, a local “invention” by a Dutch artist is also explored. The author surmises that the spread of architectural and artistic styles from the US to the Netherlands may reflect the church’s changing philosophy or its place in post-World War II society, but argues that more data from primary and secondary sources is necessary to make any substantial conclusions.

The Community of Christ (CofC), formerly the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (RLDS) until 2001, with 250,000 members, is the largest divergent church within the Latter Day Saint tradition. Although claiming a common founder with the LDS church, Joseph Smith, Jr., this church, founded in 1860 and incorporated in the American state of Illinois in 1872, has developed over the last 150 years its own religious iconography and symbolism which differs from that of LDS churches and temples. This paper will explore the three major religious symbols used by the RLDS/CofC church over the last 139 years – its church seal, the Christian cross and the nautilus – and how these symbols have been used in both some of its “Center

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<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank Michael J. Hahn, Gudgeon Park Community of Christ Congregation pastor, and Michael G. Reed, independent researcher, for their assistance with this article. All photos, except for that of the three RLDS church seals and the Stone Church Cross and Crown stained glass window are copyright 2011 by Bryan R. Monte. All rights reserved. The image of Gemeenschap van Christus church sign is copyrighted by Community of Christ.

Place,” Independence, Missouri, US buildings (the CofC equivalent of the Salt Lake Valley) and in two, purpose-built chapels in the Netherlands. In addition, it will discuss one Dutch sacred artistic expression – a mural in the Rotterdam congregation building – unique to the Netherlands.

As far as the definition of a symbol is concerned, one lexicographic and another anthropological meaning of this word will be used in this paper. The first is from the *Oxford Online Dictionary* which states that a symbol is “1. a mark or character used as a conventional representation of an object, function, or process, e.g. the letter or letters standing for a chemical element or a character in a musical notation: ... a shape or sign used to represent something such as an organization, e.g. a red cross or a Star of David.”<sup>2</sup> The anthropological definition is taken from Sherry Ortner’s taxonomy of symbols as being either “summarizing or elaborating”. The elaborating symbol is seen as being either a root metaphor or key scenario. Root metaphors ... are analogies that help us organize our thinking on a particular subject such as a model of the atom for that of the solar system and the key scenarios are “scenes, plots or bits of the story.”<sup>3</sup>

Undoubtedly, the most important symbol in RLDS/CofC art and architecture is the church seal, probably as important and as easily identifiable as the Angel Moroni is to LDS church members. The design, evolution and use of this seal is perhaps the easiest of the three symbols to document due to General Conference resolutions related to its change and development and due to its frequent use on church structures.

The first seal was commissioned by the RLDS Church on 4 April 1872 at the church’s bi-annual conference in Plano, Illinois. Here church president, Joseph Smith III, Jason W. Briggs and Elijah Banta were appointed to a committee “to design a church seal”.<sup>4</sup> Four days later, this committee reported back saying that: “We, your committee on Church Seal, respectfully submit the following design, with legend,

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<sup>2</sup> *Oxford Dictionary Online* at <http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/symbol> as of 18 October 2011

<sup>3</sup> Sherry Ortner, ‘On Key Symbols’, *American Anthropologist*, 75, 5 (1973), pp. 1338–1346, definition here given in Jack David Eller, *Introducing Anthropology of Religion* (New York and London: Routledge Publishing, 2009), pp. 64–65.

<sup>4</sup> *The True Latter Day Saints Herald* (Independence, Missouri: Herald Publishing), vol. 21 (1881), p. 271.

date and motto: “Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.’ Emblem a Lion and a Lamb lying down at rest. Motto, ‘Peace’ ‘Incorporated 1872.’”<sup>5</sup> Thus, four of the five basic elements in the present church seal – the lion, lamb, the peace motto and the name of the church were present from the very beginning. According to the conference minutes, “The report was adopted, and the committee empowered to purchase the seal.”<sup>6</sup>

Over the years, the seal’s design has evolved. According to the authors of *Community of Christ, An Illustrated History*, a palm tree was also added in the background to reflect the church’s presence in French Polynesia.<sup>7</sup> In 1917, due to General Conference Resolution 163, the following alterations were approved to the seal:

Insert, “a child” after emblem and cross out “lying down at rest” following the word “lamb.” “Third line same paragraph insert “and 1891” after “Incorporated 1872.”<sup>8</sup>

Thus the seal was altered so that the newly added standing child would have a standing lamb on its left and a now sitting lion on its right. It also added the church’s Iowa incorporation date of 1891. (Figure 1)

The image of the lion, lamb and child were to convey the idea of the peaceable kingdom found in Isaiah, chapter 11. Carlotta Davis explained in a November 1943 *Saints Herald* (the RLDS church magazine) article that:

Our church seal is an emblem of peace...the lion... signifies strength, the lamb representing meekness, and the little child symbolic of that which is recently come from God and that which is most like him, revelation.... Man in meekness with God-given strength, through Divine revelation shall establish peace in the midst of the nations.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 272.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> John Hamer, David Howlett and Barbara Walden, *Community of Christ, An Illustrated History* (Independence, MO: John Whitmer Books, 2010), p. 33.

<sup>8</sup> *Saints Herald*, vol. 94 (1947), p. 260.

<sup>9</sup> *Saints Herald*, vol. 90 (1943), p. 1478.



Another more extended explanation of the significance of the church seal can be found in Leonard J. Lea's 1958 *Question Time* column article "How does the church seal indicate our Christian beliefs?"<sup>10</sup>

(It) is a symbol that represents the gospel teaching that the highest good for the world and humanity will be attained with the coming of the kingdom of God in power and glory when the millennium is ushered in. "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid... and the lion shall eat the straw of the ox...and the suckling child shall play on the hole of the asp...and the little child shall lead them...They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain." It is from these sources that the motifs for the church seal have been taken.

In the mid to late 1960s, the church seal design also became more streamlined. The round, corded border framing the church name, (Figure 2), was deleted. The double palm beneath the peace motto became a single, and the size of the child, lion and lamb and the church name were increased. (Figure 3)



Figures 1, 2 and 3 - 1891 RLDS church seal (left), 1950s church seal (centre) and 1960s streamlined church seal (right).

This streamlined design was used on some of the more groundbreaking and controversial theological books of this era such as *Exploring the Faith*, the new "Articles of Faith" for the RLDS church, published in 1970. Thus, this seal became associated with a more modern church philosophy.

In the 1970s, an international seal was used which added the latitude and longitude lines of a Mercator-style map to the seal back-

<sup>10</sup> *Saints Herald*, vol. 105 (1958), p. 659.

ground and translated the “Peace” motto into the local language. The name of the church, however, was deleted from the seal’s rim.

This seal was used by the church to facilitate its global outreach especially in areas of the world where it was the developing its own identity, somewhat independently of the Latter-day Saint movement such as Africa where the church had different legal names such as the Church of Christ or the Restored Church of Jesus Christ and wanted to differentiate itself from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS). In 1980, a special seal was created for the RLDS church’s sesquicentennial. It had a globe-rastered background, no church name and added the dates 1830 and 1980 on the left and right sides of the seal respectively.

The church seal is such an integral part of church art that almost every major large congregation includes Sunday or Vacation Bible School activities centred around drawing or colouring “peace” seal designs or plaster casts of the church seal. One CofC church apostle, Susan Skoor, has even written a children’s book entitled, *The Lion and the Lamb*, around the characters of a lion and a lamb and the theme of peace.<sup>11</sup> Many congregations have church seal sculptures or tapestries in their lobbies, on their communion tables on the rostrum or pulpits which have been hand-carved, sculpted or sewn by church members. In many churches this seal is used as the exclusive means of identification on the church building’s steeples and exterior walls.

Church seals are also found on church legal documents requiring dates of incorporation and on baptismal and evangelist blessings. As President Israel Smith commented in a 1952 Herald article, church members had the right to have the church seal etched on their headstones and to wear church seal pins for recognition such as those used by Rotary members.<sup>12</sup> Herald House, the CofC Deseret Book, also offers a wide variety of peace seal jewellery, books, bookends, soft toys, bumper stickers, etc. which feature the lion, lamb and little child theme.

Another artistic and stylistic change that the church has more recently undergone, and concurrent with another redesign of the church seal has been rebranding of the church name in 2001. On 6 April 2001 the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

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<sup>11</sup> Susan Skoor (Marie Shipley, illustrator), *The Lion and the Lamb* (Independence, Mo: Herald House Publishing, 2003).

<sup>12</sup> *Saints Herald*, vol. 99 (1952), pp. 267 and 276.

became Community of Christ. In this more recent seal, the lion and the lamb are larger above the Peace “motto” has been removed. This new seal is included on all new church signs in the US. Churches were asked to display the new signs and to remove old, non-uniform church signs. Some congregations, however, such as the Liberty Street Congregation, about a half-mile from the Temple, decided to retain their old sign with its previous seal and church name as well as to display the new one. (Figures 4 and 5)

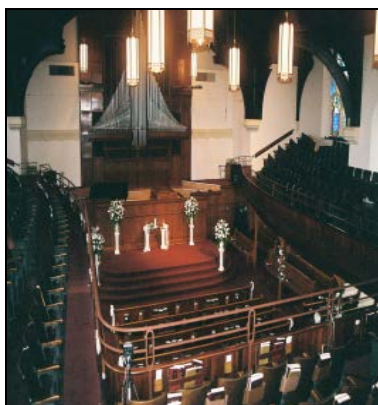


**Figures 4 and 5 - Old (left) and new (right) Liberty Street Independence, Missouri, RLDS/CofC Congregation seals.**

In addition, with the church name change in 2001, the seal was modified again. This time the three characters, the lion, lamb and child, were still together, but with a somewhat larger lion (shoulder height to the Christ child instead of waist height as in the 1950s symbol. The lion in the new seal also fills in most of the background behind the Christ child and faces forward versus the 1950s seal design which had the lion entirely off to the left hand side away from the child) were put together sometimes without the peace motto but just above name of the church as on the back of the church pamphlet, *Community of Christ Sacraments*, or in the centre of a white circle or spotlight on the new church signs with the peace motto but excluding the name of the church probably since it appears on the sign directly above. A third variation of the post-2001 seal includes the three characters in a yellow circle against a background of Mercator latitude and longitude lines.<sup>13</sup> Once again, the “Peace” motto has been retained but the name of the church is not mentioned.

<sup>13</sup> Howlett, Walden and Hamer, *Community of Christ*, p. 52.

RLDS/CofC like LDS chapels also have a very distinctive style of church architecture although not far as uniform as the new CofC church signs and certainly not as uniform as the A, B and C LDS chapel architectural plans used around the world. A good example of the interior of a large RLDS church building would be a large, late 1800s congregation such as that of the Stone Church, completed in 1892, located across the street from the Temple Lot. Here you can see typical older style, large sanctuary with fixed-pew seating, a balcony and/or choir loft, with organ pipes centred above the rostrum Figure 6 (Note: the photo shows the Stone church sanctuary was it was set up for wedding in August 2004. The pulpit and speakers chairs have been removed).



Figures 6 and 7 - Interior sanctuary (left) and stained glass window with post-1917 seal, (right) Stone Church CofC Congregation, Independence, Missouri.

Over the last 120 years, Stone Church has given birth to at least ten other congregations in Independence. In the photograph below, a post-1917 church seal design, from a stained-glass window in the Stone church, rises above the towers of the future Zioniac city as shown in Figure 7 above.

The use of the cross in RLDS/CofC art and architecture is much more difficult to pinpoint and describe although it probably was adopted by some RLDS groups after the creation of the church seal in

1872 and certainly before the introduction of the nautilus design in the late 1980s. It had limited use, however, in RLDS purpose-built churches until the 1990s. In Michael G. Reed's book, *Banishing the Cross: The Emergence of a Mormon Taboo*, he discusses the uses of the cross in the RLDS church, a study that he has just begun but which has revealed some interesting facts. For example, Reed has found photographs from the 1890s of RLDS church members wearing crosses. In the early 1900s, the RLDS church purchased two churches, one in Kansas City and another in St. Louis previously owned by Methodist Episcopal and Presbyterian denominations respectively which had crosses on their steeples or roofs. These crosses were left in place once the RLDS congregation moved into these buildings.<sup>14</sup> Mr Reed also describes how in the 1920s, RLDS congregations held pageants that included large crosses. In addition, he mentions anecdotal conversations with Ron Romig, former CofC archivist, and Bill Russell, former Graceland college professor about the use of crosses at in Lamoni, Iowa (the RLDS church's second headquarters after Plano and before Independence) and Akron, Ohio near Kirtland. Romig mentions that in 1959, Harry Black, a British church administrator, successfully persuaded the RLDS congregation in Akron, Ohio to break with tradition and include a large cross on the exterior of its church building.

On the other hand, Russell reports that Roy Cheville (the RLDS church's charismatic presiding patriarch in the 1950s and 60s) said at the 1977 ground-breaking ceremony for a chapel on the Graceland campus that would later bear his name that: "No crosses in this chapel! If you put a cross in this chapel, take my name down. I worship a living Christ and not a dead Jesus."<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Michael G. Reed, *Banishing the Cross: The Emergence of a Mormon Taboo* (Independence: John Whitmer Books, 2011), read in manuscript, chapter 10.

<sup>15</sup> Reed, *Banishing the Cross*, MS, Chapter 10.



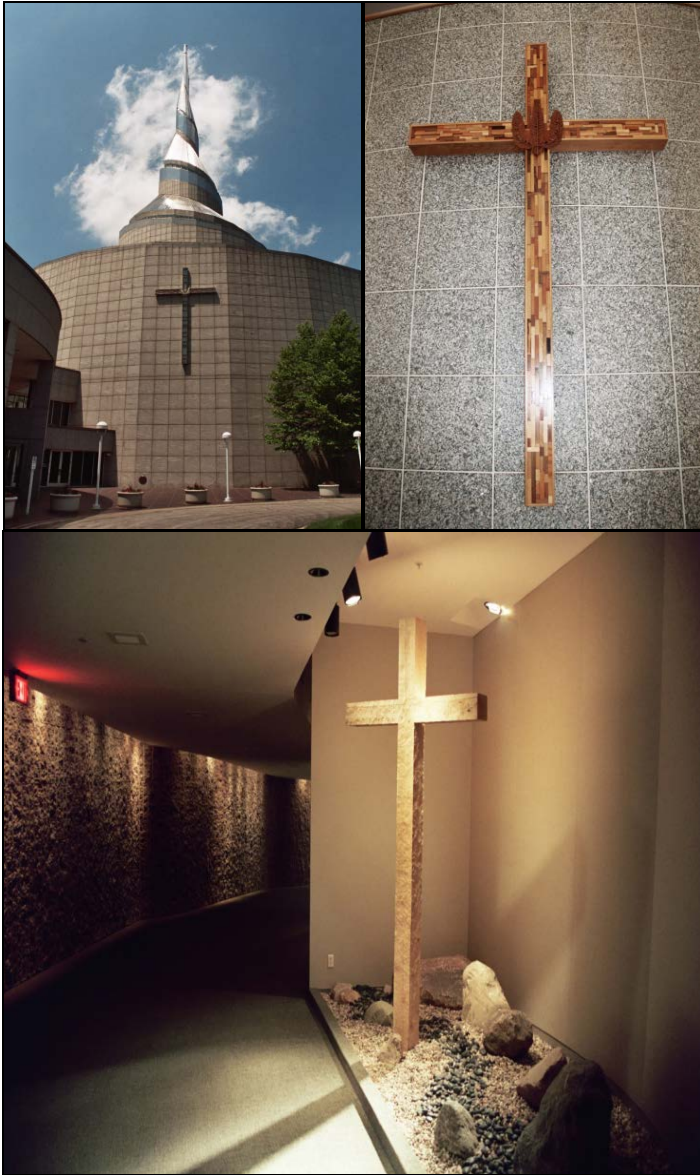
**Figure 8 - Stone Church Cross and Crown, stained glass window, Stone Church Museum. Photo provided by Michael G. Reed.**

Figure 8 above shows the detail from an original stained glass window from the Stone Church courtesy of Reed. In this window, is the emblem of a cross and crown, a phrase made famous by William Penn, In addition, are photos of 1.5 meter and a 1.2 metre crosses outside of the New Walnut Garden and College Park CofC Independence congregations respectively. (Figures 9 and 10)



**Figures 9 and 10 - Crosses outside of New Walnut Gardens (left) and College Park (right) CofC congregations, Independence, Missouri.**

Once again the reluctance or ambivalence about placing crosses directly on RLDS church buildings can be seen. The cross really came to prominence in RLDS architecture in 1992 when two were permanently installed in the interior and one on the exterior of the Temple in Independence. The cross is the first religious symbol visitors see as they approach Temple's Eastern entrance. Affixed to the building's exterior is a 9.1 metre brushed stainless steel cross as shown in Figure 11 below:



Figures 11, 12 and 13 - Exterior Cross (upper left), Interior Cross (upper right), and Interior Cross, Worshipper's Path, CofC Temple, Independence, Missouri (bottom).

Once inside the Temple, there are two more prominent crosses – one a 3.1 metre wooden cross and outside the Meditation Chapel (Figure 12 above) and the second, an 2.7 metre wooden cross on the Worshiper's Path (Figure 13 above), the raised spiral entrance leading to the temple's interior great sanctuary.

The interior cross has special significance for CofC church members because it is made of over 300 pieces of 100 types of wood from the 50 different countries where the church is present. Both the exterior cross and the one outside the Meditation Chapel have three olive branches in the form of a descending dove in their cross beams. There is also a second, eight-foot cross on the Worshiper's Path, the raised, spiral entrance to the Temple sanctuary. Here, visitors pass under the shadow of the cross to remember Christ's atonement and the scriptural admonition to take up one's cross and follow Christ.

The Temple sanctuary itself does not include any permanently-affixed crosses or images. There is, however, usually a small cross statue on the rostrum table or a banner with a cross-and-nautilus design on the back rostrum wall under the choir loft (Figure 14).

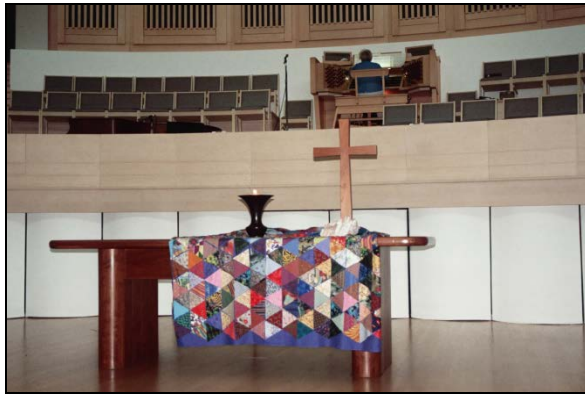


Figure 14 - Interior Cross, RLDS/CofC Temple Sanctuary.

This cross is sometimes removed, however, as was the case during the 2010 Peace Colloquy ceremony when Greg Mortenson received of the CofC Peace Prize for his building of schools in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Lastly, the most recent and increasingly the most prominent symbol in RLDS/CofC church art and architecture is the nautilus. It



was first used on a building for the Temple in Independence in 1992. President Wallace B. Smith wrote: “This symbol was chosen because it will express growth, dynamicism, harmony, unity and the worldwide presence of the church.”<sup>16</sup> The Temple was designed by the First Presidency, the architectural firm of Hellmuth, Obata and Kassabaum, and an eighteen-member church committee. Due to this unique nautilus shape, every girder of the Temple differs in length and the building itself could not have been designed, tested and built without the use of computer-aided design programs. However, as far as other artistic expression is concerned, a nautilus shaped pin were designed and worn by church women in the 1920s who were members of Temple Builders chapters across the country, including chapters in Columbus, Ohio and Spokane, Washington. Whether the First Presidency, the architects or the temple committee were aware of these chapters and pins in the 1980s when they were designing the building, however, has not been documented.

In preparation to look at the use of religious symbols in church buildings in the Netherlands, it might be best to look at typical RLDS church building (chapel) from the same period. One such building is the Gudgell Park Congregation, built in the mid-1950s and the former home congregation of the sixth RLDS church president, Wallace B. Smith, great-grandson of Joseph Smith, Jr. These images below show the simplicity and functionality of this 1950s purpose-built church as shown in Figure 15 below.



**Figures 15 and 16 - Gudgell Park Congregation, Independence, Missouri (left), Church seal detail, Gudgell Park church steeple (right).**

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<sup>16</sup> *Saints Herald*, v.135, p. 459.

The sanctuary or chapel is to the right and the administrative wing and classrooms are to the left. The church basement includes a kitchen and social hall in which adult Sunday school classes are held. The church bell tower includes a church seal but no cross as seen above in Figure 16.

The first view of the sanctuary is from the left side of the rostrum looking towards the congregation. (Figure 17)



**Figure 17 - Sanctuary interior facing rostrum, Gudgell Park CofC Congregation, Independence, Missouri.**

The exposed ceiling beams and trusses emphasize the functionality and simplicity of the building. Once again there are no crosses in the sanctuary. Fabric tapestries with a dove of peace, reminiscent of the church motto, and the word “joy” are to the left and right of the organ pipes respectively on the back wall of the rostrum.

Now it’s time to compare these examples of RLDS architecture and art in the US with expressions here in the Netherlands. The first purpose built Dutch RLDS/CofC church building is that of the Rotterdam congregation. This was completed within a few years of the Gudgell Park church in 1958 and shares some common elements. The most striking element of church is its five-story high spire composed of four independent steel girders that come together at the top to form the base for a cross. Fred Kullberg, the man who drew the plans for the church for the architectural firm of Hupkes and van Asperen, describes how difficult it was to build this feature and the glass walled baptismal font for the Rotterdam church:

The construction of your church on the pond was something completely new for us. The church's baptismal font with the big glass (front) wall gave us some problems. (In addition), four steel girders for the steeple are connected together to form a base for a cross. Mr Van Asperen spent an entire afternoon working on calculations (for this spire). He wrestled with the wind resistance among other things, but eventually he found a solution. He asked Mr Hupkes (his partner in the firm) "How strong/heavy do you think it should be?" (Hupkes said) I think 4 i-30 girders (will be needed). That was the same girder size/format Mr Van Asperen had concluded was necessary after his afternoon of calculations.<sup>17</sup>

The building includes a chapel in one wing, but also another wing with two apartments for church administrators. Like the Gudgell Park building, its kitchen and social hall are below the chapel on the ground floor (since this is the Netherlands and water tables are so high that basements are not common). This is also where the adult Sunday school class is held. The Rotterdam church also has a church seal above its entrance albeit a modified, streamlined church seal without the 1950s cording and the name of the church around a circular rim, a precursor, perhaps, of the 1970s, nameless international church seal. (Figure 18)



**Figure 18 - Rotterdam, The Netherlands CofC congregation Peace Seal.**

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<sup>17</sup> Fred Kullberg, translation of comments (from Dutch) posted on Herstellings website at <http://www.mvgcontact.org/RestoratonsHistory.htm> as of 18 September 2010.

This seal does include the Dutch word “Vrede” for Peace, but the positioning of the lion, child and lamb is also different. This peace seal is not as peaceful as the standard 1950s Gudgell Park seal, but features a lion and a lamb which are physical overlapping, whose bodies are pointed opposite directions and which looking backwards at and some would say staring somewhat unpeacefully at each other. In the background is not a Christ child but rather more the figure of a man with a large staff in his hand, which he might have to use to separate the lion and the lamb. Perhaps this reflected more clearly the post-World War II beliefs of the Dutch congregation than the more idyllic, standard 1950s American peace seal. On a facing wall of the administrative wing’s exterior is a sign which reads: Gemeenschap van Christus in the standard church font used in the US as shown below in Figure 19:

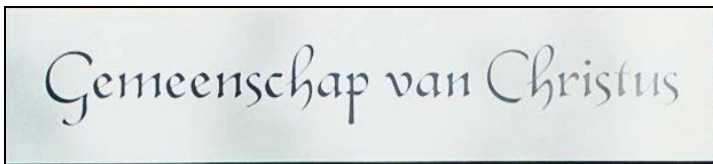
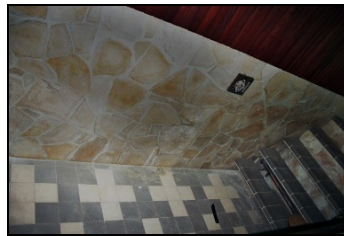


Figure 19 - Gemeenschap van Christus (Community of Christ) church sign used at Rotterdam and Zwaagwesteinde (De Westeren) congregations.

The name of the congregation, however, is not given, nor is the times for the church meetings as are on some illuminated signs used in the US. Inside, the church also has a very simple, functional sanctuary, but one which includes a permanently affixed, thin white cross on the back wall of the rostrum. Roman crosses are also part of the decorative tiling in the baptismal font as can be seen below in Figures 20 and 21.



Figures 20 and 21 - Rotterdam congregation interior sanctuary facing rostrum (left), and baptismal font in detail (right).

A mass-produced gold-painted sculpture of the lion, lamb and child (available from Herald House) is usually found on the front rostrum table at least for communion (sacrament) services. The communion is served in the same silver trays, topped by a cross, which are used in the US. (Figure 22)



**Figure 22 - Communion trays (left) and gold peace sculpture (right).**

Until 2001, this congregation also had an embroidered tapestry with the church seal and the Dutch name of the church, Gereorganiseerde Kerk van Jesus Christus der Heiligen de Laatste Dagen, hung on the front wall to the left of the cross. When the church changed its name in 2001, however, this banner was eventually taken down.

The second purpose-built RLDS/CofC building in the Netherlands is in the town of Zwaagwesteinde (called *De Westeren* in Friesian) in Friesland, a linguistically and culturally distinct region in northwest Netherlands. This building, completed in 1977, houses the largest European congregation with around 50 in attendance on a Sunday. Unlike the Rotterdam church, however, this church does not have a steeple or any prominent, permanent interior or exterior crosses. It does include, however, have a church seal on its rostrum. This church has a very simple interior similar to the Gudgell Park church, the most prominent interior element being the ceiling beams or ribs (Figure 23).



Figure 23 - Zwaagwesteinde (De Westeren) congregation sanctuary interior.

The building has a sanctuary on the right and an educational wing on the left. It also has a prominently displayed new church nameplate.

What the Rotterdam and De Westeren churches have in common is their semi-flexible and flexible seating in the sanctuaries (chapels) versus the fixed pews in the Gudgell Park church. The Dutch churches are used for community activities such as choirs and neighbourhood councils at least twice a week, and, in the case of the Rotterdam church, its space is also made available to other faith groups for worship on Wednesdays and/or Sundays.

Now that the general architecture of these two purpose-built Dutch RLDS/CofC churches along with their similarities and differences with US chapels, it's important to mention an artistic expression, which is unique to the Rotterdam building. In the hallway outside the sanctuary entrance is a five-panel mural painted by artist and member, Jan de Mik. The five panels include seminal scenes from the scriptures including the Creation, The Expulsion from Paradise, the Nativity, The Crucifixion and Redemption and the Future Peaceable Kingdom, as shown in Figure 24 below.



Figure 24 - Mural by Jan de Mik outside of Rotterdam congregation sanctuary.

The panels include Native American colours and are all connected by a thin, light-blue ribbon. The murals also become less representational and more abstract the closer the viewer gets to the sanctuary entrance.<sup>18</sup>

The Creation panel (Figure 25) includes the sun, planets and stars shot through from above by parallel beams of light symbolizing the light of creation.



Figures 25, 26 and 27 - Creation panel (left), The Expulsion from Paradise (centre), and The Nativity (right).

<sup>18</sup> Truus Heijdenrijk, letter to the author (in Dutch), 18 June 2008. A copy of this letter can be found in the Community of Christ Archives, Independence, Missouri.

In the middle are dark and light circles symbolising night and day and below are waves, fish and sea creatures.

The second panel (Figure 26) depicts “The Expulsion from Paradise” and shows prominently the outline of the head of the angel brandishing the flaming sword, banishing Adam and Eve, who can be seen with the heads facing each other. At the bottom are the snake and the apple.

The third panel (Figure 27) is entitled “The Nativity” and includes a six-pointed Star of Bethlehem as its most prominent feature above. Just below on the right and left hand sides are angels with the trumpets or horns. In the middle is the Christ child’s crib and on both sides of that are the shepherds with their staffs.

The fourth panel (Figure 28), Crucifixion, Atonement and Communion, features a cross upon which the rest of the objects are painted. At the top are Greek initials G and R for Christ and also the Roman initials INRI for Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews. In the centre is the chalice of the Last Supper. To the left and right are shapes that are meant to represent grapes and bread, the centre and at the bottom, the foot of the cross.



**Figures 28 and 29 - Crucifixion and Redemption (left)  
and The Future Peaceable Kingdom (right).**

The last panel, as shown above in Figure 29, the Future Peaceable Kingdom, is the most abstract and what follows is the artist’s own description via Ms. Heijdenrijk. “From the above left to below right are



the beams of God's eternal light inside of which are grapes, symbols of the Voede. Right: angels with horns. Left: The lion, lamb and the child. The three symbols merge into each other."<sup>19</sup>

To conclude, both purpose-built Dutch RLDS/CofC church buildings have adopted/adapted the standard simple, functional style of the US RLDS/CofC church buildings. The Dutch churches have also adopted and adapted the new nameplate signage and older church seal designs. Where the Rotterdam and De Westeren buildings differ, however, is in their use of the cross - Rotterdam displaying a very prominent cross at the top of its steeple and De Westeren having neither steeple nor cross. An interesting question to answer would be why one church adopted the cross in the late 1950s whilst the other in the mid-1970s didn't contrary to the more ecumenical direction the RLDS church was moving in the States with its desire for inclusion in the American National Council of Churches in the 1980s and 1990s (which it achieved in 2010) and its own increased display of cross on church buildings. It would be interesting to find out if difference in the presence of a cross on the two Dutch buildings had to do with the degree to which these two culturally different RLDS congregations wanted to cooperate or even assimilate more with their Christian neighbours and/or perhaps to differentiate themselves from their LDS cousins. Answers to these questions could be found perhaps through interviews with surviving adult church members from the late 50s and 70s or through correspondence between architects and world church headquarters where this is available. Oral histories and press clippings could also shed light on such local artistic expressions such as the Rotterdam mural as well as comments by those working for the architectural firms which built the churches.

Based on the conclusions above, the following recommendations could be made. Firstly, a survey of RLDS/CofC church buildings and archives could be made in order to come to a better understanding of the development of the use of that church's culture similar to Reed's study of the banishment cross in LDS culture. In addition, an understanding of the rationale between the use of the cross in Rotterdam and its absence in De Westeren might possibly give insight into different theologies and histories of these two linguistically and culturally different congregations. Thirdly, research could be done to follow the spread

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<sup>19</sup> Heijdenrijk, p. 2.

of nautilus in overseas churches as this perhaps could indicate the spread of US church's new theology to the Netherlands. Lastly, more investigation and preservation should be done regarding local information through taking oral histories and collecting newspaper clippings, programmes, and other forms of information from church members as well as non-church members as was done concerning the description of the Jan de Mik mural and the construction of the Rotterdam congregation building in this paper.