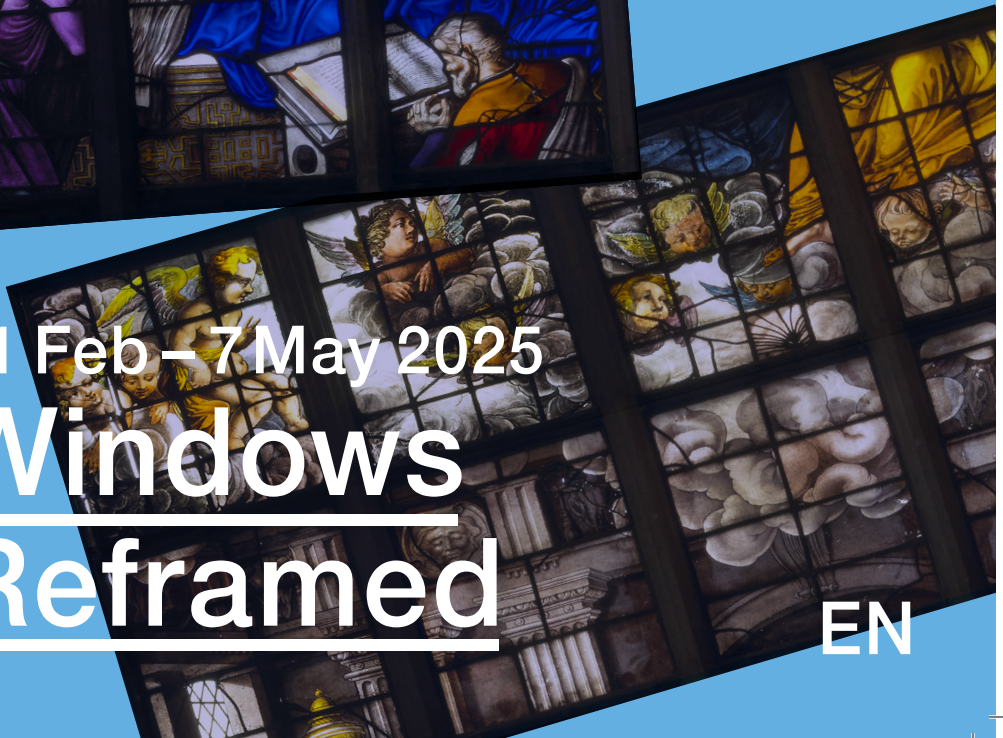


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oude kerk



21 Feb – 7 May 2025

Windows  

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Reframed

EN

It's finally happening! After an absence of five years, two iconic stained-glass windows are returning fully restored to the Oude Kerk. From 21 February to 7 May, you will have the unique opportunity to witness their reinstallation, the final stage of the restoration process, and admire the windows up close at eye level.

In the Middle Ages, the windows of the Oude Kerk were entirely or partially adorned with stained glass, casting countless shimmering hues of light into the church interior. At its peak, the Oude Kerk boasted 25 stained-glass windows, most of which dated back to the 16th century. The two windows now returning belong to the Lady Chapel.

## Restoration: Heritage for the Future

Amsterdam was built on wooden piles, and many of its historic monuments struggle with subsidence - including the Oude Kerk. As the city's first stone building, the Oude Kerk rests on its oldest foundations. Beneath the structure, various piling systems create pressure and tension on the walls.

For this reason, the two stained-glass windows in the east façade of the Mary Chapel were removed for restoration. In a specialised workshop, they were meticulously cleaned, repaired, and reframed using an innovative frame system. This system allows for flexibility in the event of future subsidence, ensuring the windows' long-term preservation.

## Two Windows, Two Eras

The left window dates back to a time when both Amsterdam and the Oude Kerk were Catholic. Stained-glass windows of that period invariably depicted religious scenes. This particular window portrays Mary on her deathbed, surrounded by the apostles, and is also known as the 'Crabeth Window', as it was created around 1555 by the renowned Gouda glass painter Dirck Crabeth (1504–1574). Along with the two leftmost stained-glass windows in the Lady Chapel, it is one of the last surviving windows from that era.

To the right of this window stands the so-called Second Burgomasters Window, installed in the second half of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century, during the Protestant period. This stained-glass window complements the First Burgomasters Window located further along the south aisle. It displays the coats of arms of the mayors who governed Amsterdam between 1757 and 1795, with additional glass panels later added to include the arms of aldermen from 1803 to 1806.

## The Lady Chapel

The Lady Chapel was built during a tumultuous period in the history of both Amsterdam and Europe. It was a time of iconoclasm, religious wars, and a profound religious upheaval known as the Reformation. During this turbulent era, the Oude Kerk was further expanded with a large chapel dedicated to Mary, complete with stained-glass windows and an altarpiece in her honour. In this chapel, the Catholic origins of the church are most intensely felt. During World War II, the windows were removed and stored in a government shelter near Zandvoort. They are now part of the Dutch National Collection. Below is an overview and description of the four stained-glass windows in the Lady Chapel.

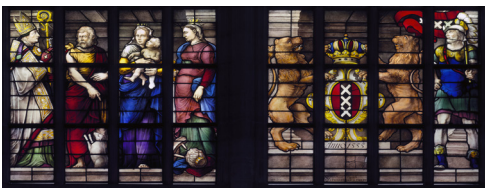
**1 The Annunciation and Visitation (1555)**  
*by Lambert van Noort, painter and architect from Antwerp, executed by stained-glass artist Digman Meynaert*

This stained-glass window depicts two pivotal moments in Mary's life. On the left, the angel Gabriel kneels before her in an intimate scene, while on the right, Mary greets her cousin Elizabeth, both visibly pregnant. In the background, we see Mary at a city gate and Zacharias in his study. Beneath these scenes, the donors of the window, Jan Claesz van Hoppen II and his wife Lysbeth Pietersdr Rodigh, kneel, flanked by their patron saints. Jan Claesz, a member of an influential family of Weitkopers (brewers), had his coat of arms featuring hop flowers incorporated into the window. The window expresses both a deep faith and civic pride.



**2 The Adoration of the Shepherds (1555)**  
*by Lambert van Noort, painter and architect from Antwerp, executed by stained-glass artist Digman Meynaert*

In this vibrant scene, shepherds gather around the newborn Jesus, while angels hover above them. In the background, we see the Presentation of Jesus, set in a dilapidated temple—a typical Mannerist detail. At the bottom, the patron saints of Amsterdam stand guard: St. Nicholas and St. John the Baptist for the Oude Kerk, and Mary and St. Catherine for the Nieuwe Kerk. Between them, the coat of arms of Amsterdam and other heraldic symbols are displayed, symbolising the strong bond between the city and its protectors.



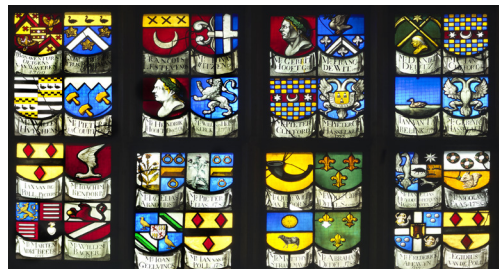
**3 The Death of the Virgin (1555 and 1639)**  
*by Dirck Crabeth and Pieter Jansz*

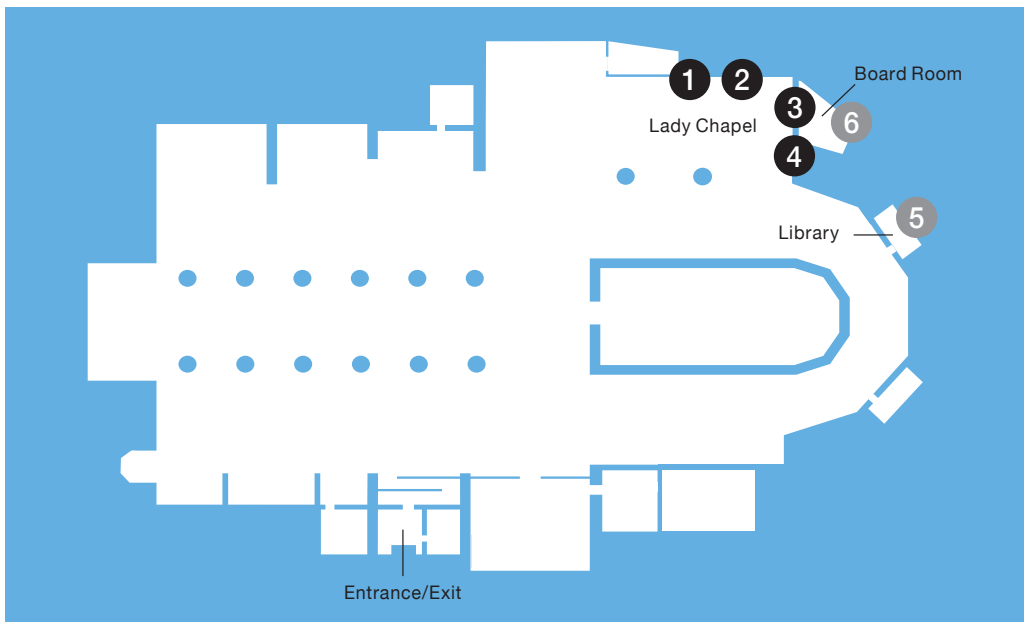
A poignant scene full of emotion: Mary lies on her deathbed in a classical interior, while St. Peter hands her a candle—a traditional symbol of her transition to the afterlife. The apostles, in groups of three, each express sorrow and devotion in their own way. Notice the finely painted details in their facial expressions, characteristic of the masterful hand of Dirck Crabeth. Below the scene, the donor family Brunt kneels, with Cornelis and his sons on the left, and his wife Trijn with their daughters on the right. St. Cornelius and St. Catherine, their patron saints, accompany them. In 1639, the upper part of the window was revised by Pieter Jansz, creating a unique combination of 16th- and 17th-century stained-glass art.



**4 Second Burgomasters Window (1761-1806)**  
*by M.E. de Angelis*

The Burgomasters Window is a visual timeline of Amsterdam's city government during the 18th and early 19th centuries: the window showcases an impressive collection of coats of arms. It was created in the second half of the 18th century by the Brussels-based glass painters De Angelis. The window complements the First Burgomasters Window in the south aisle and offers a unique insight into the urban governance of that era.





### Public Programme

Parallel to Windows Reframed, we will organize a series of expert talks and stained-glass workshops, and treasure hunts especially for children. Want to learn more or participate?

#### Expert Talks

**Friday 21 February**  
15:30 – 17:30

#### Kick-Off Windows Reframed

On Friday 21 February, the reinstallation of the two windows will kick off. Via a towering staircase, you can be among the first to view the multicoloured windows up close. During an expert talk, art historian Zsuzsanna van Ruyven-Zeman will discuss the history of these stained-glass windows.

**Friday 14 March**  
16.00 – 17.00

#### Female Spaces in Amsterdam

How does our understanding of history change when we follow the perspective of women? Professor of Medieval History at the University of Amsterdam, Serena Ferente, will

share insights from her ongoing research on women's monasteries in Amsterdam, alongside her students. In the library, you can find a presentation about figures such as Lysbeth Brunt, who played a pivotal role in commissioning Dirck Crabeth.

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**Friday 4 April**  
16:00 – 17:00

#### Digging and Mud Work

Not only during large construction projects, but also in small-scale excavations, archaeologists are present to conduct research. What do all these puzzle pieces actually tell us about the city, and in this case, the Oude Kerk? Archaeologist Ranjith Jaysena from the Centre for Monuments and Archaeology at the City of Amsterdam will share more about this.

#### Film

In the board room runs a film about the restoration process of the windows.

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### Workshops

**22 March, 12 April, and 2 May**  
13:00 – 16:30

Ever wondered how stained-glass is made? Join one of these workshops! Step by step, you'll learn the stained-glass technique: cutting glass, grinding, applying copper foil, and soldering. You'll go home with your very own creation!

Scan the QR code  
for the full programme:



### Support and Thanks

The restoration has been made possible by the generous contributions of: Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed, Cultuurfonds, Province of North Holland, Stichting Edwin Bouwfonds, Brook Foundation, Hendrik Muller Fonds, P.W. Janssen Fonds, and the Restoration Fund Oude Kerk.